

SCHOOL EDUCATION: HIDDEN WEAPON OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AGAINST UKRAINE



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INTRODUCTION

People are surrounded by numerous different factors that shape them as individuals. One of the leading among them is education, which can be radically different in terms of content, objectives, ways of presenting the materials etc. The choice within each of these elements directly affects how an individual will be enriched with information and in what way he/she will use it in the future. What really matters is that society can be formed and changed in this way.

The Russian Federation (RF) is aware of the idea of the importance of school education for society, however primarily not for learning but for forming the worldview that is necessary for the authoritarian state, with which society is ready to fulfill the objectives set by the state, even if they do not comply with the conventional human values. In such a process, a child becomes not a subject of education but an object controlled by it.

In the RF, school education has long become one of the instruments of aggression against Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, through which the predetermined narratives promotes, the purpose of which is:

- consolidation of results of the occupation and annexation of part of the Ukrainian territory;
- complication and/or prevention of processes of de-occupation and re-integration of the mentioned Ukrainian territories;
- changes in the social consciousness of children on the occupied Ukrainian territories for forming the generation of the “Russian” society, which has a loyal attitude to the objectives of the RF and is ready to join their fulfillment.

Remarkably, the official incumbents of the RF do not hide the use of school education as the instrument for achieving the stated objectives. The President of the Russian Federation has announced “de-Nazification” as the objective of the large-scale invasion on the territory of Ukraine in 2022. Here is how Alexandr Shchipkov, the Adviser to the Chairman of the State Duma of the RF, explains the stated objective: *“de-Nazification is a complete change of values. However, in order to change these values for returning Russian people in Ukraine to the normal coordinate system, it is required to revise the paradigms in education, in media, in mass culture”*¹.

In the notorious article *“What Russia should do with Ukraine”* by the state-run media outlet “RIA News” the objective of “de-Nazification” was defined as follows: *“It consists in re-education, which is achieved by the ideological repressions (suppression) of the Nazi narratives and strict censorship: not only in the political field but necessarily also in the field of culture and education”*².

1 Alexandr Shchipkov about the prohibition of Nazism, de-Nazification of Ukraine and de-liberalization of Russia, 2022. URL: http://web.archive.org/web/20221214142655/https://vrns.ru/news/spetsoperazia-rossii-eto-zapret-liberalizmu-na-eksport/?sphrase_id=1802.

2 What Russia should do with Ukraine // RIA News, 2022. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221213205642/https://ria.ru/amp/20220403/ukraina-1781469605.html>.

The most terrible thing is that the primary object of influence of school education is unformed children's personalities. For the most part, they cannot resist the content or the form chosen to change the civic consciousness, and therefore, they become easy targets. Unfortunately, on some of the occupied territories of Ukraine, the Russian Federation has been implementing its own educational standards for a long time.

At first glance, the mentioned actions of the RF are only subject to the moral, but not the legal, condemnation. However, it is not like that. Despite the lack of a direct definition of the stated educational policy of the RF as an international crime, international law is comprehensive enough to provide specific qualifications and determine the grounds for bringing the conductors of such policy to justice.

AIM AND SUBJECT OF RESEARCH



The aim of the research

is to demonstrate and record the violation of international law by the Russian Federation, in particular, the use of **school education** as the element of aggression against Ukraine to change and form the civic consciousness of the population on the territories of Ukraine occupied by it. Drawing the attention of the Ukrainian and international community to these actions will emphasize the urgent need to apply international measures of influence.

The research does not aim to analyze each of the identified attempts of Russian education directed at changing the consciousness of Ukrainian children in the occupied territories of Ukraine and those deported to the RF in detail. Instead, the general tendencies and the vector of the use of education during the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine are determined, and accompanied by examples.



The tasks of the research:

- analysis of the federal state educational standards, work programs, and teaching concepts for the school subjects defined below within elementary and secondary general education in the Russian Federation;
- analysis of a number of school study guides for 1-11 grades in the Russian Federation, approved in the federal list within elementary and secondary general education in the Russian Federation for the following mandatory subjects: "Fundamentals of Life Safety", "Social Studies", "Geography", "The World Around Us", "Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics", as well as optional ones: "Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia", "World Artistic Culture".
- legal evaluation of the implementation of Russian education on the occupied territories of Ukraine within the identified narratives, in the mentioned standards, programs, and study guides from the point of view of its compliance with international law.



The subject of the research

is the approved state standards of education, programs of the Russian Federation, as well as school handbooks for 1-11 grades recommended for use in the educational institutions of the RF during the occupation of the territory of Ukraine, in particular from 2014 to December 31, 2022.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

I EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS, PROGRAMS AND CONCEPTS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Educational standards are the requirements, formed and approved by the state, for results and competencies the education seekers should obtain after completing each of the education levels. Educational standards regardless of the country, determine the minimal volume of the load, principles of organization and system of educational process management, substantive directions, and planned results of education. Through specific educational programs, standards determine how exactly and what exactly a child should learn during education.

In the Russian Federation, the state educational standards include federal and regional components, as well as an educational institution component³.

3 Federal Centre for Educational Legislation. Federal State budgetary Scientific Institution.
URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230103084814/https://fcoz.ru/obrazovatelnoe-pravo/knigi/yagofarov2005/512.php>

The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation approves federal state educational standards (known in Russia as FGOS)⁴. The federal educational standards of secondary education of the RF are a set of requirements that are mandatory for implementing the main program of general secondary education⁵. The key objective of such federal educational programs is ensuring “*the unity of the educational space of the Russian Federation*”⁶. In addition to solving the organizational problems (such as personnel, financial, material, and technical ones), federal state educational standards include requirements for the structure of the basic educational programs, their volumes, and learning outcomes⁷.

In order to fulfill the objectives established in the federal state educational standards, there are separate exemplary work programs for general education in the Russian Federation (known as “model programs for general education”), approved by the resolution of the federal educational-methodological association for general education. Specifically, subject programs can be divided into programs for specific grades as well as for the mastery levels of a particular subject – advanced and primary levels. These programs reflect the requirements of the federal state educational standards and educational concepts⁸.

Therefore, they are the basis for further pedagogical developments, teachers at school rely on them while teaching their subjects. If they contain narratives, which promote militarization or change of cultural and national identity, then as a result, teachers will be offering them to students on the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia.

Just like any other country, the Russian Federation has the freedom of discretion to determine the educational standards and the procedure for their implementation. However, at the same time, it has corresponding obligations to preserve the children’s individuality and ensure the conditions for their development in the spirit of respect for human

4 Reference information: “Federal state educational standards of general education”. ConsultantPlus. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20230103094516/http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_142304/b97a99bdd5332b6e6794b335e38c1464851ee750/

5 Federal state educational standard of secondary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, May 17, 2012. N 413. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221018044715/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-soo/>, p. 1;

Federal state educational standard for basic general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, December 17, 2010. N 1897. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221019215131/http://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-ooo/>;

Federal state educational standard for the elementary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, October 6, 2009. N 373. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221216125400/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-noo/>

6 Federal law of December 29, 2012, N 273 (edit. of Dec-29, 2022) “On Education in the Russian Federation” (with amendments and additions which become effective since January 11, 2023). URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20230103085327/http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_140174/dfbe1cf7aa2e2acfd7b8e7ad37cdf71b759c539d/, p. 7

7 Federal law of December 29, 2012, N 273 (edit. of Dec-29, 2022) “On Education in the Russian Federation” (with amendments and additions which become effective since January 11, 2023). URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20230113094303/http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_140174/dfbe1cf7aa2e2acfd7b8e7ad37cdf71b759c539d/, p. 11

8 An example is a model work program in Geography. An exemplary work program of basic general secondary education “Geography” (for 5–9 grades of educational institutions). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221015082744/https://edsoo.ru/download/232?hash=eeb68b406b40127689e3b14d569cc333>, p. 4

rights without subjecting them to military propaganda etc⁹. In armed conflict conditions, the said freedom of discretion is limited even more because children themselves are unable to minimize the impact of occupational school education on them, especially at an early age¹⁰.

Within the framework of this study, the federal state standards approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of primary general education of the Russian Federation (grades 1-4) were analyzed (approved by order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation N 373 of October 6, 2009 (ed. of December 11, 2020))¹¹, of basic secondary general education (5-9 grades) (approved by order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation N 1897 of December 17, 2010 (ed. of December 11, 2020))¹² and secondary general education (10-11 grades) (approved by order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation N 413 of May 17, 2012 (ed. of December 11, 2020))¹³. In addition, the analysis of the following was carried out:

- Federal educational program of the basic secondary general education (approved by order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation N 993 of November 16, 2022)¹⁴;
- Federal educational program of the secondary general education (approved by order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation N 1014 of November 23, 2022)¹⁵;
- educational programs for such school subjects as “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”, “Social Studies”, “Fundamentals of Life Safety”, “Geography” “The World Around Us”, “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics”. In addition, textbooks on these subjects were also analyzed.

9 Art. 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_043#Text;

Art. 8, 27-29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 198. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_043#Text

10 Art. 38 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_043#Text

Art. 24, 50 of IV Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_154#Text

11 Federal state educational standard for elementary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of October 6, 2009. N 373. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221216125400/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-noo/>

12 Federal state educational standard for basic general secondary education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of December 17, 2010. N 1897. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221019215131/http://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-ooo/>

13 Federal state educational standard for secondary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of May 17, 2012. N 413. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221018044715/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-soo/>

14 Federal educational program for the basic general secondary education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of November 16, 2022. N 993. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20230107094428/https://cdnstatic.rg.ru/uploads/attachments/2022/12/23/71764_38d.pdf

15 Federal educational program for secondary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of November 23, 2022. N 1014. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230107094351/http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/File/GetFile/0001202212220051?type=pdf>

The comprehensive assessment of educational programs, standards, and study guides carried out in the research represents the narratives of changing cultural and national identity, as well as the militarization of education. Programs and standards containing relevant narratives are first approved and then implemented by Russia on the occupied territories.

The analyzed educational standards and programs revealed the general directions and objectives of the educational strategy of the Russian Federation aimed at changing the consciousness of Ukrainian schoolchildren in the occupied territories in order to create a loyal social environment which does not resist the annexation. The implementation of some of these objectives in the territory of the Russian Federation, within its internationally recognized borders, can be considered as acceptable. At the same time, the Russian Federation is obliged to take into consideration the protected status of the Ukrainian civilian population under the conditions of occupation¹⁶, which includes, in particular, the inadmissibility of its forced assimilation. Such a protected status is provided, in particular, by the general principle *status quo ante bellum*, which follows the obligation of the Occupying Power to preserve and maintain, as far as it is possible, the legal status and conditions of social life inherent in that territory before its occupation. This principle has been ignored by the Russian Federation during the armed conflict with Ukraine since 2014.

For the aims of the research, the most clearly expressed theses of educational standards, programs, and concepts of the Russian Federation were chosen, which allow the reader to form a general idea of the narratives used by this State during the educational process.

16 Art. 4 of IV Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_154#Text

II

NARRATIVES OF THE RUSSIAN EDUCATION, WHICH HAVE A DEVASTATING IMPACT ON THE CONSCIOUSNESS AND IDENTIFICATION OF UKRAINIAN CHILDREN

“All-Russian civic identity”

The Russian Federation has united on its territory countless peoples, which is referred to in the Constitution of the Russian Federation as “*the multinational people of the Russian Federation*”¹⁷. Under these conditions, development and respect for all peoples, which live within its borders, is the duty of the Russian Federation from the point of view of the content of their right to self-determination within the borders of another States. At the same time, the educational policy of the Russian Federation, despite the declared objectives of such respect, is aimed at the artificial unification and assimilation of different peoples under the single sing of “*all-Russian civic identity*”. Since the Russian Federation considers the occupied regions of Ukraine as its territory, the educational policy of the RF imposes this identity on Ukrainian children living in these regions too.

The concepts of “*patriotism*” and “*Russian civic identity*” in the educational standards of the Russian Federation go hand in hand. The authors of standards see them as a reflection of the result of “*mastering the educational program*” by students on the levels of secondary general¹⁸ basic general education¹⁹. In the educational standard of basic general education, “*Russian civic identity*” is revealed through the concept of “*patriotism, respect to the Fatherland, the past and the present of the multinational people of Russia; awareness of one’s ethnicity, knowledge of the history, language, culture of own people, own region, fundamentals of the cultural heritage of the peoples of Russia and humanity; assimilation of humanistic, democratic and traditional values of the multinational Russian society; fostering a sense of responsibility and duty to the Motherland*”²⁰.

Educational programs of the Russian Federation for such subjects as “Fundamentals of Life Safety”, “Geography”, “Social Studies” declare the inextricable connection of the concept of “patriotism” with the process of forming the so-called “*all-Russian civic identity*” (in some cases – “*Russian civic identity*”). The authors of the programs state that

17 Preamble, the Constitution of the Russian Federation. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230104083545/http://www.constitution.ru/>

18 Federal state educational standard for the secondary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of May 17, 2012. N 413. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221018044715/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-soo/>

19 Federal state educational standard for the basic secondary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of December 17, 2010. N 1897. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221019215131/http://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-ooo/>

20 Same as 9

the so-called “*all-Russian civic identity*” is characteristic of representatives of all peoples who live in the territory of the Russian Federation²¹.

Thus, in the model work program of the Russian Federation on the subject “Fundamentals of Life Safety” in the list of personal results, which students should achieve as a result of mastering the educational program, authors include patriotic education, which is brought out through the concept of awareness of “*the Russian civic identity in the multicultural and multi confessional society, manifestation of interest in knowledge of the native language, history, culture of the Russian Federation, own region, peoples of Russia; value attitude to the achievements of own Motherland – Russia, [...] military deeds and labor achievements of the people; respect for symbols of Russia, state holidays, historical and natural heritage and monuments, traditions of different peoples living in one’s native country; forming of a sense of pride for own homeland, and a responsible attitude towards fulfillment of the constitutional duty – defense of the Fatherland*”²². The authors of work programs on such subjects as “Geography”²³, “Social Studies”²⁴, “The World Around Us”²⁵, “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics”²⁶ and “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”²⁷ also expect to be achieved by students in a form of awareness of own “*Russian civic identity*”.

21 Concept of teaching the subject “Social Studies” in the educational organizations of the Russian federation, which implement the main general educational programs. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20211122144158/>

<https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/9906056a57059c4266eaa78bff1f0bbe/download/719/>, p. 3;

Concept of development of the geographical education in the Russian Federation. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20211126191008/>

<https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/54daf271f2cc70fc543d88114fa83250/download/723/>, p. 2;

Model work program for the basic general secondary education “Fundamentals of Life Safety” (for 8-9 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220516045115/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/339/?hash=091b908683e38271f67831cf9549369c>, p. 17

22 The model work program for the basic secondary general education “Fundamentals of Life Safety” (for 8-9 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220516045115/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/339/?hash=091b908683e38271f67831cf9549369c>, p. 17-18

23 The model work program for the basic secondary general education “Geography” (for 5-9 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221015082744/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/232?hash=eeb68b406b40127689e3b14d569cc333>, p. 29

24 The model work program for the secondary general education on the subject “Social Studies” advanced level. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230105143924/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/1111/?hash=1f7f0d69bb9314ba198a26adb4d8f853>, p. 8;

Federal work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Social Studies”.

URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230105144330/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/1343/?hash=c55b61325afd472efe674e093990f15e>, p. 8

25 Federal work program for the elementary general education on the subject “The World Around Us”. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230105144643/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/1357/?hash=440e4bb1ff3679fc56a6211e5bc888c4>, p. 19

26 The model work program for the elementary general education “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” (for 4 grade of educational organizations).

URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230105143059/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/1150/?hash=97c6ceee7e845b261b42f4035704c496>, p. 10

27 The model work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Cultures of the Peoples of Russia” (for 5-6 grades of the educational organizations).

URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220628145532/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/533/?hash=1fd0f026beb0a268cf539ccfc892bea3>, p. 18

In fact, all those facts and questions studied within a specific subject are being layered on the general concept of the “*civic identity*”.

The Russian language is integral to the “*all-Russian civic identity*”. The educational program on the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” offers students to study a separate topic, the content of which is built on the said narratives emphasizing the special importance of the Russian language for entire population on the territory of the Russian Federation, regardless the nationality: “*the Russian language is the language of communication and the language of possibilities. The Russian language is the foundation of Russian culture. How the Russian language was formed: the contribution of the peoples of Russia to its development. The Russian language as a culture-forming project and the language of international communication. The importance of the Russian language for all peoples of Russia. Possibilities that the Russian language gives*”²⁸.

The thesis about the “*unity of the Peoples of Russia*” is one of the “*traditional Russian spiritual and moral values*”, which is promoted in tandem with the idea of the “*all-Russian civic identity*” as a part of the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”²⁹. The “*unity of the country*” is considered as a “*pledge of the Russia’s future*”. Mastering this concept assumes that students know and are able to explain “*the meaning and the role of common elements in the culture of the peoples of Russia for justification of its territorial, political and economic unity*”³⁰. In addition, they should be able “*to understand and prove the importance and advantages of this unity over the requirements of the national self-identification of individual ethnic groups*”³¹. The combination of theses of “*Russian traditional spiritual and moral values*” and “*unity of the peoples of Russia*” is dangerous since, in such way, it imposes on Ukrainian children on the occupied territories, the idea that all peoples living on the territory of Russia allegedly have common features, which makes them a part of Russia. Ukrainian children are forced to form an idea of “community” between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples, which results in even greater blurring of boundaries of cultural identity between them.

As a result, students should see the “*all-Russian civic identity*” and all its elements – the Russian language, culture, cultural heritage, traditions, so-called “*military deeds*” of past generations, public holidays, monuments etc., as an integral part of their personality. The formation of the “*all-Russian civic identity*” aims to erase the boundaries between the national identities of the people living on the territory of the Russian Federation. At the same time, an attitude to the Russian language, culture, heritage etc., is formed, as to something that is a part of their own – Russian – identity, regardless of the child’s citizenship or nationality.

28 The model work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” (for 5–6 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220628145532/https://edsoo.ru/download/533/?hash=1fd0f026beb0a268cf539ccfc892bea3>, p. 10

29 The model work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” (for 5–6 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220628145532/https://edsoo.ru/download/533/?hash=1fd0f026beb0a268cf539ccfc892bea3>, p. 5, 12, 27

30 The model work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” (for 5–6 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220628145532/https://edsoo.ru/download/533/?hash=1fd0f026beb0a268cf539ccfc892bea3>, p. 30

31 Ibid, p. 30

The imposition of the Russian identity on Ukrainian children living on the occupied territories through the educational standards aims to erase their Ukrainian national and cultural identity. The long-term consequence of this is the formation of the “Russian environment” in the occupied territory, the “voluntary” fulfillment of the aims of the Russian Federation by the Ukrainian population as a part of aggression against Ukraine, and consolidation of the annexation of territories.

“Patriotism”

Patriotic education, as a component of the educational process, is present in school education in many countries, and, in general, is not something abnormal since, precisely though it the civil society is formed, and its activity is ensured. Traditionally, the concept of “patriotic education” means raising the individual’s (a child’s) sense of obligation towards the society, attachment to family, home, and Motherland, love to native nature, respect for ancestors, older people, tolerant attitude towards other people, nationalities, etc.

In the educational policy of the Russian Federation, the concept of patriotism is cross-cutting – it permeates all the studied educational concepts and programs³². At the same time, the emphases made by the authors of educational programs and concepts are quite dangerous in the context of their use on the temporarily occupied territories.

32 The examples of educational programs and concepts where the concept of “patriotism” is mentioned:

Federal state educational standard for the elementary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of October 6, 2009. N 373. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221216125400/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-noo/>, p. 13;

Federal state educational standard for the basic secondary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of May 17, 2012. N 413. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221018044715/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-soo/>, p. 7;

Federal state educational standard for the basic secondary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of December 17, 2010. N 1897. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221019215131/http://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-ooo/>, p. 9;

The concept of teaching in subject field “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220623085049/https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/210ad0cd0423c3c9f7f9020f78bee51c/download/4948/>, p. 6;

The concept of teaching of subject “Social Studies” in educational organizations of the Russian Federation that implement basic general educational programs. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20211122144158/https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/9906056a57059c4266eaa78bff1f0bbe/download/719/>, p. 3;

The concept of development of geographical education in the Russian Federation.

URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20211126191008/>

<https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/54daf271f2cc70fc543d88114fa83250/download/723/>, p. 2;

Federal work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Social Studies”.

URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230105144330/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/1343/?hash=c55b61325afd472efe674e093990f15e>, p. 8;

Model work program of the basic general secondary education “Fundamentals of Life Safety” (for 8-9 grades of the educational institutions). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220516045115/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/339/?hash=091b908683e38271f67831cf9549369c>, p. 17;

Model work program for the elementary general education “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” (for 4 grade of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230105143059/https://edsoo.ru/download/1150/?hash=97c6ceee7e845b261b42f4035704c496>, p. 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23-25;

Federal work program for the elementary general education on the subject “The World Around Us”. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230105144643/>

<https://edsoo.ru/download/1357/?hash=440e4bb1ff3679fc56a6211e5bc888c4>, p. 19

“Patriotism” is brought out not only through the forced instillation of love for the Russian Federation as the state, to its language, culture, and history (which itself is already quite traumatic for children who find themselves under the occupation by this State and have no opportunity to study by the alternative program), but also through the forced instillation of a sense of respect to the so-called “military deeds” of the past generations of the Russians. For example, the authors of the federal program on the subject “Social Studies” shape students’ achievements of personal results in patriotic education as *“awareness of Russian civic identity in the multicultural and multi confessional society; expression of interest to knowing native language, history, the culture of the Russian Federation, own region, peoples of Russia; value attitude to the achievements of own Motherland – Russia, to science, art, sports, technologies, military deeds and labor achievements of the people; respect for the symbols of Russia, public holidays, historical and natural heritage, monuments, traditions of different peoples living in the native country”*³³. The use of this concept on the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia looks like forcible imposition of the positive image of the occupier state and instilling love for it among children, which can result in children losing the awareness that their real homeland is Ukraine.

Educational programs, in particular, “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Cultures of the Peoples of Russia” and “Social Studies”, present the concept of patriotism as a part of spiritual and moral (*“love to the Fatherland”*) and civic (*“patriotism, civic consciousness, national consciousness, respect for the memory of ancestors”*³⁴) education through studying the topics related to the culture, religion, formation, and development of personality.³⁵ Because the information on these topics is distorted, children on the occupied territories form a distorted understanding of patriotism: not to the state of their citizenship, but to the occupier state, not to the Ukrainian people, but to the population of the Russian Federation.

The program of the subject “Geography”, for its part, determines the following educational objective, which is not logical for such a subject – *“raising a sense of patriotism, love to own country, small homeland, mutual understanding with other peoples, based on forming of a holistic geographical image of Russia, value orientations of a person.”*³⁶. In this way, the program’s authors change the purpose of the educational subject, which belongs to the natural-mathematical cycle, and should be aimed at the study of natural phenomena and not focus significant attention of students on *“patriotic education”*.

In addition, the analysis of educational programs in the subjects “Social Studies” and “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Cultures of the Peoples of Russia” demonstrates

33 Federal work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Social Studies”. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230105144330/https://edsoo.ru/download/1343?hash=c55b61325afd472efe674e093990f15e>, p. 8

34 Concept of teaching in the study field “Fundamentals of Spiritual and moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220623085049/https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/210ad0cd0423c3c9f7f9020f78bee51c/download/4948/>, p. 3

35 Model work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” (for 5–6 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220628145532/https://edsoo.ru/download/533?hash=1fd0f026beb0a268cf539ccfc892bea3>, p. 12–17

36 Model work program for the basic secondary general education “Geography” (for 5–9 grades of educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221015082744/https://edsoo.ru/download/232?hash=eeb68b406b40127689e3b14d569cc333>, p. 5

that awareness of the concept of “patriotism” is mandatory for the formation of the *“harmoniously developed personality”*³⁷, and the sense of patriotism itself is perceived through *“self-awareness as a citizen of one’s Fatherland”*³⁸. Such a significant attention to patriotism as a part of a subject of the natural-mathematical cycle has significant impact on the formation of young personalities, which means replacing the concept of “Motherland” for children in the occupied territories.

This kind of approach to the concept of patriotism itself and the methods imposing it on Ukrainian children on the temporarily occupied territories (TOT) leads to the formation of Ukrainian children’s attitude to the Russian Federation as to their homeland, which simplifies the use of the Ukrainian population for the aggressive purposes of the Russian Federation. In the long-term perspective, it will significantly complicate the reintegration of these territories after their return to the control of Ukraine.

In general, the promotion of the concept of patriotism by the Russian Federation on the occupied territories looks like part of the plan to destroy Ukrainian identity and poses a threat to the existence of the Ukrainian national group as such.

Militarism

Military duty is an essential element of the existence and survival of the people within a particular state. The right to self-defense is an integral element of the right to self-determination. In order to be able to fulfill this right at the right moment and protect oneself, one’s family, and society from the aggression of third states, the population should develop a patriotic attitude towards their homeland. However, in this context, it is important not to attune the society belligerently, not to militarize the consciousness of citizens, especially children, who, if necessary, can further be used by the state for self-defense but also for waging a war of occupation. Militarization implies, in particular, an excessive concentration of attention on military victories, deeds, and self-sacrifice during the war, specifically on cases of children’s sacrificing their own lives, encouragement to follow such actions, actual preparation from a young age for military service, including contract service.

In the conditions of occupation, the militarization of the civilian population, especially children, should be excluded because it creates conditions for the involvement of the civilian population in hostilities on the occupier’s side against their State, which is a violation of the norms of international humanitarian law, in particular, Article 52 of the IV Geneva Convention.

Despite this, the Russian Federation implements its educational policies, which impose the “duty” on Ukrainian children living in the occupied territory to serve in the Russian

37 Concept of teaching the subject “Social Studies” in the educational organizations of the Russian Federation that implement basic general education programs. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20211122144158/https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/9906056a57059c4266eaa78bff1f0bbe/download/719/>, p. 3

38 Model work program for the basic secondary general education on a subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” (for 5-6 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220628145532/https://edsoo.ru/download/533/?hash=1fd0f026beb0a268cf539ccfc892bea3>, p. 5

army and participate in armed aggression against third states. The danger of using such narratives on the occupied territories lies in the fact that schoolchildren are being convinced of the lawfulness and the existence of legal grounds for the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Children are led to a perception of the necessity to “defend” their forcibly imposed “Fatherland” and are even encouraged to take part in military actions against Ukraine in the future.

The study of the educational programs and concepts showed a cross-cutting imposition of the narrative about the necessity to fulfill the so-called “*civic duty*”. For example, one of the personal results students should achieve as a result of mastering the basic general education program is “*cultivation of a sense of obligation and duty to the Motherland*”³⁹.

In high school, the narrative of the prestige of fulfilling the “*civic duty*” is used in the programs and concepts of the subjects “Fundamentals of Life Safety” (for 8-9 grades), “Geography” (for 5-9 grades) and “Fundamentals of Spiritual and moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” (for 5-6 grades). The programs and concepts of teaching these subjects provide that students should qualitatively learn the meaning of the concept of “*civic duty*” and, as a result, associate it with the matter of defending the State and its security in various ways, in particular, through military service in the ranks of the Russian army.

For example, as a part of the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”, students of the 6th grade should master, among others, the following topics: “*What is a deed. Heroism as self-sacrifice. Heroism on war. Deed during the peaceful time. Mercy, mutual help*” and “*Defense of the Fatherland: a deed or a duty?*”⁴⁰. The educational program also requires a teacher to continuously focus students’ attention and discuss the following questions: “*War and peace. The role of knowledge in defense of the Fatherland. The duty of the citizen to society. War deeds. Honor. Valor*”⁴¹. That is, children at age eleven or twelve convinced that in order to become a hero, one must sacrifice oneself, and this can be done at war. Because that within the occupation education, Russia is being called the Fatherland that needs to be fought for, Ukrainian children on the occupied territories are de-facto imposed the idea that sacrificing oneself at war against Ukraine is heroism.

The concept of teaching of “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” defines that “*service to the Fatherland and responsibility for its fate*” belongs to the “*traditional Russian spiritual and moral values*”⁴². Another example is personal results that the students should achieve as a result of mastering the study program on the subject “Fundamentals of Life Safety”: “*formation of the sense of pride for own homeland, responsible attitude to fulfilling the constitutional duty – defense of the Fa-*

39 Federal state educational standard for the basic secondary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of October 6, 2009. N 373.

URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221216125400/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-noo/>, p. 9(1)

40 Model work program for the basic secondary general education on the subject “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” (for 5-6 grades of educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220628145532/https://edsoo.ru/download/533?hash=1fd0f026beb0a268cf539ccfc892bea3>, p. 15-16

41 Ibid, p. 16

42 Ibid, p. 3

therland"⁴³. In addition, a part of the program focuses students' attention on Russia's unique role in ensuring not only state, but also the international security. Students should demonstrate *"understanding and recognition of the special role of Russia in ensuring state and international security, defense of the country, understanding of the role of the state and society in solving problems of protecting the population from emergencies [...] of a social nature"*⁴⁴. While theses about the necessity to defend own state within the internationally recognized state borders are not something unusual, in the case of the territories occupied by Russia, their dissemination alongside with substitution of the concept of "Motherland" means imposing on students the necessity of serving in the Russian army to the detriment of their country of citizenship – Ukraine.

For high-quality and quick mastering of the mentioned theses by students, the educational program "Fundamentals of Life Safety" offers teachers options for conducting complex lessons with creative tasks and public discussions, in particular on the following topics: *"Fundamentals of ensuring complex security of the Russian Federation", "Legal basis for ensuring complex security", "Organization of complex protection of the population", and "Key activities of complex protection of the population"*⁴⁵. Teachers are suggested to create the *"Conscript's Corner"* in a classroom or on the website of an educational institution⁴⁶. Typically, it contains information about the citizen's duty to complete military training, responsibility for violations *"in the field of military registration"*, and grounds for exemption and deferment of military service⁴⁷.

The concept of "Fundamentals of Life Safety" also provides that at the level of secondary general education, students should acquire *"an understanding of the role and place of a citizen in the system of national security of the Russian Federation"*⁴⁸.

The personal results of completing the program on the subject "Geography" include cultivating *"the sense of obligation and duty to the Fatherland; readiness to fulfill the duties of a citizen"*⁴⁹. At the concept of studying geographical education level, it is already possible to use acquired knowledge as a basis for mastering military specialties.

43 Model work program for the basic secondary general education "Fundamentals of Life Safety" (for 8-9 grades of educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220516045115/https://edsoo.ru/download/339/?hash=091b908683e38271f67831cf9549369c>, p. 18

44 Ibid, p. 18

45 Ibid, p. 8-9

46 Ibid, p. 14

47 Examples of design of "Conscript's corners":

The Conscript's Corner stand. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20221230125059/https://znak86.ru/ugolok_prizivnika/;

The Conscript's Corner. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221230125255/http://uchcollector-spb.ru/item/ugolok-prizyvnik-10-plakatov-razmerom-41h30-sm->;

The Conscript's Corner. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221230125515/http://school9vlz.ru/ugolok-prizyvnik/1840-ugolok-prizyvnik>

48 The concept of teaching the subject "Fundamentals of Life Safety" in the educational organizations of the Russian Federation, that implement general educational programs. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220309210400/https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/df9e8baa129e02af6fc774b51703d16a/download/2747/>, p. 10

49 Model work program for basic secondary general education "Geography" (for 5-9 grades of the educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221015082744/https://edsoo.ru/download/232?hash=eeb68b406b40127689e3b14d569cc333>, p. 29

In particular, it is stipulated that high-quality geographical education should ensure “*the basis for training future specialists*” [...] *in the field of [...] defense and security*”⁵⁰.

Thus, the educational standards of the Russian Federation plainly and overtly prepare Ukrainian children on the occupied territories for fulfilling the “honorable” military duty of defending the “Fatherland”. The problem lies in the militarization of the children’s consciousness that, alongside the forced formation of the Russian identity and sense of patriotism to Russia as to their homeland, can result in the “conscious and sincere” fulfillment of military by Ukrainian children in the ranks of the army of the Russian Federation or on its side in the armed aggression against Ukraine.

50 The concept of development of geographical education in the Russian Federation.
URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20211126191008/https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/54daf271f2cc70fc543d88114fa83250/download/723/>, p. 2

CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 1

In the Russian Federation, at the national level, the educational standards, work programs, and concepts of the teaching of specific study subjects have been approved, which collectively determine the educational process results for a specific student.

Since 2014, the occupation authorities have been implementing these standards on the occupied territories of Ukraine, the area of which has significantly expanded since February 24, 2022, after the beginning of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation. It means that the Russian Federation had enough time to directly and significantly influence the consciousness of Ukrainian children in schools on these territories. In addition, Ukrainian children, who were deported to the Russian Federation, are also forced to study by Russian standards.

The educational standards, programs and concepts clearly outline the intention of the aggressor state to impose the Russian identity on Ukrainian children, to form a patriotic attitude towards the Russian Federation, as their Fatherland, and willingness to perform military duty for the benefit of this State.

Ukrainian schoolchildren on the occupied territories are imposed thesis that their affiliation with the Russian Federation is based on the presence of several features which are inherent people living on the territory of the Russian Federation. The Russian language and culture, cultural heritage, monuments, so-called “*military feats*” of the past generations, state holidays, etc. are attributed to the “*all-Russian civic identity*”, and it is these things that justify the fact that other peoples are a part of the Russian Federation. The promotion of these narratives and the imposition of the thesis about “one nation”, which is actively promoted in the global Russian informational space, contributes to erasing Ukrainian children’s cultural and national identity.

Alongside this, Ukrainian children have also imposed the concept of “*patriotism*”, which is basically presented as the nationwide “unifying” idea. In all the analyzed educational standards, programs, and other educational documents, this concept is interpreted by their authors through the love of the “*Fatherland*”, by which exclusively the Russian Federation is meant. Although within the internationally recognized borders, the presence of patriotic education belongs to the discretion of Russia, the imposition of love towards the Russian Federation on the occupied territories entails the replacement of the concept of “Motherland” and is considered unacceptable. The result of such actions, in addition to those mentioned above, is that under the pressure of teachers, children first stop openly demonstrating their sincere feelings for Ukraine as their Motherland, and then gradually lose them and even absorb the idea that having such feelings to Ukraine is not only unpatriotic but also dangerous since it is a manifestation of “Nazism”.

Another instrument of influence on the consciousness of Ukrainian children is the militarization of education, which is fixed in the educational standards, concepts, and programs as a narrative common for them all. Ukrainian students in the occupied territories have imposed the thesis that serving in the Russian army is not only prestigious and honorable but that they allegedly have the *duty* to serve specifically in the armed forces of Russia. Moreover, Ukrainian children are formed to believe that sacrificing oneself at war for the sake of Russia is the highest manifestation of heroism.

Collectively, the imposition of such narratives already has dangerous consequences and will have them both in the medium term and the long-term. Such consequences can include:

- the involvement of the Ukrainian population, including children who studied and are studying on the occupied territories by the Russian educational standards, to the service in the army of the Russian Federation or participation in the armed conflict on its side;
- actual assimilation of the Ukrainian population;
- destruction of the Ukrainian identity as one of the perquisites for the existence and reinstation of the Ukrainian national group;
- complication of the re integration of the liberated territories into Ukraine.
- The achievement of these objectives by the Russian Federation is carried out with numerous violations of the norms of international law.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

The standards, concepts of teaching and work programs for educational subjects of the Russian Federation are only the initial theoretical basis of what education in the Russian Federation should be like and what result is expected from it in terms of the formation of individuals' consciousness. Even more important is the way in which these standards are implemented, and extended on specific examples in the study guides, which a teacher relies on and which children study by performing their learning tasks in accordance with them. That is why the analysis of Russian school textbooks is a practical basis for research and a direct evidence of what kind of narratives, such as Russian patriotism, militarization, and the formation of the Russian identity, are present in a significant number of textbooks, approved and recommended by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation (before 2018 – the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation).



FEDERAL LIST OF TEXTBOOKS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The system of textbooks, which is allowed to be used in school educational institutions of the Russian Federation, is regulated and specified by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

The federal law “On Education in the Russian Federation” specifies that for the educational programs of elementary, basic secondary and general education, textbooks and methodological guides to them are used, which are included in the federal list of the study guides of the Russian Federation⁵¹, approved by the relevant Ministry based on the previously conducted scientific and pedagogical expert evaluation of the study guides to determine (in particular):

- the compliance of the textbook with the Federal state educational standard and the Constitution of the Russian Federation;
- the focus of the textbook on the formation of the “Russian civic identity”, “patriotism, love and respect for the family, Fatherland, own people, region”⁵².

During the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, there were several main federal lists in which changes were made periodically, mostly of a “cosmetic” nature:

- of year 2014 (The order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of March 31, 2014. N 253)⁵³;
- of year 2018 (The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of December 28, 2018. N 345)⁵⁴;

51 Art. 18 of the Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation” of December 29, 2012. N 273, 2012. URL: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_140174/

52 The order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of September 2, 2013. N 1047, 2013. URL: <https://archive.ph/hH7WZ>;

The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of July 18, 2016. N 870, 2016. URL: <https://archive.ph/NiHl9>;

The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of December 18, 2019. N 695, 2019. URL: <https://archive.ph/F8x4V>;

The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of November 12, 2021. N 819, 2021. URL: <https://archive.ph/Fw5Wd>

53 The order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of March 31, 2014. N 253, 2014. URL: <https://archive.ph/7Pq2z>

54 The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of December 28, 2018. N 345, 2018. URL: <https://archive.ph/OAYu0>

- of year 2020 (The order of the Ministry of Education of May 20, 2020. N 254, into which significant changes were made according to the order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of December 23, 2020. N 766)⁵⁵;
- of year 2022 (The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of September 21, 2022. N 858)⁵⁶.

Therefore, the list of textbooks allowed to be studied in school educational institutions of the Russian Federation is under strict control.

The lists provided above are used in the occupied Crimea since 2014, and until 2022 were also used in the occupied parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, where occupation administrations of the Russian Federation (the so-called “DPR” and “LPR”) approve their lists of Russian textbooks and recommendations⁵⁷. After the annexation of the territory of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the use of the federal lists is mandatory in the occupied parts of these regions.

As for the newly occupied territories in 2022, namely the parts of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine, which were annexed after the so-called “referendums on accession to the Russian Federation”, in these territories, the federal lists of year 2020 (valid until 2025) and of year 2022 are subject to the application.

II

NARRATIVES OF SCHOOL SUBJECTS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Since the federal lists mentioned above are directly related to the occupied territories of Ukraine, the following study of the textbooks which implement and develop the Russian educational standards, focuses specifically on them.

The analysis of the significant number of educational materials of various authors from the federal lists gives a holistic vision of what straightforward narratives can be offered

55 The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of May 20, 2020. N 254, 2020. URL: <https://mo.mosreg.ru/download/document/8605117>, <https://archive.ph/gNLC0>, <https://archive.ph/yw00N>, <https://archive.ph/aGhmt>, <https://archive.ph/uNzD0>, <https://archive.ph/yYdGM>, <https://archive.ph/HjvMk>, <https://archive.ph/CP8Fc>, <https://archive.ph/GOMHY>, <https://archive.ph/X8zK3>, <https://archive.ph/pyu7r>, <https://archive.ph/5zGDx>;

The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of December 23, 2020. N 766, 2020. URL: https://fpu.prosv.ru/docs/Prikaz_766_ot_23_12_2020_skan.pdf, <https://archive.ph/m6U5v>

56 The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of September 21, 2022. N 858, 2022. URL: https://cdnstatic.rg.ru/uploads/attachments/2022/11/02/70799_fdc.pdf, <https://archive.ph/1jKbt>, <https://archive.ph/cM1i6>, <https://archive.ph/piXrq>, <https://archive.ph/kPAki>, <https://archive.ph/6Fw2z>, <https://archive.ph/2q3Zo>, <https://archive.ph/Qmkl3>, <https://archive.ph/YHCOB>, <https://archive.ph/GmVt6>, <https://archive.ph/QNx2>, <https://archive.ph/TCNyL>

57 The order of the “Ministry of Education and Science of the DPR” of August 31, 2021. N 727, 2021. URL: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mkyhVpeEjhbqaFgenG147esrWY7hFIQv/view>;
The order of the “Ministry of Education and Science of the LPR” of August 4, 2020. N 713, 2020. URL: <https://disk.yandex.ru/d/v54D2rnbVLXtyw?w=1>, <https://archive.ph/3cpQY>, <https://archive.ph/ob7St>;
The order of the “Ministry of Education and Science of the LPR” of May 28, 2021. N 400, 2021. URL: https://drive.google.com/file/d/13JUi-_8R_yJ5G8bIAGsC-_s2eOGbgS1V/view, <https://archive.ph/3aEnS>

to the Ukrainian children on the occupied territories. For this purpose, several mandatory study subjects were selected under the federal lists, namely: “The World Around Us” (1-4 grades), “Social Studies” (5-11 grades), “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” (4th grade), “Fundamentals of Life Safety” (5-11 grades) and “Geography” (5-11 grades).

After a preliminary analysis of the contents of educational materials, it was established that the subjects related to the general understanding of the Russian social system and values contain narratives which develop the mentioned theses of the standards and lead to the assimilation of Ukrainian children, who remain on the occupied territories of Ukraine or have been deported to the Russian Federation.

Several optional subjects, which the educational institutions can implement at their own discretion, were analyzed. Among them: “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” (5-9 grades), “World Artistic Culture” (10-11 grades). The first subject was considered since its content coincides with the mandatory subject “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” and was taught as a mandatory one for some time. As for the second subject, its choice was due to the urgency of the problem of protecting the cultural heritage of Ukraine, and the understanding of the need to demonstrate the perception of world culture by Russian education and the place of the Russian Federation in it. It is difficult to overestimate the consequences of teaching such subject because it directly affects the identity and cultural diversity of a child.

The relevant educational materials from the publicly available federal lists were taken for the analysis. The narratives revealed in them significantly expand the mentioned theses of the federal standards, deepen them, and detail them. They aim to eliminate the possibility of Ukrainian children perceiving their own Ukrainian identity, changing and forming their consciousness to prepare them for active involvement in aggression against Ukraine, creating a favorable environment for further consolidation of results of the annexation and complicating re-integration of the liberated territories.

A. | “THE WORLD AROUND US” AND “SOCIAL STUDIES”

“The World Around Us” and “Social Studies” are school study subjects for 1-4 and 5-11 grades, respectively, which are interconnected and logically complement each other, where the second one is a continuation of the first one.

In total, 10 textbooks, 14 workbooks and 4 methodological manuals for teachers for the study subject “The World Around Us”, 4 textbooks “The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship” and 15 textbooks for the study subject “Social Studies” were analyzed during the research.

The program of the course “The World Around Us” for the elementary level of general education was developed based on the “Requirements for the results of mastering the basic educational program of the elementary general education”, defined in the “Federal state educational standard of elementary general education”⁵⁸, “Exemplary program for the education”⁵⁹, as well as with correspondence to the Russian “historical and cultural standard”⁶⁰.

Its content, the most significant part of the subject “The World Around Us” consists of information about the natural environment, and is the basis for the further study of the course “Geography” in middle and high schools. However, individual sections of the course “The World Around Us” are devoted to studying the social life and history of the Russian Federation.

58 Federal state educational program for the elementary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of October 6, 2009. N 373. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221216125400/https://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-noo/>

59 *note.* The program was developed in 2019 by the specialists of Institute for Strategy of Educational Development of the Russian Academy of Education as a part of the Russian state task. The aim of the program to help pedagogists of the Russian Federation identify and implement the educational potential of the educational process in order to solve the tasks of the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of May 7, 2018. The program was registered in the Unified State Information System of Accounting for Scientific Research, Research, Development and Technological Works of Civil Purpose (registration № AAAA-Г19-619070900024-2 of August 15, 2019). Exemplary program for education, 2020. URL: <https://cutt.ly/W2NNc8p>

60 *note.* Since 2014, the main methodological and contextual approaches to teaching the history of Russia are defined by the “Concept of the new educational-methodological complex on national history”, developed on the instructions of the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin, and “historical and cultural standard”, included in it. Actually, the standard itself was developed by a special order of the President of the Russian Federation to the author team of the Institute of the Russian History of the RAS under the supervision of its director Y Pertov in 2015

Based on the standard, textbooks on the History of Russia and World History and methodological recommendations to them were written, changes to the control and measurement materials for the “USE” of 2015 were made. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221127182447/https://historyrussia.org/sobytiya/podgotovlen-proekt-usovershenstvovannoj-kontseptsii-prepodavaniya-uchebnogo-kursa-istoriya-rossii.html>

Meeting of the President of the Russian Federation with the developers of the Standard and discussion of the further steps. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230115140213/http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20071>

Among the specified results which students should achieve after completing the course “The World Around Us” there are particularly the following ones: *“spiritual and moral development and personality development of a citizen of Russia, understanding own affiliation to the Russian state, to the certain ethnic group”*⁶¹, as well as *“Civil-patriotic education”*, which implies the *“formation of the value attitude to own homeland – Russia; understanding of the special role of multi-national Russia in the modern world”*⁶².

The research also considers a separate set of four textbooks of “The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship”, which was first included in the federal list at the end of 2020 as one of the textbook options for teaching the subject “The World Around Us”. The general idea of this set of textbooks is for the students at elementary school to learn information about the people living in the Russian Federation, their culture, traditions, etc. At the same time, if such textbooks are chosen for studying, Ukrainian children are being imposed the uncharacteristic affiliation with the “multinational people of the Russian Federation” and love for Russia. In addition, a significant part of the textbook refers to the “military feats”, “patriotic wars” of the Russian Federation, which are aimed at the militarization of children.

“Social Studies” – is subject for students of 5-11 grades, which is aimed at students learning the basic rules of coexistence in society, moral and religious aspects of the interaction of an individual with the central governmental institutions and civil society, familiarization with the norms that regulate this interaction.

The programs of the course “Social Studies” are developed based on the provisions and “Requirements to the results of mastering the basic educational program”, defined in the “Federal state educational standard for general education”⁶³, as well as in accordance with the “Concept of Teaching the Subject “Social Studies”⁶⁴ considering the “Exemplary Program for Education”⁶⁵.

Among the planned results of the course “Social Studies”, there are, particularly, the following ones:

61 Model work program for elementary general education on “The World Around us” for 1-4 grades // Institute for Strategy of Educational Development of the Russian Academy of Education, 2021. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220817005946/https://edsoo.ru/download/252/?hash=484c8cb066e92559681cb2d27ba664e8>, p. 5-6

62 Ibid, p. 20

63 Federal state educational standard for elementary general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of December 17, 2010. N 1897. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221019215131/http://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-ooo/>

64 The concept of teaching the school subject “Social Studies” in the educational organizations of the Russian Federation that implement basic educational programs. URL: <https://docs.edu.gov.ru/document/9906056a57059c4266eaa78bff1f0bbe/download/719/>, <https://archive.ph/QR8UC>

65 *note.* The program was developed by the specialists from the Institute for Strategy of Educational Development of the Russian Academy of Education as a part of state task. The aim of the program is to help Russian pedagogists identify and implement educational potential of educational process in order to solve the tasks of the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of May 7, 2018. The program was registered in the Unified State Information System of Accounting for Scientific Research, Research, Development and Technological Works of Civil Purpose (Registration № AAAA-F19-619070900024-2 of August 15, 2019). Exemplary program for education. – 2020. – URL: <https://cutt.ly/W2NNc8p>

- *“formation of the all-Russian identity, patriotism, civic-mindedness, social responsibility, legal self-awareness, commitment to the basic values of our people”;*
- *“development of students’ understanding of the priority of overall national interests, adherence to legal principles enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the legislation of the Russian Federation”⁶⁶.*

In the textbooks and methodological recommendations for the teachers of the mentioned subjects, a reasonably significant list of narratives was found which have a high potential for the complex and consistent formation of the “Russian identity” among Ukrainian children who remain under occupation or have been deported to the Russian Federation. Children have imposed on the idea that they are, in fact, representatives of this identity, a part of the Russian people. Moreover, being a part of the Russian people means loving Russia, being proud of Russian military heroism, and being ready to defend its interests, even at the cost of one’s own life.

Russian ethnos – the basis of the unity of the Russian people

In most of the analyzed textbooks on both subjects, their authors included a significant array of information united by the idea of centrality of the Russian ethnos. The materials state that Russian people are multinational and multicultural; however, Russia’s existence is only possible if Russian ethnos takes a central place in it, the language and cultural traditions of which should be known and promoted by all other peoples as if they were their own. The imposition of such a narrative on Ukrainian children aims to destroy and make it impossible for them to form their own Ukrainian and cultural identities.

Thus, in the texts of elementary school textbooks, the following quotes can be seen quite often: *“Many peoples live in our country, they have their native language, their national culture, and traditions. However, all of them should know the Russian language – the state language of Russia and the culture of the Russian people”⁶⁷, or “the Russian language [...] unites all peoples living in our country, holds our fraternal family together”⁶⁸. The authors of the textbooks for elementary school repeatedly prove to students that the presence of a common dominator, such as the Russian language and culture, will inevitably lead to the unity of peoples, and therefore, to the strength of Russia and accordingly – to the sense of affiliation with this strength. For example, such a chain of thoughts can be found in elementary school textbooks: *“Each of them [note. peoples of Russia] has their own native region and language. In order to communicate with each**

66 Model work program for the basic secondary general education “Social Studies” for 6-9 grades // Institute for Strategy of Educational Development of the Russian Academy of Education, 2021. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220817004617/https://edsoo.ru/download/251/?hash=f306700666dcb83570e45106f05802e6>, p. 4

67 Vinogradova N. F. The World Around Us 3-4 grades: Teaching manual / N. F. Vinogradova. - Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2019. - 223 p. - (3), p. 202

68 The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship. Golden Book of the Russian People, 4th grade: Textbook / A. Tishkov, S. N. Rudnik, V. I. Vlasenko, O. N. Zhuravliova. - Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2022. - (2), p. 22

other, they chose the Russian language. Because all of them are citizens of Russia"⁶⁹ ➔ "All citizens of Russia are Russians; those who consider our great country their Motherland"⁷⁰ ➔ "The greatness of Russia lies in the strong friendship of all peoples living in it!"⁷¹ ➔ "their [note. peoples of Russia] common homeland is the great country Russia"⁷²,

Subsequently, the author of the textbooks on both subjects explains the pages of one of them why exactly the thesis about unity and friendship is so important: "Until we begin to affirm the concept of the "Russian people" alongside with the concept of the "peoples of Russia" nothing good will come out of it. It is not about turning Tatars or Buryats into Russians. The objecting of the responsible experts, scientists, and pedagogies are to patiently and persistently explain that "Russianness" as identity and the Russian people-nation is not a result of the internal unification but a natural layering of a wider historical and cultural, social, and political identity on numerous internal ethnocultural differences, which exist among the population of the country"⁷³.

In the textbooks, the idea of the Strategy of state national policy of the Russian Federation⁷⁴, which is directly mentioned on their pages, received further development: "this document of the strategic planning recognizes the multinational people of the Russian Federation as a Russian civil nation and at the same time notes the leading role of the Russian people in creation and preservation of the Russian sovereignty and the Russian culture"⁷⁵.

As a result of such unity and friendship inside Russian there should be actual "voluntary" refusal to exercise the right to self-determination by all peoples, except the Russian one. That is, in the textbook on a subject "social Studies" for high school, you can find thoughts that try to form such an idea among the students in schools: "[...] the civic nation is destroyed, when during the process of building the state, **ethnic separatism** fails to be overcome. A political (civic) nation is not born from ethnic nations. The national unity [...] is supported not by ethnic grounds, but with by more significant connections and interests [...] an important role is played by patriotism as a feeling, affiliation with own country, which is called Homeland", or "It is important to note that nowadays the legal registration of the right to national self-determination practically does not accept ethnic, cultural or linguistic differences as grounds for the exercise of this right"⁷⁶.

In other words, the narrative aims to force Ukrainian children – participants of the Russian educational process who do not belong to the Russian ethnic group, to consider themselves Russian people according to the "common standards".

69 Vakhrushchev A. A. The World Around Us, 2nd grade, Part 2: Textbook / A. A. Vakhrushchev, O. V. Burskiy, A. S. Rautian. - Moscow: Balass. - 128 p. - (4), p. 84

70 Vakhrushchev A. A. The World Around Us, 3rd grade, Part 2: Textbook / A. A. Vakhrushchev, D. D. Danilov, E. V. Sizova. - Moscow: Balass, 2015 - 144 p. - (4), p. 142

71 Ibid, p. 125

72 Ibid, p. 129

73 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 8th grade: Textbook/ L. N. Bogolyubov, A. Y. Lazebnikova, N. I. Gorodetskaya. - Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2014. - 255 p., p. 124.

74 The strategy of the national state policy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025. URL: <https://archive.ph/Or5PY>.

75 Social Studies, 10th grade: Textbook/ V. A. Tishkov, R. S. Grinberg, G. E. Korolyova, O. B. Soboleva. - Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2020. - 415 p., p. 237.

76 Ibid, p. 230-231

Russian Federation is the Fatherland

In continuation to the thesis of denying the right of other peoples within Russia and on the territories occupied by it for self-determination, language, and culture, the Russian Federation artificially form in the minds of Ukrainian children the vision of Russia as **their** homeland, which is not the case. The imposition of this idea allows making the process of annexation of the Ukrainian territories easier because if the Russian Federation is children's homeland, there is nothing to express disagreement against of.

It is noteworthy that the narrative is primarily revealed during teaching the subject "The World Around Us" for elementary school, and while the course "Social Studies" it is only sharpened and deepened. It shows that they are trying to impose the general idea as early as possible so it would be more difficult to eradicate or change over time. For example, during the teaching of the subject "The World Around Us" the following topics and sections are expected to be studied: *"From where the Motherland begins"*⁷⁷, *"Russia is our Motherland"*, *"Our country Russia"*, *"We are Russians"*, *"Russia is your Motherland"*, *"What does Motherland mean?"*⁷⁸. In the same way, similar topics are developed during the lessons of "Social Studies": *"Why do people love their Motherland?"*, *"Our Motherland - Russia"*⁷⁹.

In addition to the textbooks, teachers are offered the relevant methodological manuals for each textbook, which help to organize the process of learning in a high-quality and effective way. The objective of the mentioned topics and sections, according to the methodology, in particular of the subject "The World Around Us", implies students obtaining and understanding: *"the elements of the civic identity, their ethnic affiliation in the form of self-awareness as a member of the family, a representative of the nation, a citizen of Russia"*, and *"a sense of empathy and pride for their Homeland, nation, history"*, which should be manifested *"as a general emotional spirit of the lesson"*⁸⁰.

During the presentation of the related material, the authors of the methodology draw teacher's attention to the "receptivity" of students to such a narrative at this age, which definitely must be used for achieving the mentioned results: *"In terms of its psychological characteristics, the period of elementary school age is most favorable for the education of patriotism because students of elementary school trust an adult, they are characterized by imitation, suggestibility, emotional responsiveness, sincerity of feelings"*⁸¹.

As one example, it is recommended for teachers to offer children to sing the national anthem of Russia during the lessons and ask them how exactly they understand what Motherland means. In this way, children, as if "independently", begin to form relevant conclusions, although, a peculiar imposition of ideas, contained in the textbooks, takes

77 Vakhrushchev A.A. The World Around Us, 3rd grade, Part 2: Textbook / A. A. Vakhrushchev, D. D. Danilov, E. V. Sizova. - Moscow: Balass, 2015 - 144 p. - (4), p. 16

78 Vinogradova N. F. The World Around Us 1-2 grades: Teaching manual / N. F. Vinogradova. - Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2019. - 358 p., p. 213-214, 288-291.

79 Nikitin A. F. Social Studies, 7th grade: Textbook/ A. F. Nikitin, T. I. Nikitina. - Moscow: Drofa, 2019. - 174 p., p. 35

80 Samkova V. A. Teaching manual for the textbook by V.A. Samkova, N. I. Romanova The World Around Us, 2nd grade / V. A Samkova, E. A. Grineva. - Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2020. - 208 p., p. 161, 164, 180, 184, 195.

81 Ibid, p. 181, 195-196, 198.

place. In addition, it is offered to familiarize children with various patriotic poems, which helps to consolidate the mentioned narrative. For example:

*“[...] Russia, Russia, Russia, - what can be dearer to a heart
[...] Russia, Russia, Russia – in grief and in happiness, we are with you! Russia!
[...] And if they violate the borders, We will rouse to defend you!
[...] And if we were suddenly asked: «Why is your country dear to you?»
[...] Because Russia is like a mother – one and only for all of us!”⁸²*

Subsequently, the narrative regarding the attitude to Russia as the Motherland during the teaching of the subject “Social Studies” for the secondary school is presented as a fact: *“According to the research, for young people patriotism means love, devotion and loyalty to their Motherland, readiness to do anything for their Motherland”⁸³.*

The methodology of teaching and the educational materials for the course defines a significant role of a teacher in forming the opinion of Russia as their Motherland among children of elementary school. Teachers should not only formally convey the content of textbooks. However, they also should think through and, considering children’s age, use various tools that can effectively influence their consciousness and help form the required worldview.

The result of such “education” for Ukrainian children on the occupied territories and those deported to Russia is the children’s loss of awareness of their true roots and connection with their real Motherland – Ukraine. The upbringing of at least one such generation can seriously complicate the reintegration of the occupied territories and the return of children who were deported. Moreover, the Russian Federation can use the generation of children with correspondingly formed worldviews as the instrument of influence not only on the internal political processes in Ukraine but also to carry out direct aggression against Ukraine.

Being a patriot, but not a nationalist

On the pages of the textbooks for both subjects, it is possible to detect the formation of the narrative that patriotism is a positive phenomenon while nationalism is a negative one. This complements the formation of the mentioned narrative regarding the attitude to the Russian Federation as to own Motherland among children since the textbooks explain quite clear the idea of patriotism and how it should be manifested. As an example, the following quotes can be cited:

“It [note. patriotism] is not even a feeling, it is the most important aspect of the both personal and social culture of the spirit, when a person and the whole nation sort of rise above themselves, set super-personal goals for themselves”⁸⁴, “The highest manifestation of civic-mindedness is patriotism – a high, innermost feeling of love and devotion to the Fatherland. [...] Patriotism is love. And love is a sublime and deeply personal feeling. Love is the pinnacle of a moral attitude toward the one you love. And the main manifestation of love is selfless service”⁸⁵.

82 Ibid, p. 183, 196, 198

83 Pevtsova E. A. Social Studies, 7th grade: Textbook / E. A. Pevtsova, A. I. Kravchenko. – Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2014. – (2). p. 20

84 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 8th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov, A. Y. Lazebnikova, N. I. Gorodetskaya. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2014. – 255 p., p. 142

85 Ibid, p. 59

In parallel with such theses, “nationalism” is presented as a “*manifestation of nation’s weakness, and not its strength*”, which “*stems from [...] malice, hatred of other nations*”⁸⁶. Sometimes, in the textbooks, “nationalism” is explained as “*the ideology of the struggle for one’s state*”. However, over the time it “*combined with racism [...] and took the form of genocide*”⁸⁷.

It is unlikely that the implementation of such a distinction was a preparation of the population of the Russian Federation to accept of its armed aggression. Since nationalism as such does not necessarily imply chauvinism, discrimination, or hatred of other nations, except in its ultimate form, there is a possibility that the source of the distinction between the two concepts may be the inheritance of the policy of the Soviet Union, for which the struggle of the enslaved nations for their state formations was disadvantageous, and the creation of an association with the consonant word “Nazism”, which does not coincide with “nationalism” in terms of its meaning⁸⁸.

It can be confirmed by the fact that textbooks inherit the approach of the Soviet Union to the incorrect replacement of the term “Nazism” with “fascism”: “*fascist Germany, fascist forces, German fascists*”⁸⁹, which presumably aims to avoid the association of national-socialism with socialism in the USSR.

At first glance, it may seem that a different approach to terminology does not play an unique role since a negative attitude is formed toward chauvinism. At the same time, this narrative continues the idea of limiting the right to self-determination of other peoples in the Russian Federation and on the territory controlled by it because nationalism as a phenomenon is condemned. Accordingly, in the future, Ukrainian children involved in Russian education are unlikely to be able to express their position regarding the need to restore the state system of Ukraine.

For clarity, the following quote from the textbook on the subject “Social studies” for 8th grade can be cited: “*For the most part, weak nations, which try to preserve themselves with the help of nationalistic feelings and ideology, get infected with nationalism. However, the great nation, the nation with its great culture, must be kind, especially if the fate of a small nation is connected with it. The great nation should help the small nation to preserve itself, its language, its own culture*”⁹⁰. It is noteworthy that the quote extremely successfully describes the attitude of Russian towards Ukrainians and toward the people living in the territory of the Russian Federation when it’s trying to help

86 Ibid, p. 142

87 Social Studies, 10th grade: Textbook / V. A. Tishkov, R. S. Grinberg, G. E. Korolyova, O. B. Soboleva. – Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2020. – 415 p., p. 232

88 “Nationalism” // Encyclopedia of modern Ukraine. URL: <https://esu.com.ua/article-71080>; “Nationalism” // Britannica. URL: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/nationalism/European-nationalism>

89 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 8th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov, A. Y. Lazebnikova, N. I. Gorodetskaya. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2014. – 255 p., p. 73, 126;

The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship. Golden Book of the Russian People, 4th grade: Textbook/ A. Tishkov, S. N. Rudnik, V. I. Vlasenko, O. N. Zhuravlyova. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2022. – (2)., p. 63;

Vakhrushchev A. A. The World Around Us, 3rd grade, Part 2: Textbook/ A. A. Vakhrushchev, D. D. Danilov, E. V. Sizova. – Moscow: Balass, 2015 – 144 p. – (4)., p. 143

90 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 8th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov, A. Y. Lazebnikovqa, N. I. Gorodetskaya. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2014. – 255 p., p. 142

all “small peoples” to preserve themselves through learning the culture of the “great Russian people”.

Moreover, since the beginning of the aggression in 2014, the military and political leadership of the Russian Federation accused Ukrainian activists, politicians, and service members of nationalism and Nazism. In 2022, the President of the Russian Federation declared that the “de-Nazification” of the Ukrainian population is one of the objectives of the aggression against Ukraine. At the same time, the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine occurs precisely because Ukrainians are trying to defend their statehood.

It is pretty likely that the result of the implementation of this narrative on the occupied territories can already be seen today in the context of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation in 2022 because, starting from 2014, some students were forced to complete most of the 11-year-long Russian school program. Accusing Ukrainians of nationalism and the necessity of conducting “de-Nazification” can be seen by them as a “logical” explanation of the reasons for aggression.

Defense of the Russian Federation and self-sacrifice for the benefit of the Russian Federation is a “sacred duty”

Military service in the Russian Federation is an integral element of achieving the occupation objectives, which the military and political leadership of the Russian Federation set for themselves, as evidenced by the numerous military conflicts the armed forces of the Russian Federation were involved in. Apparently, that is why the educational textbooks contain repeated references to the necessity of being ready for the armed defense of the interests of the Russian Federation, self-sacrifice for the sake of the Fatherland, which is a logical consequence of affiliation with the Russian people, and patriotic attitude towards the Russian Federation. Such narratives of Russian education prepare Ukrainian children to be involved in the Russian Federation’s armed conflicts in the ranks of the armed forces of the Russian Federation or on its side, including against Ukraine.

For example, on pages of the analyzed textbooks, it is proposed “to understand the essence and fullness of great patriotism – patriotism as a sense of duty to the nation, to the Motherland”⁹¹, or “such components of patriotism as «desire to connect one’s fate with own Motherland», “support of state policy”, “service in the army”⁹². It is the evidence of the unity of all the narratives mentioned above, aimed at forming in the minds of Ukrainian children of a strong sense of duty to defend the Russian Federation as “their” Motherland and, even, without second thoughts, to lay down their lives for it. The authors of the educational materials for two of the analyzed subjects pay significant attention to the period of the “Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945”. Quite often, the textbooks contain stand-alone sections, which, in short, historical perspective, try to demonstrate the heroism of struggles of the “friendly peoples” of the USSR against “fascists”. Sometimes it is possible to see various references to military feats, as examples of presenting other sections, different in terms of their content: “Thousands of peo-

91 Samkova V. A. Teaching manual for the textbook by V. A. Samkova, N. I. Romanova The World Around Us, 2nd grade / V. A. Samkova, E. A. Grineva. – Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2020. – 208., c. 198

92 Pevtsova E. A. Social Studies, 7th grade: Textbook / E. A. Pevtsova, A. I. Kravchenko. – Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2014. – (2), p. 20-21

ple voluntarily enlisted in the army. Your great-grandfather did the same thing – he was a young student at the university [...]. It was the graduation year of your great-grandfather [...]. Almost everyone you see went to fight against the enemies [...]. All the people of the Soviet Union came together to face a terrible danger”⁹³.

Amid the numerous references to the “Patriotic War”, the Ribbon of St. George, as well as calls to participate in the march of the “Immortal Regiment”, are demonstrated as the associative symbols of these events⁹⁴. Here it is important to note that the Russian Federation draws a parallel between the events of 1941-1945 and the armed conflict in Ukraine, where the Russian Federation represents the USSR, and the Russian soldiers wear St. George’s ribbons on their uniform. In such a way, a false parallel of the supposedly “righteous war” is drawn, where the Russian Federation fights against the “Nazis” in Ukraine. As a result, after learning such material, it will be easier for Ukrainian children to accept the aggression against Ukraine and even to support it.

In its turn, this is not the only war that glorifies the Russian army’s heroism on the textbooks’ pages. For example, the content of the textbook for the 3rd grade on the subject “The World Around Us” implies familiarization of children with “*heroic pages of history [...] of the Motherland*”: «*Victory over the Swedish invaders. Victory over the Swedes. Kulikovo battle. The Patriotic War of 1812. The Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*»⁹⁵. Another textbook – “The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship” for the 4th grade – contains 42 pages about the Russian military feats during the times of “patriotic” wars⁹⁶. Such examples and constant imposition of the thesis about the “patriotic wars” can contribute to the formation of the ideas in children’s minds that war against Ukraine can also be considered “patriotic”, that is, aimed at the “defense of the Russian Federation”, which contributes to the formation of the narrative about the supposedly “righteous war”.

After getting familiarized with numerous examples of military valor and mentions of heroic wars, children are offered open questions in junior and senior classes. Their peculiarity is that after constant examples of “righteous wars”, a child, in one way or another, can come to conclusions which will contribute to the continuation of wars, military build-up, and even personal participation in such events. Although the following examples are not preemptively answered, and the textbooks contain theses that war is not the way of solving modern problems, it is quite likely that students may develop more militant beliefs, or at least not consider it categorically unacceptable:

93 Vakhrushchev A. A. The World Around Us, 3rd grade, Part 2: Textbook / A. A. Vakhrushchev, D. D. Danilov, E. V. Sizova. – Moscow: Balass, 2015 – 144 p. – (4), p. 101

94 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 6th grade: Textbook/ L. N. Bogolyubov. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2020. – 159 p., p. 151;

Tishkov A. The world Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship. Celebration of Friendship, 1st grade: Textbook/ A. Tishkov, E. A. Naidyonova, O. N. Zhuravlyova. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2022. – 126 p., p. 80

95 Vinogradova N. F. The World Around Us, 3-4 grades: Teaching manual / N. F. Vinogradova. – Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2019. – 223 p. – (3), p. 189

96 The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship. Golden Book of the Russian People, 4th grade: Textbook / A. Tishkov, S. N. Rudnik, V. I. Vlasenko, O. N. Zhuravlyova. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2022. – 141 p. – (2), p. 142-144

“The Russian Empire fought many wars. Do you think it is possible to solve any problems with the help of war nowadays?”⁹⁷, “Compare two opinions and formulate your attitude to them [...]. H. Grotius [...] tried to justify the principles of preserving peace and waging “righteous” wars with the fact that it is required for the self-defense of the country. [...] any violence should have its limit and be proportionate to the objectives. [...] N. Machiavelli considered war a natural state that prevents an attack from outside and impacts the expansion of influence on neighboring countries: «The desire to acquire is a natural and ordinary thing»”⁹⁸.

Even though teachers can try to direct students to the perception of the ideas of the first philosopher, in light of the long-term aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and the constant “expansion of influence”, the view of Machiavelli can be presented as not devoid of sense, especially with the help of the thesis of Grotius regarding the “right to self-defense”. It is important to emphasize that textbooks direct students and teachers to forming of such a view: *“Give examples of the conflicts between the peoples, the oppression of some peoples by other ones in different periods of history”⁹⁹, “Name the political events of the recent times, which made you happy and which made you upset. Explain why”¹⁰⁰.*

The given examples of heroic wars and attempts to form children’s attitude towards war as a phenomenon, which is not that negative, is a prerequisite for encouraging children to fulfill their military duty to the Russian Federation, including on their “own” will. It closely borders with the essence of patriotism, as it is presented in the school programs. Therefore all the narratives belong to the general complex narrative, which has a general objective. The military duty itself is presented as one that lies in the nature of the “Russian man”: *“At all times, for all generations of Russians, their main duty was the duty to the Fatherland. And their honorable duty was the duty to devote all their strength, all of themselves, to serving the Fatherland. In this, Russian people saw the meaning of their lives, in this, they drew strength to overcome the hardships and adversities during the difficult times”¹⁰¹, “In times of war, it is the duty of every man to stand up for the defense of his Fatherland. This duty is called the sacred one.”¹⁰².*

In addition, for students in high school, military service is presented as a social elevator, which can help a person to find his or her own place in society, “rise” in social status and get greater benefits¹⁰³.

97 Vakhrushchev A. A. The World Around Us, 3rd grade, Part 2: Textbook / A. A. Vakhrushchev, D. D. Danilov, E. V. Sizova. – Moscow: Balass, 2015 – 144 p. – (4), p. 72

98 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 9th grade: Textbook / Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2021. – 224 c. – (3), p. 63

99 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 6th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2020. – 159 p., p. 130

100 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 9th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2021. – 224 p. – (3), p. 9

101 Nikitin A. F. Social Studies, 7th grade: Textbook / A. F. Nikitin, T. I. Nikitina. – Moscow: Drofa, 2019. – 174 p., p. 136

102 Nikitin A. F. Social Studies, 5th grade: Textbook / A. F. Nikitin, T. I. Nikitina. – Moscow: Drofa, 2018. – 173 p. – (7), p. 69

103 Kotova O. A. Social Studies, 8th grade: Textbook / O. A. Kotova, T. E. Liskova. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2019. – 80 p., p. 65

Tishkov V.A. Social Studies, 10th grade: Textbook / V. A. Tishkov, R. S. Grinberg, G. E. Korolyova, O. B. Soboleva. – Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2020. – 415 p., p. 206

For those children who still oppose the “nature of the Russian person” and even the material and social success, the textbooks emphasize the risk of legal responsibility and social condemnation for such behavior: “[note. the state] *applies various measures of influence to a person who does not fulfill one’s civic duties. But is it only the fear of punishment that should keep the public order? [...] Deliberate and faithful fulfillment of one’s duties [...] that gradually becomes a habit [...] – these are the main civil qualities [...] the virtues that are so much needed today*”¹⁰⁴, or “*And if a citizen received call-up papers, but evaded conscription for military service or training without a valid reason? Then this person is criminally liable*”¹⁰⁵.

Almost immediately after forming in the children’s minds the idea of the necessity to fulfill the military duty, for more effective consolidation of the narratives and imitation of the deeds, the authors of the textbooks provide specific examples of the implementation of the “sacred duty” by children borrowed from the period of the “Great Patriotic War”. For example, students of 4th and 6th grades are offered to research how kids and students “*contributed to the defense of the Fatherland*”¹⁰⁶, they are told about the participation of children in the military events of that time: “*At the age of fourteen and a half he commanded a course of cadets, and at the age of seventeen he was a commander of a separate regiment*”¹⁰⁷, or “*In the ranks of the partisans there were children as well. The guys did not want the boots of fascist invaders to trample on their native land. [...] Young partisans made excellent liaisons and scouts*”¹⁰⁸, or “*In 1942, the 13-year-old [...] became a soldier of a partisan detachment. [...] He fought his last battle there*”¹⁰⁹.

Since life is the most significant value, war is instinctively seen as a threat, therefore, even having patriotic feelings, a person is not always ready for military service. In order to reduce the potential of such an instinct, the textbooks continuously emphasize that self-sacrifice in conditions of war is specifically honorable, and that is why fear should not stop a person. In the textbooks, this narrative is formed as a generalized idea: “*there is a special spiritual value, for the sake of which people are ready for any sacrifices, – it is patriotism – love for the Motherland*”¹¹⁰, “*It is necessary that the Motherland would be more precious than ourselves*”¹¹¹, as well as on the level of specific examples, which should prepare children for the similar role model: “*The pilot fearlessly directed the burning plane towards the concentration of enemy vehicles and tanks with gasoline.*”

104 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 9th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2021. – 224 p. – (3), p. 15-16

105 Pevtsova E. A. Social Studies, 7th grade: Textbook / E. A. Pevtsova, A. I. Kravchenko. – Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2014. – (2), p. 108

106 Pleshakov A. A. The World Around Us, 4th grade, Part 2: Workbook / A. A. Pleshakov, M. Y. Novitskaya. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2015. – 79 p. – (5), p. 46

107 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 6th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2020. – 159 p., p. 123

108 The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship. Golden Book of the Russian People, 4th grade: Textbook / A. Tishkov, S. N. Rudnik, V. I. Vlasenko, O. N. Zhuravlyova. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2022. – (2), p. 60-61

109 Ibid, p. 60-61

110 Pevtsova E. A. Social Studies, 7th grade: Textbook / E. A. Pevtsova, A. I. Kravchenko. – Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2014. – (2), p. 20-21

111 Nikitin A. F. Social Studies, 7th grade: Textbook / A. F. Nikitin, T. I. Nikitina. – Moscow: Drofa, 2019. – 174 p., p. 41

They exploded along with the hero's plane. During the years of war, 327 crews did the same"¹¹², and "Kokorin was closely encircled by the enemies, they wanted to take the soldier prisoner. With his last grenade, he blew himself and the Nazis up"¹¹³.

Same as in the case of the formation of children's attitude to war, in the process of discussing the open questions, questions about self-sacrifice are also offered so the child can independently explain why it is essential. For example, the following can be found on the pages of the textbooks for 4-5 grades: *"Why are soldiers ready to die for the sake of protection of their Fatherland?"¹¹⁴, "Tell us about the heroes, [...] who defended their Fatherland. Why were they not afraid to sacrifice their own lives for it?"¹¹⁵.*

The constant and methodical formation of the distorted vision of war as an instrument of solving numerous societal problems, the introduction of the idea of "sacred duty", and readiness to fulfill it through self-sacrifice indicates a high level of militarization of the educational process in the Russian Federation. The aggressive promotion of the mentioned narratives and absorption by children not only contradicts the generally accepted principles of peaceful coexistence but also leads to the violation of international law, to which the third chapter of this research will be devoted.

These narratives are implemented in the occupied territories of Ukraine and in the Russian Federation for deported children. In combination, these narratives are highly likely to cause the escalation of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, not only by the Russian military but also the population of Ukraine. In fact, this can currently be seen in Donetsk and Luhansk regions after 2014. Thanks to such an education, the Russian Federation can easily mobilize "yesterday's" Ukrainian children in the occupied territories of Ukraine to fight against their own people. Moreover, even minor age may not be an obstacle due to the formed positive attitude and respect for the deeds of children who came to "defend the Motherland" and sacrificed their own lives.

The importance of meddling of the Russian federation in the affairs of the "CIS countries"

Simultaneously with the formation of readiness for the fulfillment of the military duty and defense of the Russian Federation, as the Fatherland, and the Russian people, in some educational materials, arguments for children why the Russian Federation should meddle in the affairs of the "countries of the former USSR", "CIS countries" can be found, and also the "reasons" that should justify the start of the armed conflicts are presented. As a result, a child can become entirely unprepared to resist such narratives, as school prepares a child's consciousness for the perception of "reality".

At the same time, it is essential to note that this narrative is rare to be seen. Although all the analyzed materials were published after 2014, this narrative also does not ex-

112 Vinogradova N. F. The World Around Us, 3-4 grades: Teaching manual / N. F. Vinogradova. - Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2019. - 223 p. - (3), p. 200

113 Ibid, p. 200

114 Ibid, p. 197

115 Nikitin A. F. Social Studies, 5th grade: Textbook / A. F. Nikitin, T. I. Nikitina. - Moscow: Drofa, 2018. - 173 p. - (7), p. 143

plain the reasons of the occupation and annexation of Crimea, and any references to this event are episodic and generalized, such as: *“Crimea is a part of great Russia”*¹¹⁶.

The central aspect of the revealed narrative is the relations between the Russian Federation and the neighboring countries. Emphasis is made on the “inter-ethnic conflicts”, where there is no single reference to the meddling of the Russian Federation in the relations of the neighboring sovereign countries, in particular, by military force: *“Bloody conflicts did not bypass the territory of the former USSR in the past two decades. The most serious among them are: Azerbaijani-Armenian, Georgian-Abkhazian, and Georgian-Ossetian. The main cause for the emergence of the inter-ethnic conflicts in the CIS is the erroneous and sometimes criminal national policy in the preceding years”*¹¹⁷.

As one of the causes of the “inter-ethnic conflict” the violation of human rights is mentioned, *“for example, the discrimination of the Russian-speaking population in the CIS and Baltic countries”*¹¹⁸.

Such a definition of the causes of the conflict allows the Russian Federation to include it in the narrative mentioned above that one should not be a “nationalist”, which means one should not fight for one’s self-determination and own state, and that it is better to be a part of something bigger, for example USSR, CIS, Russia. Although there is no direct reference to the aggression against Ukraine in this context, for Russia, the armed conflict in Ukraine is nothing else but the “inter-ethnic” conflict caused by the “discrimination” of the Russian-speaking population, which can be seen in the statements of the military and political leadership of the Russian Federation.

As a part of the statements mentioned above, the textbooks offer students to try to answer a number of questions, the answers to which apparently should form the impression that the relations of the Russian Federation with the neighboring countries are tense, and inside those countries, there are significant economic issues and “inter-ethnic conflicts”, which are not inherent in the Russian Federation and the USSR *“Russia and the CIS countries: how are their relations developing nowadays?”*¹¹⁹, *“After the liquidation of the Soviet government, residents of the former republics of the Soviet Union actively began to move to the territory of Russia. What ethnic processes can we talk about in this case?”*¹²⁰.

Such theses prepare students’ minds for the perception of the dominant role of the Russian Federation in the fate of, at least, “the countries of USSR, CIS”, the specific names of which are not mentioned, and also to the idea of constant expansion of control and influence of the Russian Federation on them. In fact, this is an attempt to establish and legitimize imperialism as the essential nature of the Russian Federation as the state.

116 Tishkov A. The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship. Celebration of Friendship, 1st grade: Textbook / A. Tishkov, E. A. Naidyonova, O. N. Zhuravlyova. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2022. – 126 p., p. 98

117 Nikitin A. F. Social Studies, 8th grade: Textbook / A. F. Nikitin, T. I. Nikitina. – Moscow: Drofa, 2016. – 253 p. – (3), p. 128

118 Social Studies, 10th grade: Textbook / V. A. Tishkov, R. S. Grinberg, G. E. Korolyova, O. B. Soboleva. – Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2020. – 415 p., p. 236, 238

119 Nikitin A. F. Social Studies, 8th grade: Textbook / A. F. Nikitin, T. I. Nikitina. – Moscow: Drofa, 2016. – 253 p. – (3), p. 131

120 Social Studies, 10th grade: Textbook / V. A. Tishkov, R. S. Grinberg, G. E. Korolyova, O. B. Soboleva. – Moscow: Ventana-Graf, 2020. – 415 p., p. 236, 238

As a result, children stop seeing the aggressive behavior of the Russian Federation, aimed at seizing territories and destruction of other peoples, as something that does not comply with basic human principles. In general, pages of the textbooks do not hide it: *“For many centuries, Russia kept expanding its borders. The development of huge territories was a joint business of people of different nationalities”*¹²¹.

Mastering such an imperialistic approach contributes to children’s positive attitude toward the military conquests of the Russian Federation. This approach also helps to form the mentioned narrative regarding the need of continuous armed defense for the Russian Federation from the “external aggressors”.

However, in the modern world, it is sometimes quite challenging to justify the direct conquests of the Russian Federation, even with the mentioned theses. It can be seen on the example of the creation by the Russian Federation of paramilitary formations on the territory of Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine, the control over which the Russian Federation denies. That is precisely why the position is formed on the pages of the textbooks, that in order to fulfill the Russian imperial ambitions, the so-called “soft power” is used at first, when one state is being imposed values of the other, in various ways without the direct meddling, in particular, military interference: *“For Russia, it is more important to «acquire» moral influence on other countries, without meddling in their governance, internal affairs, and political relations but trying to dispel mistrust and establish strong relations through peaceful and trade relations in order to be able to protect the safety of our citizens”*¹²².

And if the “soft power” turns out to be not enough, the authors of textbooks offer to think about the other methods of achieving the dominant role of the Russian Federation in the world, in particular through the use of military force: *“in certain circumstances, such an interference [in the internal policy of the other state] takes place, if it is about the threat of international terrorism, the development of chemical, nuclear, bacteriological and other weapons of mass destruction. Such causes, in exceptional cases, serve as grounds for actions aimed at preventing expansion to the entire region or beyond the borders of the belligerents”*¹²³.

In the last two mentioned quotes, it can be found the motives of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine since February 24, 2022, since the leadership of the Russian Federation claims that the armed aggression of the Russian Federation was “preventive” and aimed at *“protection of the safety of citizens of the Russian Federation”*¹²⁴ from “the attack of Ukraine on the Russian Federation”, which was about to happen in the nearest time due to possible future accession of Ukraine to NATO, and also imply the “use of biological and chemical weapons”, which, according to the statements of the Russian Federation, were detected en masse in the “laboratories” on the occupied territories of Ukraine¹²⁵.

121 The World Around Us. Peoples of Russia: Path of Friendship. Golden Book of the Russian People, 4th grade: Textbook / A. Tishkov, S. N. Rudnik, V. I. Vlasenko, O. N. Zhuravlyova. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2022. – (2)., p. 30

122 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 9th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2021. – 224 p. – (3)., p. 60

123 Ibid, p. 60

124 Ibid, p. 60

125 Publications on “RIA News” in the social media “Telegram” of March 9-10, 2022. URL: <https://archive.ph/Dn85b>, <https://archive.ph/uJ7Vh>

In summary, it can be said that Ukrainian children who remain on the occupied territories or have been deported to the Russian Federation are being imposed on the imperial narrative that justifies the aggressive policy against Ukraine, which is allegedly caused by the necessity to stop the “inter-ethnic conflict”, and “protection of the Russian Federation from the military threats from Ukraine”. They are convinced of the need to limit the rights of Ukrainians to self-determination and to establish control over the state of Ukraine, which is “not capable” of existing independently.

The history of Rus and the figures on the territory of modern Ukraine is the exclusive historical, cultural, and scientific heritage of the Russian Federation

One of the ways to eradicate the identity is to deny the existence of culture, history, and sovereignty associated with a specific people. Accordingly, the persistence of a nation's existence and development is critical, especially for children who learn about it for the first time. For Ukrainian children, such persistence is mainly related to the history of Kyivan Rus, the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia, the era of Cossacks, etc. At the same time, the continuous existence of the Ukrainian people in a time when the modern territory of Ukraine was controlled by the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Poland, Osman Empire, and Russian Empire is also meaningful.

In this context, different approaches to teaching the history of Rus exist. One of them is based on the fact that the history of Rus is a common heritage of Ukraine, Belarus, and the Russian Federation. Without delving deeply into the historical research, which is not a subject of the evaluation of this work, the Russian Federation presents its history in the textbooks starting from the times of Rus. On the pages of both subjects that were analyzed, historical information is often presented, which goes beyond the actual names of the subjects. Most part of the textbook is sometimes devoted to this, particularly on the subject “The World Around Us”.

The problem with the Russian approach of the textbooks' pages is that the history of Rus is presented exclusively as the history of Russia. There was no place for Ukrainian history in these textbooks, even though this history took place on the territory of modern Ukraine.

In addition, the material in the textbooks is presented in such a way as if the history of Rus, all its figures, its achievements, and language are precisely “Russian”: *“The Grand Dukes of Kyiv created the first laws of the Old Russian State”*¹²⁶, *“...because we are in the XII century. Back then, the alphabet was noticeably different from the modern one. We call it Old Russian alphabet”*¹²⁷, *“The author of this «Tale» [note. the Tale of Igor's Campaign] – is the great Old Russian poet, unknown to us”*¹²⁸, *“Among the books, which were published by the I. Fyodorov, there was the first Russian «Alphabet book»”*¹²⁹.

126 Vakhrushchev A. A. The World Around Us, 3rd grade. Part 2: Textbook / A. A. Vakhrushchev, D. D. Danilov, E. V. Sizova. – Moscow: Balass, 2015 – 144 p. – (4), p. 31

127 Ibid, p. 35

128 Ibid, p. 44

129 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 6th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov. – Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2020. – 159 p., p. 77

In the given examples, the Russian Federation presents the history of the “Russian state” and the history of Russia, while the very concepts, such as “Russia”, “Russian”, “Russian language”, “Russian writer” did not exist at all. This way of presenting the information without explaining the word “Russian” (“ancient Russian”) is aimed at establishing the narrative, according to which the history of Rus is exclusively the history of what is now called the Russian Federation.

The further history of the territory of modern Ukraine after the fall of Kyivan Rus is not being studied, and is seen as Russia’s history since it is the territory of the “Russian state”. Such a one-sided and distorted approach can result in Ukrainian children “naturally” seeing Ukrainian as an artificial nation, which had no own history and language, and therefore it will be easier for them to believe in theses that Ukraine “was created by Austria-Hungary or by V. I. Lenin”. Moreover, if the residents of the occupied territories agree that the population of Ukraine is Russians, who must be liberated, if Ukrainian children see themselves as Russians, this will become a severe auxiliary factor in achieving the objective of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

In addition to this, the figures who carried out their activity in the ties of the Russian Empire on the territory of modern Ukraine are considered exclusively Russian, even though from the point of view of modern historiography, at least, there can be doubts regarding the identity of certain figures, which can be considered Ukrainian: *“From the legacy of the Russian philosopher V. V. Zenkovsky”, “V. I. Vernadsky... the Russian scientist”, “...in Russia, there was a pleiad of jurists ... Among them, we can name... B. A. Kistyakovsky”*¹³⁰.

In this way, children form a permanent idea that Ukraine had no own history, figures and state building. As a result of this deported Ukrainian children, and Ukrainian children in the occupied territories cannot trace the long history of formation and development of Ukraine on its modern territories. It also applies to the students’ actual place of residence on the occupied territory of Ukraine, which in their historical consciousness begins to form as “originally Russian land” which can belong only to one modern state – the Russian Federation.

130 Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 8th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov, A. Y. Lazebnikova, N. I. Gorodetskaya. - Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2014. - 255 p., p. 79
Bogolyubov L. N. Social Studies, 9th grade: Textbook / L. N. Bogolyubov. - Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2021. - 224 p. - (3), p. 28, 134

B | “FUNDAMENTALS OF RELIGIOUS CULTURES AND SECULAR ETHICS” AND “FUNDAMENTALS OF SPIRITUAL AND MORAL CULTURE OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA”

“Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” and **“Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”** are subject areas that consist of two courses – a mandatory course for students of 4th grade “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” and an optional course for students of 5th grade “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia”, which is a logical continuation of the previous course.

The federal list of 2014 determines that in order to master the mandatory subject area “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics”, students of 4th grade will be offered textbooks on “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” and “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” respectively¹³¹. At the same time, the same list also implied the availability of the optional subject area “Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” for students in 5th grade, which offered textbooks with a similar name to the subject area for studying. In 2020 the federal list was changed in the part of the subject area “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics”, which now offered textbooks only with the name that corresponded to the name of the subject area, and the program of the course “Fundamentals of the Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia” for the 5th grade was expanded and extended to 9th grade inclusive¹³².

Within both study areas, the following textbooks are mandatory for study: “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures of the Peoples of Russia”, “Fundamentals of Orthodox Culture”, “Fundamentals of Judean Culture”, “Fundamentals of Buddhist Culture”, “Fundamentals of Islamic Culture”, “Fundamentals of World Religious Cultures” and “Fundamentals of Secular Ethics”. Accordingly, the choice of a textbook from both study areas for children with a mandatory indication of one of the “sub-subjects” is made at the request of parents or legal representatives of students¹³³.

The programs of the disciplines of both subject areas were developed following the recommendations of the “Federal state educational standard for elementary general and basic secondary general education”, as well as with corresponding recommendations of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

131 The order of the ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of March 31, 2014. N 253, 2014. URL: <https://archive.ph/7Pq2z>

132 The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation pf May 20, 2020. N 254, 2020. URL: <https://mo.mosreg.ru/download/document/8605117>, <https://archive.ph/aGhmt>, <https://archive.ph/pyu7r>

The order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation of December 23, 2020. N 766, 2020. URL: https://fpu.prosv.ru/docs/Prikaz_766_ot_23_12_2020_skan.pdf, <https://archive.ph/m6U5v>

133 Art. 87 of the Federal Law of December 29, 2012 N 273 “On Education in the Russian Federation”. URL: https://web.archive.org/web/20221126132132/https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_140174/0de7845187501423002e9572e4903056b41b3f7f/

Regarding their content and objective, the mentioned courses of the subject area “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” are similar. Therefore, within the scope of this research, the results of their analysis are jointly presented in this section.

- ▶ The general objective of both courses is to give a *“general idea about the historical and cultural traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church: the fundamentals of the Orthodox Christian religion, rites”*¹³⁴.
- ▶ In particular, among the main results, which should be achieved by children upon completion of both courses is the formation of a *“basic level of the citizen’s personality, a patriot, a bearer of values of the civil society, who is aware of own involvement in the fate of the Motherland, global problems of our time, own role in solving them, who respects values of other cultures, confessions, worldviews”* is listed¹³⁵.

The purpose, objectives, and accordingly, the content of the analyzed educational materials in general, promote the narratives regarding the so-called common Russian identity, which is based on the Russian language and culture, and the existence of which is continuously connected with the fulfillment of the civic duty of defending the Fatherland, that is, Russia. The promotion of such narratives, in particular, on the occupied territories of Ukraine, is primarily aimed at erasing the national identity of Ukrainian students, who are forced to study in the occupation schools, imposition of the all-Russian civic identity on them alongside the Russian language and culture and the sense of the necessity to fulfill the “civic duty”, in particular, with weapons in their hands.

In total, as a part of the research 7 textbooks for 4-6 grades and 9 teaching manuals for teachers of 4-9 grades were analyzed.

Patriotism and complete devotion to the Fatherland is the highest spiritual and moral value

Patriotic education is a multi-layered process, which consists of learning the history, traditions, and customs of the national, cultural, and ethnic society, and state. It aims to form respect, love, a tolerant attitude, and care for one’s people, culture, traditions, etc. Undoubtedly. Education on patriotic feelings towards one’s country is an essential component of children’s education. Meanwhile, the Russian Federation puts much narrower and more complex ideas in patriotic education, which can hardly be justified with patriotic education, and which lie in:

- blind and fanatic love for the state;
- unconditional loyalty and trust, which is expressed, among other things, through readiness to fight for the interests of the Russian Federation with weapons in one’s hands.

134 Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of Peoples of Russia. Fundamentals of Orthodox Culture: Textbook for 6th grade of the general educational organizations/ archpriest Victor Dorofeev, deacon Ilya Kokin, O. L. Yanushkyavichene, Y. S. Vasechko. – M.: “Russkoe slovo – uchebnik” LLC, 2016. – 160 p.: il. – (Innovation school), p. 3

135 Fundamentals of Secular Ethics: Teaching manual for the textbook of A. A. Shemshurin, N. M. Brunchukova, P. H. Dyomin and others Fundamentals of Secular Ethics. 4th grade / I. B. Katysheva, K. V. Savchenko, T. D. Shaposhnikova; edit by T. D. Shaposhnikova. – M.: Drofa, 2018. – 229 p. – (Russian textbook), p. 8

Such ideas which the Russian Federation puts in patriotic education and forcibly imposes on children living in the Ukrainian occupied territories, not only contradict the basic principles of ensuring the right to education but also lead to the destructive influence on the formation of the Ukrainian national identity among these children, their perception of Ukraine as their Motherland, and resulting in children's desire to join the armed forces of the Russian Federation.

Among the main issues of the patriotic education agenda in the Russian textbooks, the following ones are defined: *"Civic-mindedness as a feeling for Motherland, an unbreakable connection with the Fatherland, participation in its destiny"*¹³⁶. For example, the distribution of information in the table of contents in one of the textbooks from the course "Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics" for the 4th grade looks like this: around 60% of textbook material is devoted to the topic of patriotism, 25% - to ethnic values, and 15% - to the environment:

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Screenshot of the page of one of the analyzed textbooks¹³⁷

Other educational materials for the course "Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics" and "Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia" also contain similar dissemination of the volume of topics: information, which presents patriotism through general ideas of loyalty to the state and its defense as the main and only duty, always takes the most space in textbooks and teaching manuals.

136 Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics. Fundamentals of Secular Ethics. Teaching manual. 4th grade: manual for teachers of general, education organizations / A. I. Shemshurina. - M.: Prosveshcheniye, 2015. - 78 p., p. 17-18

137 Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics: Fundamentals of Secular Ethics. 4th grade: textbook for students of general educational organizations: v 2 p. 2 / N. F. Vinogradova. - 2nd edition., edited and updated. - M.: Ventana-Graf, 2016. - 144 p.: ill., - p. 144

In addition to such dissemination of topics, in particular, teaching manuals contain recommendations for teachers, in which direction lessons should be developed with the purpose of “high-quality coverage of texts of the textbooks and its effective learning by children”. Basically, their recommendations are presented in theses and as an option for developing the discussion during lessons. For example:

- ▶ *“Love for the Fatherland, for the Motherland can be compared only to the love of one’s parents – a father and a mother. The loss of the Motherland means the loss of a person’s dignity and happiness”¹³⁸.*
- ▶ *“The defense of the Fatherland is every citizen’s duty, one’s honorable responsibility. What helps a nation to endure in the era of adversity and challenges? «If the nation is united, it cannot be defeated». The examples of heroic feats of representatives of different peoples of Russia”¹³⁹.*
- ▶ *“The fundamentals of love for a mother and the Motherland. Common and special. A patriot, a citizen is a son of the Fatherland, its defender. Once a citizen grows up, the Motherland is calm. Basic concepts: patriot, patriotism, citizen, civic-mindedness, love, service, duty”¹⁴⁰.*

Such “recommendations” on the lessons’ organization not only contribute to the formation and strengthening of the child’s opinion regarding the image of Russia as one’s own Fatherland but also the necessity of its constant defense, particularly the armed defense.

In one of the textbooks, there was also a creative task for students to study the proverbs and sayings related specifically to the education of patriotic feelings: *“Cherish your Motherland like the apple of an eye. [...] In a foreign land, the Motherland is doubly dearer. [...] To live is to serve the Motherland. He who stands up for his Motherland is the true hero. [...] The main thing in one’s life is to serve the Fatherland”¹⁴¹.*

As a result of promoting the mentioned narratives, depending on children’s age, duration of their studies, and work with Russian educational materials, they can form or ingrain the uncharacteristic sense of affiliation with the Russian people and patriotic attitude to the Russian Federation as to their Fatherland. It can interfere with the formation of children’s Ukrainian identity or destroy it. In this way, forcible assimilation of Ukrainian children takes place, which in turn not only complicates the future re-integration of the occupied territories of Ukraine but also leads to the partial disappearance of the Ukrainian national group.

138 Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics: 4th grade: Teaching manual / N. F. Vinogradova. – M.: Ventana-Graf, 2015. – 184 p., p. 158

139 Ibid, p. 39-40

140 Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics. Fundamentals of Secular Ethics. Teaching manual. 4th grade: Manual for teachers of general educational organizations / A. I. Shemshurina. – M.: Prosveshcheniye, 2015. – 78 p., p. 29

141 Fundamentals of Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia: 5th grade: Methodological recommendations / N. F. Vinogradova. – M.: Ventana-Graf, 2018. – 64 p. : ill.. – (Russian textbook), p. 29-30

Heroization of the “Russian military feats” and readiness for self-sacrifice in war as the manifestation of patriotism

The fundamentals of patriotic education in the Russian textbooks for subjects of 4-6 grades are presented through examples of the feats of the participants of the “Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945” and other “patriotic wars”.

In particular, it can be found numerous creative tasks of the following nature for independent study or as a part of classwork: *“In addition, it is important to plan the group (or individual) work on the preparation of the messages about the feats of Russians in the years of the Great Patriotic War (including during the defense of Crimea), Hero Cities (including Sevastopol and Kerch) cities of military glory.”*¹⁴², or *“Individually for the next lesson: Prepare a message about the feats, committed by ordinary citizens in the name of their Motherland. Pick the illustrative materials for your presentation. It can be a story about the actions of partisans during the Patriotic War of 1812, about the heroes of the Great Patriotic War, about children-heroes, about the relatives of the students whose life was connected with the events of the XX century (veterans of war and labor)”*¹⁴³. It is clear from the content that in addition to the search for the Russians’ feats, it is offered to look for them in the occupied territories of Ukraine, which, in the perspective of Russian policy, is considered “originally Russian”. In this way, they are trying to instill the view among the Ukrainian children that the occupied territories never actually were Ukrainian.

The methodological recommendations for teachers on both subjects also suggest studying specifically military feats and their heroes as a way to learn about the fundamentals of religious and secular ethics and culture, particularly the concept of “patriotism”. Thus, at least 3 out of 4 methodological recommendations for the subject “Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” for the 4th grade contain examples of structuring the lesson through an emphasis on the topic of feats of individual figures during World War II: *“Topic: «When people unite». Program content: Defense of the Fatherhood is a duty of each citizen, one’s honorable responsibility. What helps people to endure during the era of adversity and challenges? [...] Examples of heroic deeds of the representatives of different Russian peoples. [...] In order to achieve “the best result”, teaching manuals offer teachers to conduct interactive discussions in class on the following topics: “«Soldiers of what nationalities participated in the Great Patriotic War and committed deeds?», «In the name of what did they lay down their lives?», Which qualities did they demonstrate during the war?”*¹⁴⁴.

142 Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics. Modules: Fundamentals of World Religious Cultures, Fundamentals of Secular Ethics: Methodological recommendations to the textbooks for 4th grade of general educational organizations (with examples of work programs). Teaching manual / N. I. Vorozheikina. - Smolensk: Association “21 century”, 2017. - 48 p., p. 26

143 Fundamentals of Secular Ethics. Teaching manual for the textbook of A. A. Shemshurin, N. M. Brunchukova, R. N. Dyomin and others “Fundamentals of Secular Ethics, 4th grade. / I. B. Katysheva, K. V. Savchenko, T. D. Shaposhnikova; edited by T. D. Shaposhnikova. - M.: Drofa, 2018. - 229 p. - (Russian textbook)., p. 163

144 Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics: 4th grade: teaching manual / N. F. Vinogradova. - M.: Ventana-Graf, 2015. - 184 p., p. 39-40

In addition to getting Ukrainian children accustomed to such phenomena as “war” and “Russian feats”, forming a positive or, at least, a neutral attitude to these concepts, the narratives of the textbooks encourage children to the formation of readiness to sacrifice their own lives during the fulfillment of patriotic duties. Among the examples, one of the chapters of the analyzed textbooks can be mentioned: *“Article of the Constitution of the Russian Federation on the defense of the Fatherland as a duty and obligation of a citizen. The Great Patriotic Victory is an example of the fulfillment of this duty by representatives of all peoples of Russia. The discussion of different points of view on the topic «How do we understand the article of the Constitution of the Russian Federation on citizen’s duty to defend the Fatherland?». Explanation of the proverbs «If the nation is united, it cannot be defeated», «They, to whom friendship is dear, they beat the enemy together».”*¹⁴⁵



Когда была Великая Отечественная война?

Готовность к самопожертвованию — качество героя-патриота

Началась Великая Отечественная война. На защиту Родины от фашистов встали мужчины и женщины, военные и штатские, взрослые и дети. Война потребовала от народа великих жертв, героизма и самопожертвования. Но никто не думал о себе, во имя свободы и независимости своей Отчизны отдавали жизнь миллионы россиян.

Screenshot of the page of one of the analyzed textbooks ¹⁴⁶;



Обсудим вместе. Какое чувство владело защитниками нашей Родины в годы Великой Отечественной войны? Почему советский народ победил фашистов?



Великая Отечественная война сплотила советских людей, раскрыла их патриотические чувства: солдаты самоотверженно сражались на полях войны, отдавали жизнь за Родину; работники тыла, не жалея сил, помогали воинам победить.

Screenshot of the page of one of the analyzed textbooks ¹⁴⁷.

After forming a patriotic feeling for the Russian Federation, the education militarizes

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 27

¹⁴⁶ Fundamentals of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics: Fundamentals of Secular Ethics: 4th grade : Textbook for students of general educational organizations : in 2 parts. Part 2 / N. F. Vinogradova. – 2nd edition edited and updated. – M.: Ventana-Graf, 2016. – 144 p.: ill., p. 47

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 56



Ukrainian children by giving numerous examples of “military valor in Russian patriotic wars”. As a result, Ukrainian children should conclude that self-sacrifice during the fulfillment of military duties is the highest manifestation of patriotism. It allows them to ideologically prepare Ukrainian children on the occupied territories for the armed confrontation with their state – Ukraine, either as a part of the Russian military formations or the ones controlled by the Russian Federation or to oppose Ukraine independently.

B | “FUNDAMENTALS OF LIFE SAFETY”

As the objective of the subject “**Fundamentals of Life Safety**” (“FLS”), the Russian authors defined the formation of the student’s knowledge and skills to recognize and avoid dangerous life situations, to neutralize conflicts, to solve complicated issues of social nature, to behave in emergencies appropriately.

The programs of the course “Fundamentals of Life Safety” on the level of basic secondary and secondary general education in the Russian Federation (5-11 grades) are developed based on the “Concept of teaching the study subject «Fundamentals of Life Safety»”¹⁴⁸ and reflect the main requirements of the “Federal state educational standard of the general education”¹⁴⁹.

Separate sections of the program for the course “FLS” are continuously actualized according to the corresponding documents in the field of security, approved on the all-state level, in particular, “Strategy of the national security of the Russian Federation”, “Doctrine of the informational security of the Russian Federation (Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of December 5, 2016, N 646)”, “National objectives of development of the Russian Federation for the period until 2030 (Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of July 21, 2020, N 474)” and “State program of the Russian Federation “Development of Education” (Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of December 26, 2017, N 1642)”¹⁵⁰.

In the programs for the course “FLS”, among the declared expected students’ results, in addition to the understanding of the concept of “security”, providing first aid, fire safety, etc., there are also the following ones:

- ▶ *“Patriotic education: awareness of own Russian civic identity in the multi-cultural and multi-confessional society, expression of interest to learning the native language, history, culture of the Russian Federation, own region, peoples of Russia; value attitude to the achievements of own Fatherland – Russia, to science, art, sports, technologies, military feats and labor achievements of the people; respect for the symbols of Russia, state holidays, historical and natural heritage and monuments, traditions of different peoples living in one’s native country; formation of the sense of pride for one’s homeland, responsible attitude to fulfillment of the constitutional duty – defense of the Fatherland”, and*

148 Concept of teaching educational subject “Fundamentals of Life Safety” in the educational organizations of the Russian Federation, which implement general educational programs. Approved by the decision of the Board of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, protocol of December 24, 2018. N ПК-1ВН. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230114114701/http://www.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc&base=EXP&n=333770>

149 Federal state educational standard of the basic general education. Approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of December 17, 2010. N 1897. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221019215131/http://fgos.ru/fgos/fgos-ooo>

150 Model work program of the basic secondary general education “Fundamentals of Life Safety” (for 8-9 grades of educational organizations). URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220516045115/http://edsoo.ru/download/339/?hash=091b908683e38271f67831cf9549369c>

► *“Civil education: [...] understanding and recognition of Russia’s special role in ensuring state and international security, defense of the country, understanding of the role of the state and society in solving problems of protecting the population from dangerous and emergencies of a natural, technogenic and social nature”¹⁵¹.*

The textbooks and teaching guides for teachers of the subject “Fundamentals of Life Safety” for 5-11 grades contain the narratives capable of forming Ukrainian children’s worldviews that can be used to continue the aggression of the Russian Federation and to consolidate the annexation of a part of Ukrainian territories by it.

As a part of the research, 14 textbooks, 9 workbooks, and 2 teaching guides were analyzed. We found the narratives which may indicate the fact of Ukrainian children’s militarization, in particular, in separate special sections devoted to mastering pre-conscription military training and “familiarization” with the Russian Army.

The invincibility of the Russian army and romanticization of the “military deeds”

The Army of the Russian Federation has one of the fundamental places in the program of the course “FLS”. While the textbooks for 5-9 grades mostly talk about everyday threats to human life and health, and teach how to avoid them, the program for the 10-11 grades is completely dedicated to the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

Screenshots of the covers of the analyzed textbooks (first one¹⁵² and second one¹⁵³)



¹⁵¹ Ibid, p. 17-18

¹⁵² Fundamentals of Life Safety: 10th grade: O-75 textbook for general education organizations / M. P. Frolov [and others]; edited by Y. L. Vorobiova. – Moscow: AST, 2013. – 350 p., [2]

¹⁵³ Assessment workbook for the textbook by V. N. Latchuk, V. V. Markov, S. K. Mironov, S.N. Vangorodskiy Fundamentals of Life Safety. Basic Level. 10th grade. / V. N. Latchuk, S. K. Mironov. – M.: Drofa, 2014. – 61 p., [3]

In the educational materials, through the historical context, the “greatness” of the Army of the Russian Federation is demonstrated, which the authors try to present as extremely powerful and invincible. For example, in one of the textbooks for 10-11 grades, the text of the paragraph states: *“Throughout the history of our Fatherhood, the Russian people had to wage an armed struggle, defending their land, freedom, and independence from the foreign invaders. Russian soldiers were always characterized by their indomitable will of victory, staunchness in defense and firm determination during the offensive [...] patriotism, devotion to duty, service to the Fatherland always remained the unshakable tradition and moral power of our army”*¹⁵⁴. A separate section of the textbook is dedicated to information about the so-called *“military valor of Russian soldiers”*¹⁵⁵.

The modern army is also presented as such that can defeat any enemy: *“The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation have a powerful arsenal of forces and means, capable of resisting any aggressor”*¹⁵⁶.

Describing the Russian army, the authors of textbooks focus on its unique and noble role, which supposedly exists for centuries – exclusively for defense from numerous external enemies. For example, this is how the history of the Russian naval flag is described: *“in 1668, the first naval flag was raised on the Russian military ship “Oryol” [and] it combined three colors in it: red, blue and white, which symbolized nobility, loyalty and courage”*¹⁵⁷. The historical exemplarity of the Russian Army is directly emphasized: *“Mutual support and mutual help of soldiers has become a tradition, which cultivates unity, faith in a comrade and his help during the battle. The Russian Army was always characterized by internal unity and collectivism: one for all and all for one”*¹⁵⁸. Thus, the image of the perfect Russian Army is created, which is almighty in general, and each of its representatives has exceptional personal qualities.

In order to personify these theses, the authors pay attention to the Russian service members who received specific awards while performing combat missions. In particular, in the workbook for the textbook on “FLS” for 11th grade, in order to consolidate the material, students are offered to complete a practical task, in which they should choose fourteen surnames from the list below: *“Full Cavaliers of the Order of St. George”, “four times Heroes of the Soviet Union”, “three times Heroes of the Soviet Union”*¹⁵⁹.

A particular emphasis in such tasks is made on the activity of the underaged during combat actions. In order to consolidate the completed material, students are offered to choose a topic for further research. In one of such tasks, the topic for educational research is *“sons of the regiment are the sons of Russia: the fate of teenagers in 1941-1945”*¹⁶⁰. Therefore, students may get the false impression that children's participation

154 Fundamentals of Life Safety: 10 - 11 grades: Basic level : Textbook / S. V. Kim, V. A. Gorskiy. - M.: Ventana-Graf, 2019. - 397 p., p. 106

155 Ibid, p. 289-293

156 Ibid, p. 112

157 Ibid, p. 124

158 Ibid, p. 124

159 Assessment workbooks for the textbook by V. N. Latchuk, V. V. Markov, S. K. Mironov, S. N. Vangorodskiy Fundamentals of Life Safety. Basic level. 11th grade. / V. N. Latchuk, S. K.Mironov. - M.: Drofa, 2015. - 60, [4] p. ill., p. 30.

160 Fundamentals of Life Safety: 10 - 11 grades: basic level: textbook / S. V. Kim, V. A. Gorskiy. - M.: Ventana-Graf, 2019. - 397 p., p. 126

in war is not only acceptable but also encouraged by the state, that such actions are prestigious and will ensure respect and perpetuate their memory among future generations. The danger of the task format of conducting “*educational research*” is that students are forced to reproduce and articulate the necessary theses, which justify such behavior.

The narrative of the heroism of the Russian Army is demonstrated not only through the often distorted presentation of historical events but also through the examples from literature, which primarily reflect the narratives of the official propaganda of the Soviet period. The authors of the study guide romanticize the actions of the army, offering students to form ideas about certain events through works of fiction. For example, in practical written tasks, students are offered the following topics for educational research: “*the feat of the Brest Fortress defenders (based on the novel by Boris Vasilyev «Not on the Active List»)*”, “*I serve the Fatherland: the legend of the VDV [note. Soviet and Russian Airborne Forces] (based on the materials of biography of V. F. Margelov (1908-1990), commander of the Airborne forces, Hero of the Soviet Union)*”¹⁶¹. Completing such tasks results in the romanticization of war in children’s minds. In fact, within this study subject, instead of delivering a thesis that war means terrible losses and is a human disaster, the tragedy of whole generations, students are demonstrated that participation in any war on Russia’s side is not only honorable but is also nearly the only place where one can become a hero.

The given theses can form the idea among Ukrainian children who have been deported to the Russian Federation or remain in the occupied territories that the Russian army, which occupied the territory of Ukraine, allegedly acted with the noble objective to defend the population. Moreover, since it is invincible, it is no point in confronting it.

The demonstration of mass heroism during the war can form a child’s strong idea that Russian soldiers commit only “good” deeds aimed precisely at peace and safety instead of delivering the objective and truthful information that actions of the Russian Army on the territory of Ukraine are mainly related to committing mass international crimes. Considering the active imposition of patriotism as a part of this and other study subjects, this may encourage children to become “heroes” in the ranks of the Russian Army, mainly through participating in Russia’s war against Ukraine. The romanticization of war, in turn, forms an inspired attitude towards it, detached from its real side – inhuman suffering, destruction, pain, loss, and death.

Russian military service is the “honor and dignity of the Fatherland”

In the textbooks on “Fundamentals of Life Safety” for 10th and 11th grades, much attention is paid to pre-conscription military training. In particular, students should complete the section “*Military security of the state*” [note. in the textbook, two such sections same name, for both 10th and 11th grade], in particular, such topics as: “*The Composition of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation*”, “*Military duty and military service*”, “*Rights and obligations of military personnel*”, “*Martial traditions and rituals of the Armed forces of the Russian Federation*”¹⁶², “*Legal foundations of military duty*”, “*Legal foundations of military service*”, “*Preparation of citizens for military service: mandatory and volun-*

161 Ibid, p. 113

162 Ibid, p. 110-127

tary”, which contain detailed information about the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation¹⁶³. In addition, the authors of the textbook describe the peculiarities of military service in the modern Russian army, particularly through such topics as: *“Requirements of military activity to the serviceman’s person”, “Peculiarities of conscripted military service and alternative civilian service”*¹⁶⁴ and inform about the possibility of contract military service¹⁶⁵. As a part of studying these topics, students should learn information about the Statutes of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, familiarize themselves with the rights and obligations of Russian service members, rules of military discipline, such concepts as *“mobilization”, “military training”*, mandatory preparation of citizens for military service, *“military registration specialties”*, and rules of military registration¹⁶⁶. In addition, students should read the text of the military oath of the Russian service members and reproduce it in one of the written tasks¹⁶⁷. While the presence of such knowledge to own children within the internationally recognized borders of the Russian Federation can be considered as not beyond the discretion of the state, similar actions on the occupied territories, where Ukrainian children are forced not only to learn such information but also to confirm the correct perception of the imposed narratives, including their own “readiness” to fulfill “the sacred duty” of serving in the armed forces of the state that committed aggression against the state of their residence, is not only unacceptable but also criminal.

The indirect encouragement to service in the Armed Forces of Russia occurs, in particular, through informing students about the benefits that military servicemen receive. For example, in one of the tasks, 11th graders are offered to supplement the diagram, indicating the *“social guarantees and compensations for military servicemen, who undergo military service by conscription”*¹⁶⁸. For students who remain in the occupied territory without means for living and opportunity to leave, in combination with the imposition of other narratives regarding patriotic attitudes toward Russia, their affiliation with the Russian identity, the prestige and alleged sacredness of the “duty” of serving in the Russian armed forces, this can become an additional imposed incentive to serve in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

In addition to placing a detailed description of the pre-conscription military training that students undergo one way or another, the educational materials for the course “Fundamentals of Life Safety” contain constant references to modern Russian military servicemen, who supposedly have idealized personal qualities. In one of the analyzed textbooks and *“assessment workbooks”* for the textbooks for 11th grade, a separate topic dedicated to this narrative can be found in the table of contents: *“A military serviceman is a defender of own Fatherhood. Honor and dignity of a soldier of the Armed Forces of Russia”*¹⁶⁹. As a part of this topic, the authors of the textbook distinguish the following

163 Ibid, p. 256-268

164 Ibid, p. 274-277

165 Ibid, p. 262

166 Ibid, p. 271, 272, 267, 268, 269-270, 261

167 Assessment workbook for the textbook by V. N. Latchuk, V. V. Markov, S. K. Mironov, S. N. Vangorodskiy Fundamentals of Life Safety. Basic level. 11th grade. / V. N. Latchuk, S. K. Mironov – M.: Drofa, 2015. – 60, [4] p., p.35

168 Ibid, p.34

169 Ibid, p. 37-40; and

Fundamentals of Life Safety. 11th grade: textbook for general educational organizations / V. V. Markov, V. N. Latchuk, S. K. Mironov, S. N. Vinogradskiy – 13th edition, stereotype. – M.: Drofa, 2013. – 302, [2] p. p.196-229

subtopics: *“A military serviceman is a patriot, who carries the knowledge of the defender of the Fatherhood with honor and dignity”, “A military serviceman is a specialist, who has perfect mastery of weapons and military equipment”, “A military serviceman is a subordinate who strictly observes the Constitution and the laws of the Russian Federation, fulfills the requirements of Military Code, orders of commanders and chiefs”*¹⁷⁰. In the next topic, students are immediately given information on *“How to become an officer of the Russian Army”* and offered to take a detailed look at the process of admission in Russian military higher education institutions, familiarize themselves with the list of the required documents and opportunity of admission outside the competition¹⁷¹. In other words, students are gradually brought to the conclusion that it is worth serving in the Russian army and provided with detailed instructions on getting into this service.

To consolidate the topics on pre-conscription training, students are offered to answer the question *“What is patriotism, and how do exactly military servicemen manifest it?”*, *“What do you think the expression «to fulfill military duty» means?”*¹⁷², and also to perform an *“educational research”* on the following topics: *“Moral and psychological qualities of military servicemen of the Armed Forces of The Russian Federation”*, and *“Contract military service and its prospects”*, *“Your compatriots – the defenders of Russia”*¹⁷³, which forces students on the occupied territories to produce the narratives about the alleged “prestige” and “prospects” of service in the Russian army.

Russian Federation is the guarantor of the world security

Along with the formation of a child's readiness to be a part of the army of the Russian Federation, educational materials try to impose the idea that there are an awful lot of threats for the Russian Federation around, which their army has to react. Children are being prepared to accept the aggressive policy of the top state leadership of the Russian Federation in order to simplify their further involvement in participation in the armed aggression against third countries with no remorse.

During the 10-11 grades, students should understand not only the so-called “power” and “prestige” of the Russian army in both historical and modern context but also learn that the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation allegedly play the most crucial role in the world system of security and peace.

The formation of narrative begins with a description of what a military threat and a threat to a national security are:

▶ *“the activities related to distribution and propaganda of the ideology of fascism, extremism, terrorism, and separatism, causing damage to civil peace, political and social stability in society;*

170 Ibid, p. 196-213

171 Ibid, p. 213-225

172 Fundamentals of Life Safety: 10 - 11 grades: basic level : textbook / S. V. Kim, V. A. Gorskiy. - M.: Ventana-Graf, 2019. - 397 p., p. 126

173 Ibid, p. 119, 126

▶ *the activities of radical public associations, groups, and individuals, aimed at [...] destroying the traditional Russian spiritual and moral values*¹⁷⁴.

The problem of such educational formulations for Ukrainian children is related to the fact that the Russian Federation applies the mentioned concepts to the actions, which do not relate to their content in any way. For example, in occupied Crimea, people are persecuted for “extremism” in the case of exercising their right to freedom of expression, worldview, and religion, and Ukraine’s right to self-defense from the aggressive actions of the Russian Federation is being called “fascism and terrorism”. As a result, children on the occupied territories receive not only a distorted understanding of concepts, but also a convenient for the Russian Federation, justification of the “causes” for the so-called special military operation, which, in its nature, is the aggressive war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Therefore, the additional risk of participation of students from the occupied territories in the armed conflict in the ranks of the occupation army increases.

The textbooks’ authors specifically emphasize on the important security role of the Russian Federation in the modern world. For example, the textbook’s authors for 10th grade include “*prevention of the global and regional wars and conflicts*” in strategic objectives of the national defense of the Russian Federation. Another objective is defined as: “*exercising strategic deterrence in order to ensure the country’s military security*”¹⁷⁵, which allegedly should be carried out by the Russian Federation. In fact, in another textbook, “*military deterrence strategy*” is explained as a “*political decision of the Government of the Russian Federation that determines the priority of diplomatic means of resolving international problems while improving the military power of the state, its forces and defense, in order to maintain the military security of the state*”¹⁷⁶.

The policy of “*some leading foreign countries, [which is] aimed at achieving the dominant supremacy in the military sphere*”, and “*unilateral establishment of the global missile defense system*”¹⁷⁷ is also defined as so-called threats for the security of the Russian Federation. It is directly stated that Russia wants to influence the situation in the neighboring sovereign countries and prevent the expansion of NATO: “*Concerning the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the plans to advance the military infrastructure of the alliance towards the borders of our country and the excess of the norms of international law by the alliance remain unacceptable for Russia*”¹⁷⁸.

These theses are aimed at imposing the position convenient for the Russian Federation regarding the “necessity” of meddling in the internal affairs of other countries. Moreover, they can be used to justify the “necessity” for the Russian Federation to “preventively” respond to the military threats which allegedly exist, especially in the context of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against other states, primarily Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine. The dissemination of such narratives in schools will result

174 Ibid, p. 38

175 Fundamentals of Life Safety: 10th grade: O-75 textbook for general educational organizations / M. P. Frolov [and others]; edited by Y. L. Vorobyova. – Moscow: ACT, 2013. p. 9-10

176 Fundamentals of Life Safety: 10 – 11 grades: basic level: textbook / S. V. Kim, V. A. Gorskiy. – M.: Ventana-Graf, 2019. – 397 p., p. 39

177 Fundamentals of Life Safety: 10th grade.: O-75 textbook for general educational organizations / M. P. Frolov [and others]; edited by Y. L. Vorobyova. – Moscow: ACT, 2013. p. 10-11

178 Ibid, p. 11-12

in Ukrainian children in the occupied territories having an artificially formed distorted understanding of the role of the Russian Federation in the world and will accept the narratives that justify its armed aggression against Ukraine.

The analyzed narratives about the romanticization of the Russian army, the “feats” of the Russian soldiers, along with the simultaneous agitation to serve in the Russian Army, indicate the deeply militarized nature of school education in the Russian Federation, which Ukrainian children on the occupied territories are forced to receive, in particular as a part of the subject “*Fundamentals of Live Safety*”. In the conditions of limited access to alternative sources of information and educational courses, and often even their complete lack, the constant imposition of these narratives within the school process organized on the occupied territories results in the formation of children’s worldviews, in which they supposedly must fulfill the “duty” of serving in the Russian army, which is presented as an exceptionally highly moral activity, including in the conditions of war without demonstrating its horrors in the form of death and destruction. In addition, students are being imposed on the idea that the Russian Federation must oppose the world and regional threats in the form of “NATO, fascism and extremism”, which aims to justify the aggression against Ukraine. All this contributed to the moral preparation of Ukrainian children for military service in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, which, in modern conditions, can result in their involvement in the war against Ukraine on the aggressor’s side.

C | “GEOGRAPHY”

“Geography” – a subject aimed at forming students’ system of complex socially oriented knowledge about the planet Earth, about the main patterns of nature development, population, and economy, features and dynamics of the primary natural, environmental, and socio-economic processes, problems of interaction between nature and society, geographical approaches to the sustainable development of territories.

Students learn “Geography” course in grades 5-11 based on the geographical knowledge and skills previously acquired in “The world around” course in grades 1-4¹⁷⁹.

The subject offers the student some standard and understandable tasks like “development of cognitive interests,” “ability to observe the environment,” “solution of geographical problems,” etc., as well as several atypical goals: *“fostering a sense of patriotism, love for one’s country, small motherland, mutual understanding with other peoples based on forming a comprehensive geographical image of Russia, personal value orientations”*¹⁸⁰. Such tasks are a priority in almost all programs considered in the study, although they do not relate to the learning objectives of geography.

The analyzed textbooks, atlases, and methodological recommendations for teachers in the “Geography” course for grades 5-11 contain several narratives aimed at militarizing Ukrainian children and improving their perception of the causes and circumstances of Russian aggression.

According to the research plan, 16 textbooks, 6 workbooks, and 17 atlases on geography published between 2014 and 2020 were analyzed.

Colonialism and assimilation of other peoples are the basis of the existence of the Russian Federation

Given the history of the Russian state, the need to justify aggressive methods of its foreign policy is logical. In Russian geography textbooks, the forcible conquest of territories and exploitation of their resources is seen as a heroic act for the good of the motherland. Forming such a narrative in Ukrainian children may facilitate the perception of Russian conquest behavior towards Ukraine, as its territories are rich in minerals. Here is how Russia’s conquest of Siberia, which is extremely rich in natural resources, is justified: *“the Russian pioneers did not only discover new lands, but they annexed them to Russia. [...] Russia became much richer thanks to the resources of Siberia [...] To this day, Siberia provides our country with resources – oil, gas, coal, timber, and many*

179 See the analysis of textbooks of the subject “The world around” above

180 The exemplary work program for basic general education. Geography (for grades 5-9 of educational institutions). Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation. — 2021. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20221223124359/https://edsoo.ru/download/232?hash=eeb68b406b40127689e3b14d569cc333>

*others*¹⁸¹. Since this territory has played a significant role in Russia's ability to maintain its status as an influential state after its conquest, and to this day, it imposes on the younger generation the idea that conquest of the territory is acceptable if it leads to the enrichment of the Russian Federation, to the growth of external influence of the State. It is important to note that such conquests and the implementation of an invasive policy in the new territories, according to the texts of the textbooks, are carried out with the blessing of the Russian Orthodox Church, which also *"took an active part in the development of the new territories"*¹⁸².

Alongside the romanticization and glorification of an aggressive foreign policy of colonization of foreign territories, actualized in the textbooks through the glorification of the victories of the Russian Federation, there is disappointment in the impossibility of annexing certain lands. In particular, one textbook suggests: *"Russia faced strong resistance from other countries [...] and settlement [of lands] by Russians did not take place, as these lands were already densely populated by other peoples"*¹⁸³.

In addition to conquering new territories to exploit their resources for the benefit of Russia, it sought to Russify the conquered lands by settling them with Russians. The dissemination in school textbooks of a narrative justifying such behavior leads to the tolerance of children in the occupied territories towards russification policies. It is also a tool to encourage them to participate directly in implementation of such policies.

It is true not only in antiquity but also in modern history, particularly after the creation of the USSR. One textbook mentions that *"in the first decades of Soviet rule, the process of settlement by Russians in the national outskirts of the USSR continued"*¹⁸⁴, but after the collapse of the Union, *"the territories inhabited by the Russian people began to shrink"*¹⁸⁵. The political and geographical position of the newly formed state of the Russian Federation after the collapse of the USSR is presented as a tragic fact, as it is said to have *"changed very much, and for the worse. The loss of several former territories and water areas has had the greatest impact on its western border"*¹⁸⁶ (i.e., the loss of the territories of Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic States).

The forcible seizure of territories, the forced russification of the local population, and actions with signs of xenophobia are the embodiment of the colonialist policy that the Russian state has been pursuing since long ago and has continued to implement on Ukrainian territory since 2014 blatantly. In particular, from 60 000 to 100 000 people were forced to leave Crimea during the temporary occupation. At the same time,

181 Geography. 5-6 grades / A. I. Alekseev - Moscow: Prosveshcheniye, 2019. - 191 p., p. 16

182 Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature and Population. 8th grade. / A. I. Alekseev, V. A. Nizovtsev, E. V. Kim. Moscow: Drofa, 2019. - 332 p., p. 300

183 Ibid, p. 36

184 note. This was the name given in the Russian Empire (and in the first decades of Soviet rule) to territories that were remote from the centre, where non-Russian peoples, including the land of Ukraine, were and still are indigenous to

185 Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature and population. Grade 8. / A. I. Alekseev, V. A. Nizovtsev, E.V. Kim. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. -p. 34-35

186 Geography. 10-11 grades / V. P. Maksakovsky. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2020. - p. 23

from 500 000 to 800 000 Russians moved to the peninsula¹⁸⁷ from mainland Russia. The Ukrainian language's oppression and the Russian language's imposition accompany the change in demographic composition. In Crimea, for example, record keeping has generally been switched to Russian. At the same time, in the temporarily occupied areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions Russian was declared the official language immediately after the occupation. Teaching in schools is provided entirely in Russian¹⁸⁸. In addition, national symbols and cultural monuments are being destroyed. This policy has continued in the newly occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts since 2022.

"Former republics of the USSR" should be together with the Russian Federation

Russian geographical science uses the term *"new foreign countries"* to refer to the states formerly members of the USSR, as *"they have only relatively recently become independent countries"*¹⁸⁹.

The authors of one textbook also argue that the collapse of the USSR *"resulted in the borders of the former Soviet republics, which at one time (the 1920s-1930s) were established as purely administrative, suddenly becoming state borders that divided many peoples used to live in a single state for a long time"*¹⁹⁰. In other words, the authors of Russian textbooks constantly remind students of the "brotherhood of nations," which should live in a single state, despite the desire for autonomy. The leading role in such a state should belong to Russia, and unification should take place around the Russian language and culture, which, although the property of many peoples, is represented as exclusively Russian.

The logical continuation of this narrative in Russian textbooks are statements about close historical ties between Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians and that *"there are still quite a few Russians living in Ukraine [...]"*¹⁹¹. They justify the commonality of the three eastern Slavic peoples and their need to be part of a single state.

Thus, the collapse of the USSR into separate independent nation-states is presented as a "historic mistake", which weakened Russia and divided the inseparable peoples who inhabited it. This narrative directly reflects the direct position of Russia's top political

187 Report on the results of the study of the policy of the Russian Federation on forcible change of demographic composition of the occupied Crimean peninsula. Regional Center for Human Rights, 2021. URL: <https://krymbezpravil.org.ua/en/issues/report-on-the-results-of-the-study-of-the-policy-of-the-russian-federation-on-forcible-change-of-demogra>

188 Review on the restriction of the functioning of the Ukrainian language in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, State Language Protection Commissioner, 2021. URL: <https://mova-ombudsman.gov.ua/oglyad-ukrayinskoyi-movi-na-timchasovo-okupovanih-teritoriyah-ukrayini>

189 Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature and population. Grade 8. / A. I. Alekseev, V. A. Nizovtsev, E.V Kim. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. - p. 14-15

190 Ibid, p. 34-35

191 Geography. Country studies. Grade 7. O. A. Klimanova, V. V. Klimanov, E.V Kim. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. - p. 128



leadership¹⁹². The dissemination of these ideas among Ukrainian children in the occupied territories and children deported to the Russian Federation will contribute to their conviction that Ukraine has no right to exist as an independent state and that its full development is only possible with Russia.

Russian language is a unifying factor

Under the Russian Federation's full policy of colonization of territories and assimilation of peoples, a language issue is an effective tool for the aggressor state to consolidate newly conquered territories successfully. Accordingly, the Russian Federation is not only increasing the percentage of Russian language use in the lives of the population of the territories it occupies. However, it is also actively promoting, at the level of education, the statements about the privileged position of the Russian language over others, its status and allegedly unifying role for the "brotherly peoples" who were once part of the USSR.

Geography textbooks actively impose the idea of Russian language to be supposedly quite logically the language of international communication in the former USSR republics, united many peoples into a single Russian cultural space: *"the wide spread of the Russian language within the territory of the former USSR is a great value. People who speak the Russian language know Russian culture better, understand Russians, and are often linked to them by friendship and good business relations"*¹⁹³.

The authors propagate the argument that the linguistic situation in the former Soviet republics deteriorated significantly after the collapse of the USSR due to nationalist sentiments. In particular, it is alleged that the rights of Russian-speaking citizens are infringed upon in the former Soviet republics. As the authors write, having gained independence, the former republics *"began to expand the language rights of the «titular nation», without stopping infringing on the rights of the Russian language. In many of the former republics, broadcasting time on Russian television has been drastically reduced, and it has become much more difficult to subscribe to Russian newspapers or buy books and magazines in Russian. The number of schools and universities teaching in Russian is decreasing. Over time, language policies have become softer in some states and more restrictive in others"*¹⁹⁴. The "worst", in their view, is the situation of the Russian language in the Baltic States, particularly in Estonia and Latvia¹⁹⁵.

Some textbooks particularly emphasize the position of the Russian language in Ukraine: *"a large part of the population [of the East of Ukraine] is Russian; Ukrainians living there*

192 "Putin called the collapse of the USSR the greatest geopolitical catastrophe" / Ukrainska Pravda, 2005. URL: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2005/04/25/3009187/>

193 Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature and population. Grade 8. / A. I. Alekseev, V. A. Nizovtsev, E.V Kim. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. - p. 296-297

194 Ibid, p. 298

195 Geography. Grades 10-11 / V. P. Maksakovsky. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2019. - p. 416, p. 194

*usually speak Russian*¹⁹⁶. It is also alleged that most Ukrainians living in Russia “*consider Russian their mother tongue*”¹⁹⁷. This situation is a direct consequence of the russification policy that Russia has been pursuing for centuries in the Ukrainian territories under its control, which of course, is not mentioned in the textbooks.

Even though the development of their language by the independent states formed after the collapse of the USSR indicates a desire to get rid of Russia’s colonial influence and ensure their free functioning, the textbooks present this as discrimination against the Russian-speaking population, “indigenous Russians” and a break of friendly relations with the Russian Federation. The authors seem to recognize that with the independence of the former Soviet republics, Russia gradually lost this vital tool for their russification. The Russian Federation uses the need to protect the “rights of the Russian-speaking population” as a pretext for armed aggression against other countries. An example is the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the prevalence of the Russian language in Ukraine is mentioned separately in the textbooks. The impact of such a narrative on Ukrainian children in the occupied territories could be pretty far-reaching, as, first and foremost, education in schools would be in Russian, and the imposition of these ideas would facilitate the assimilation of Ukrainians with Russians.

Crimea is an integral part of the Russian Federation

The textbooks analyzed for this study were published after the occupation of the Crimean peninsula by the Russian Federation, so the Crimean issue in Russian geography textbooks is not surprising. The textbooks’ authors attempt in any way to demonstrate not only the existing historical and geographical links of the peninsula with Russian territory but also the economic benefit and political and strategic importance for Russia of this “reunification”. Special respect is being paid to the event itself – the so-called return of Crimea to its native harbour of the Russian Federation: “*In 2014, the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol became part of Russia following a referendum, when over 96% of voters were in favor of reunification with Russia*”¹⁹⁸.

In all geography textbooks and atlases reviewed, Crimea is shown on maps as one of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, the sections on administrative-territorial division include “the Republic of Crimea”, and the border with Ukraine runs along the “*isthmus*”¹⁹⁹. The textbooks contain separate sections on the nature of Crimea²⁰⁰,

196 Geography. Country studies. Grade 7. O. A. Klimanova, V. V. Klimanov, E.V Kim. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. – p. 132

197 Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature and population. Grade 8. / A. I. Alekseev, V. A. Nizovtsev, E.V Kim. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. – p. 298

198 Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature and population. Grade 8. / A. I. Alekseev, V. A. Nizovtsev, E.V Kim. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. – p. 15

199 For example: Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature. Grade 8 / I. I. Barinova. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. – p. 11; and

Geography of Russia: nature, population, economy. Grade 8 / V. P. Dronov, L. E. Savelyeva. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2018, – p. 29

200 Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature. Grade 8 / I. I. Barinova. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019, – p. 171

its cultural heritage, and development features. In particular, one textbook explains why Crimea is so important to the Russian Federation: it allows control over the Black Sea, is an industrially developed region, and a popular resort²⁰¹. Similarly, Sevastopol is referred to as *“the city of Russian glory”* and the home of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, which is of strategic importance to the Russian Federation²⁰². The construction of the Kerch Strait Bridge is portrayed in textbooks as *“the most important event of our time”*²⁰³.

In continuation of the colonization and assimilation policies mentioned above, the Russian Federation is actively developing and propagating the theory of historical ties with Crimea, thus seeking to legitimize its territorial conquests. The thesis in the textbooks about “return to native harbor” is primarily based on the assertion that the Crimean peninsula, especially after the Crimean war (1853-1856), is inseparably linked to Russia: *“Crimea always played an important role in Russia’s destiny - it is enough to remember the Crimean campaigns of 1687 and 1689 against the Crimean Khanate, the Crimean war of 1853-1856, the Crimean campaign during the Great Patriotic War in 1944, the Crimean (Yalta) Conference of 1945”*²⁰⁴.

Except that the survival and further development of Crimea in the 1950s and 1960s were made possible by its return to Ukrainian control, thanks to the Dniro River water, it is not mentioned in the textbooks.

The textbooks necessarily accompany the conquest of the Crimea with a description of its further colonization: *“The Russian government resettled natives of Central Russia and Little Russia to the liberated lands”*²⁰⁵. At the same time, it is nothing more than a forcible change in the demographic composition of the peninsula.

Particular attention in Russian textbooks is given to the deportation of Crimean Tatars and other peoples during and after World War II: *“mainly, Russians from war-torn central regions were resettled in their place”*. It is also pointed out that the 2014 census confirmed *“the proportion of Russians over 67%”*²⁰⁶. At the same time, the link between the aforementioned forced change in the demographic composition of the Crimean peninsula and the proportion of the population belonging to the Russian ethos is silenced; the presence of a high percentage of the Russian population is not explained by the direct impact of the stationing in Crimea and Sevastopol of the Russian Navy Black Sea Fleet and the russification policy pursued in this territory.

201 Geography. Grade 9 / A. I. Alekseyev. V. V. Nikolina. E. K. Lipkina. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2019, - p. 142

202 Geography. Grade 7 / A. I. Alekseyev. V. V. Nikolina. E. K. Lipkina. - Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2015.- p. - p. 203

203 Geography. Grade 9 / A. I. Alekseyev. V. V. Nikolina. E. K. Lipkina. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2019, p. 142-143

204 Geography. Geography of Russia. Nature. Grade 8 / I. I. Barinova. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2019. - p. 172

205 Geography. Grade 9 / A. I. Alekseyev. V. V. Nikolina. E. K. Lipkina. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2019. - p. 138

206 Ibid, p. 138

In this way, they try to instill confidence in Ukrainian children, particularly in occupied Crimea, that the Crimean peninsula has always belonged to Russia and has inseparable historical, political, and economic ties. Just as the narrative of the conquest of Siberia heroized the event, the “return” of Crimea to Russia is presented as an unqualified victory in light of its benefits, which are carefully enumerated. Another argument used by the Russian Federation to legitimize its territorial claims to the Crimean peninsula is the constant reminder that Crimea is inhabited by a large percentage of ethnic Russians, which, as stated above, is the result of nearly two centuries of colonial policy and russification of the peninsula.

NATO is a threat to the Russian Federation

One of the most frequently repeated narratives of Russian propaganda is also present in geography textbooks. The phrase “*great power*” refers to Russia, which has everything it needs to become a “*world leader*”²⁰⁷. It may lead children in the occupied territories to think that other states are inferior to Russia, which, despite its “high” status, has more authority.

Among the goals of Russian foreign policy named in one of the textbooks, the following are highlighted: “*supporting compatriots abroad*” and “*striving for a multipolar world*”²⁰⁸. The means to achieve these goals are named in Russian textbooks as building a competitive economy, in particular through the “*modernization of the army and navy*”²⁰⁹. However, Russia’s economic progress is “hindered” by “*sanctions imposed in 2014 by the European Union, the US, Japan, and some others in response to Crimea’s return to Russia*”²¹⁰.

One textbook points out that the world peace and disarmament situation has recently deteriorated, primarily due to “*the desire of the United States to use its new position as the sole superpower to implement a unipolar world model under its aegis*”²¹¹. It is noted that the NATO military bloc poses a direct threat to Russia since “*the accession of almost all Eastern European countries to NATO has resulted in the bloc expanding eastward and approaching Russia’s borders*”²¹².

The narrative that the US and NATO member, states of the European Union, are to blame for supporting the “*coup d’état*” in Ukraine, as a result of which Russia was “forced” to stand up for the people of Crimea, is actively promoted: “*International relations became particularly tense in 2014 as a result of [...] the coup d’état [in Ukraine], which brought radical nationalists to power with support of the US and the European Union. Western*

207 Geography of Russia: nature, population, economy. Grade 8 / V. P. Dronov, L. E. Savelyeva, Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2018.- p. 16

208 Ibid, p. 19

209 Geography. Grade 9 / A. I. Alekseyev, V. V. Nikolina, E. K. Lipkina. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2019.- p. 10

210 Also, p. 11

211 Geography. Grades 10-11 / V. P. Maksakovsky. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2020. - p. 18

212 Ibid, p. 18

countries have reacted to Russia's response to protect its interests in Crimea and the Black Sea with all sorts of ultimatums and sanctions, which could have a «boomerang effect» on the Western coalition itself»²¹³.

In this context, it appeals to the Russian Armed Forces, the only ones capable of “responding adequately to the approach of NATO’s military infrastructure”²¹⁴.

It constructs a narrative of an existential threat to Russia from NATO. The North Atlantic Alliance seems to be trying to move as close as possible to Russia’s borders to deploy its weapon systems, with aggressive plans against it. To this end, the Alliance allegedly staged a revolution in Ukraine, installing a “nationalist” government and planning an attack on Russia, so Russia had no choice but to take up arms to defend the Russian population of Crimea and prevent a future attack on its lands.

Imposing such a narrative on Ukrainian children in the occupied territories and children deported to the Russian Federation will promote their loyalty both to the armed aggression against Ukraine, which has been ongoing since 2014 and to its new phase beginning in February 2022, since the reasoning behind the armed conflict has changed little. Children will perceive Ukraine’s ambitions to join NATO as something dangerous, first and foremost for themselves, which in turn will contribute to the reconciliation of the population of the occupied territory with the fact of occupation, their further assimilation, and the continuation of the imperial ambitions of the Russian Federation.

Historical, cultural, and scientific heritage of the Russian Federation consists of the achievements of all other countries and peoples, which were under its control at different periods of history

The texts of geography textbooks, in particular for grades 8-9, contain historical references stating that the territory of the former Kyivan Rus was exclusively the territory of contemporary Russia: *“historically Russia, which in the sixteenth century was called Rus, had a complex system of territorial administration [...]. The entire European part of Russia was divided into [...] «Ukrainian [cities]»”²¹⁵. And Kyiv was included in the list of Russian cities: *“the area of settlement of the Eastern Slavs on the territory of Russia: [...] where the most ancient cities of Russia were founded: Kyiv, Great Novgorod, Smolensk, Pskov – centers of Russian principalities”²¹⁶.**

Thus, Ukrainian children in the occupied territories and children deported to the Russian Federation are led to believe that ancient Kyivan Rus is modern Russia, and that the territory of Ukraine is an integral part of it, which is allegedly confirmed by historical facts.

213 Ibid, p. 19

214 Ibid, p. 19

215 Geography of Russia. Nature. Population. Economy. Grade 8 / V. P. Dronov, I. I. Barinova, V. Ya. Rom. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2016. – p. 42

216 Geography of Russia. Population and economy. Grade 9 / V. P. Dronov, V. Ya. Rom. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2020. – p. 24.



In addition, the analyzed textbooks gloss over the Ukrainian origins of prominent historical, scientific and cultural figures who acted in the Russian Empire and the USSR. Some textbooks, and atlases refer to Yurii Lysianskyi as *“the Russian sailor”*²¹⁷, and *“the Russian navigator”*²¹⁸. The prominent Soviet-era rocket designer Serhii Korolov, who identified himself as Ukrainian, is referred to in one textbook as a scientist who made *“a major contribution to the development of national cosmonautics”*²¹⁹. Korolov undoubtedly worked all his life for Soviet cosmonautics. However, textbooks present this as though all Soviet scientific achievements were specifically Russian, thus denying the rights of other states that were part of the USSR to their scientific heritage.

The identification of all prominent Soviet figures with Russian heritage negatively impacts Ukrainian children, as it shapes their belief that there are no authoritative people associated with Ukraine. It consequently causes children to feel inferior and encourages them to change their identity to Russian. In addition, Ukraine is “depersonalized” - it loses its independence and reason for existence.

Russia, through education, seeks to “monopolize” the historical and scientific heritage of Kyivan Rus, the Russian Empire and the USSR, ignoring the current affiliation of territories, and the ethnic origins of particular individuals. Children in the occupied territories and children deported to the Russian Federation are given the impression that other countries that were forced to be part of the Russian Empire or the USSR do not have their own historical and scientific heritage, as it all “automatically” belongs to modern Russia.

217 Geography. 5- 6 grades / A. I. Alekseyev. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2019. - p. 18

218 Geography. Atlas. Grade 6. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2015. - p. 5

219 Geography. Initial course / I. I. Barinova, A. A. Pleshakov, N. I. Sonin. Moscow: Drofa Publ., 2014. - p. 74

D | “WORLD ART CULTURE”

“World art culture” – a subject intended to be taught in grades 10–11. According to the official documents, it aims to form an idea of art culture as part of spiritual culture, to involve children in mastering the artistic experience of the past and present, to cultivate an artistic taste, to raise the level of artistic development of young people, and so on. The course curriculum has been developed taking into account the requirements of the federal state educational standard for secondary general education. It has been approved by the federal list of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

The goals of the subject “World art culture” are defined as the acquisition by students of knowledge of historical traditions and objects of the cultural heritage of different peoples of the world. The abstract of one of the textbooks reviewed states: *“The course aims is to provide students with a holistic view of the historical traditions and values of the art culture of the peoples of the world. The author has selected from world art culture what is closest to Russian culture, what has nourished it, what interacts with it, what is the actual artistic heritage of our time”*²²⁰.

Although the name, purpose, and goals of the subject include the study of world culture, the authors of the textbooks focus the attention of teachers and students mainly on the study of Russian culture itself, everything related to it and its place in the world. In particular, the analysis revealed that the geographical boundaries of Russian culture, which children should learn at school, are determined by the territory of Moscow, Novgorod, St Petersburg, Kyiv, Sevastopol, and some cities of the Donetsk and Zaporizhia regions. With such a selective approach, the authors of the course’s educational materials openly declare their thoughts on the unique historical and cultural kinship of the Ukrainian and Russian people, their “fraternal” bond with the Russians acting as the elder brother. Such narratives contribute to distorting Ukrainian children’s attitudes toward historical paradigms and facts, blurring and further altering their national identity.

Among the other narratives mentioned in the textbooks of the “World art culture” course, there were also theses portrayed Western countries and their cultural traditions as not only barbaric in contrast to those of Russia, but those that seek to “destroy” Russia. In this way, children studying this subject potentially develop an idea of the so-called *external enemy* of the State, which is best countered by means of aggression. Such narratives are, in fact, one of component tool of militarization of education. The study analyzed four textbooks for 10–11 grades printed in 2016.

220 World art culture. Grade 11. In 2 parts. 1 part. WAC: [textbook]. / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vados centre, 2016, 384 p. (illustrated), endpaper

Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian people are “brotherhood nations”

The traditional Russian propaganda narrative is evident on every page of the course textbooks analyzed in this study. In particular, textbook authors repeatedly note that *“the Old Russian state centered on the banks of the Dnipro River was the «childhood» of three brotherly peoples - Russian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian”*²²¹ and the common roots of these “brothers” lie in the same religious, linguistic, cultural values and traditions. In particular, in support of this thought, the textbook for the 10th grade gives an example of architectural and cultural imitations in the construction of various religious buildings: *“after the construction of the Saint Sophia Cathedral of Kyiv, cathedrals in honor of the Wisdom of God were erected in Novgorod and Polotsk, the future Belarusian cultural center”*²²². However, at the same time, the cultural monuments located in the cities on the territory of modern Russia (Novgorod, Moscow), are described more pathetically and, in particular, are described as *“«sounding» more Russian than Sophia [note. Saint Sophia Cathedral of Kyiv]”*²²³.

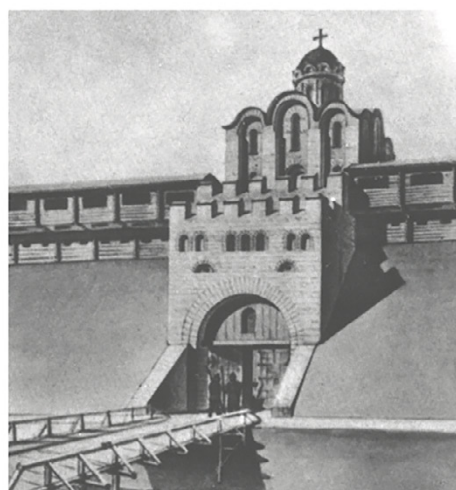
In one of the textbooks, in the section on “the artistic heritage of Russia”, the author gives examples of historical monuments in Ukraine - the Saint Sophia Cathedral of Kyiv and the Golden Gate, pointing out that they belong to the history and cultural heritage of Russia.

ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОЕ НАСЛЕДИЕ РОССИИ

Архитектура Древнего Киева



Софийский собор в Киеве. XI в.



Золотые ворота в Киеве. 1037 г.

Screenshot of a page from one of the textbooks studied²²⁴

221 World art culture. Grade 10. In 2 parts. Part 1: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vldos centre, 2016. - p. 297

222 Ibid, p. 297.

223 Ibid, p. 297.

224 Ibid, p. 69

It is noteworthy that before the above statements, the author of the textbook, on several pages, argues about the absence of an intense cultural and political center in Kyiv as such, about the “happy salvation” by the Novgorod princes of the declining culture of Kyivan Rus, its perfection and improvement by moving the center to the Russian cities. As an argument in confirmation of the “happy salvation” of the artistic heritage of the period of Kyivan Rus and the cultural connection with it of the Grand Duchy of Moscow, the author gives the following example: *“The icon [note. Vladimir Mother of God] was brought to Rus in 1155. It owes its name «Vladimir» to Prince Andrey Bogolyubsky, who rescued it and secretly took the icon from Kiev to his native Vladimir. In 1395, the icon was solemnly transferred to Moscow; to its intercession is attributed the miraculous repulsion of enemies from the Russian capital”*²²⁵.

Forming an idea of the existing cultural similarities and historical ties between the Ukrainian and Russian people, the authors of study materials for the course “World art culture” simultaneously declare the absence of any cultural achievements of Kyiv from the times of Kyivan Rus. More precisely, the achievements of Kyiv are shown as insignificant, having no value; its role, in fact, is auxiliary and consists in shaping the greatness of first the Muscovite Empire, and later of the Russian Empire.

In each section devoted to a particular art form (architecture, music, written and oral creativity) the authors of the textbooks constantly demonstrate a superior attitude toward the culture of the whole Kyivan Rus period, emphasizing that *“there was no antiquity of its own in Rus, and the short pagan period did not lead the Eastern Slavs to the flowering of civilization and left no visible monuments of artistic creativity”*²²⁶. Even the moment of Rus’s baptism in 988 from the point of view of cultural value, according to Russians, was *“only a prologue to the history of Russian artistic culture,”*²²⁷ and that culture developed after 988 was *“only an «overture» to the subsequent action – the flowering of the original Russian national artistic culture”*²²⁸.

Such ideas and their reflection form a distorted perception of reality, Ukrainian history, and culture in a Ukrainian child forced to study the subject, laying the groundwork for further assimilation of general political narratives of Russian discourse. Therefore, in children in the occupied territories, the processes of formation of Ukrainian identity are significantly complicated or the already formed elements of Ukrainian identity are destroyed, and the forced assimilation of Ukrainian children is also facilitated, which certainly not only significantly complicates the reintegration of the occupied territories of Ukraine after their liberation but also destroys the future of the Ukrainian nation.

225 World art culture. Grade 10. In 2 parts. Part 2. WAC: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vados center, 2016. – p. 56

226 World art culture. Grade 10. In 2 parts. Part 1: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vados center, 2016. – p. 283

227 Ibid, p. 291

228 World art culture. Grade 10. In 2 parts. Part 2. WAC: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vados center, 2016. – p. 83

Ukrainian heritage is an integral part of the Russian one

In order to facilitate it for children to absorb the information, some historical periods of cultural development in the territories of Ukraine and Russia are described through the activities of certain well-known personalities.

Despite its name, the course's teaching materials give preference to the process of the historical formation of Russian culture (which absorbs the Ukrainian historical and cultural heritage) and stories about the achievements of its figures, among whom representatives of Ukrainian culture are undoubtedly included.

That is why, despite the references in textbooks to the life and work of Ukrainian artists, in particular Arkhyp Kuindzhi, Oleksandr Dovzhenko, and Illia Repin, they are described as representatives of Russian culture and their achievements – as part of the Russian cultural heritage.

Figures of Ukrainian history, whose nationality is difficult to deny due to their general prominence, are portrayed in the textbooks through negative verbal constructions and connotations. In particular, Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovskyi is portrayed as “*the lover of Katieryna II*”²²⁹. Another Ukrainian Hetman Ivan Mazepa, in Russian cultural tradition presented as a “treacherous traitor to the Russian state”, and as one who, “having allied himself with Karl XII, lost to the «*brave warlord Mienshykov*»”²³⁰.

Any links between prominent cultural figures (regardless of nationality) and Ukraine are either denied or deliberately glossed over in stories about this or that individual. In particular, in the biographies of Russian cultural figures who had close links with Ukraine because of their origin, residence on its territory, and contacts with the Ukrainian intelligentsia, these facts of their biographies are bypassed. Nor are their achievements and/or works (even the most famous ones) that are either related to Ukraine, or contain words or symbols that may lead to thoughts about Ukraine, its independence, and the originality of its culture, not mentioned. In particular, we are talking about the writer Mykola Hohol, the artist Illia Repin, and the historian Borys Hrekov²³¹.

Such silencing of the links of well-known historical and cultural figures with everything Ukrainian, and demonstration of a negative attitude towards all representatives of Ukrainian history lead children to rejecting the very idea of an independent State of Ukraine with its history and culture, extremely negatively affect young people's consciousness and distort the formation of their Ukrainian identity.

229 World art culture. Grade 10. In 2 parts. Part 2. WAC: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vlado center, 2016. – p. 249

230 Ibid, p. 228

231 World art culture. Grade 11. In 2 parts. Part 2. Russian art culture: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vlado centre, 2015, 319 p.

“Western world” is the external enemy of the Russian Federation

Creating an imaginary external enemy of the country is a prerequisite for any anti-democratic regime. The Russian textbooks for the course “World art culture” present this image of the “enemy” by presenting Russians as peaceful, open, and benevolent people and representatives of the Western world as barbarians and eternal fighters against everything Russian. In particular, the textbook often states: *“Moreover, our soul is open to Western culture: we see it, study it, know it and, if there is anything, we learn from it [...] we have the gift of feeling and bright imagination. Europeans do not have this gift. They only understand what is similar to them, even if it is distorted in their own way. For them, the Russian is foreign, restless, alien, strange, unattractive...”*²³².

Similar statements, in one interpretation or another, are repeated virtually every 30 - 40 pages, no matter what period of history and culture is in question: *“However, the idea of the incompatibility of the spiritual movements of France and Russia, «one’s own» and «someone else’s», East and West has proved truly eternal”*²³³.

To reinforce the narrative of the “lowness” of Western culture, the textbook author gives the following example: *“American cinema has spread the values of the American way of life around the world, acting as a promoter of Western democracy and freedom. However, one cannot fail to notice that today, along with masterpieces, American cinema is increasingly represented either by overpriced films [...] or by stereotypical fakes that espouse violence and sex to satisfy the lowbrow tastes of the ‘mass consumer’*²³⁴. The “infirmity” of the Western world and its values is also demonstrated by the example of the renaming of a public park in Paris: *“Only after the victory over Napoleon the square was renamed Field of Mars [note. Mars, the god of war], which became a place to commemorate Russian military glory”*²³⁵. In this way, the author of the textbook tries to convince that the Western world is not even able to come up with a “worthy name” for anything. However, the question of parallels between the name of the Roman god of war and “the deeds of the Russians in the war against Napoleon” in the name of a Paris landmark has been left open.

Creating an imaginary image of an *external enemy* in Russian textbooks does not avoid further humiliation of this “enemy” through belittling its culture and traditions and attributing to it a lack of understanding of the “true value” of life. One of the textbooks reviewed notes: *“The pathos of European doctrines, born of a belief in the omnipotence of man, in their ability to arrange «life without God» with the help of the power of reason, has not overshadowed the indigenous Russian national values. At this time, [...] the amazing ability of “the religious energy of the Russian soul [...] to switch and guide*

232 Ibid, p. 11

233 Ibid, p. 258

234 World art culture. Grade 11. In 2 parts. 1 part. WAC: [textbook]. / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vlado center, 2016. - p. 309-310

235 Ibid, p. 24

itself towards goals that are not religious” was evident. In other words, secular forms of culture borrowed from Europe were reinterpreted in Russia, taking into account the traditional Orthodox spiritual experience and the primordial moral attitudes of life»²³⁶.

The arrogant attitude towards the culture and values of other nations is also evident in another Russian textbook: *“The European, brought up by Rome values, despises other nations (and European nations too) and wishes to dominate them; but he/she demands within the state formal “freedom” and formal “democracy”. The Russian persons have always enjoyed the natural freedom of their space [...] they have always ‘wondered’ at other peoples, get along with them good-naturedly and only hate invading enslavers, they value freedom of spirit above formal legal freedom”²³⁷.*

At the same time, as a counterbalance to the “wrong values of the West”, the textbooks portray in the brightest colors the image of “beautiful and perfect, right and religious” Russian culture. In particular, through descriptions of paintings and other works of art, the author demonstrates that the main aim of Russian culture is to glorify the exploits of soldiers, their struggle for the “righteous cause”, and the assertion of military glory and honor: *“It is no coincidence that the mosaic of Saint Demetrius of Thessaloniki is considered the most artistically perfect. [...] The image of the warrior represents firmness of spirit, and invincibility in the fight for a righteous cause. Of course, there is a strong Byzantine tradition in the mosaic. And yet it is not foreign art, but rather an artistic act of national self-assertion, a glorification of Russian military glory”²³⁸.* It does not even mention that the mosaic depicting St. Demetrius of Thessaloniki, which was removed from the walls of the St. Michael’s Golden-Domed Monastery in Kyiv after its destruction in 1934, was taken from Kyiv to Soviet Russia and not brought back.

In one of the textbooks, the author also demonstrates the “right” values of the Russian man by quoting famous Russian figures, such as Leo Tolstoy: *“The desire to defend his homeland, the just anger, the thirst for retribution – all these feelings of the Russian soldier-patriot are conveyed in his fiction with great authenticity. [...] It exalts the humble courage, the belief in higher justice, characteristic of ordinary Russian soldiers”²³⁹.*

The narrative of external hostility towards everything Russian can be seen as part of an overall process of militarization of education. In particular, the demonstration of the superiority of all things Russian over other cultures and values, the search for “aspirations” of other states “to destroy Russia and all its culture”, especially in the context of today, somehow leads children to form the idea that other nations are hostile towards Russians and that the latter must be protected. Including aggression, which can be “justified” by the actual values of the Russian person, such as *“the desire to defend one’s homeland, fair anger, the thirst for retribution”*.

236 World art culture. Grade 10. In 2 parts. Part 1: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vldos center, 2016. – p. 350-351

237 World art culture. Grade 10. In 2 parts. Part 2. WAC: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vldos center, 2016. – p. 10

238 Ibid, p. 81

239 World art culture. Grade 11. In 2 parts. Part 2. Russian art culture: [textbook] / L. A. Rapatskaya. M.: Humanitarian ed. Vldos center, 2015. – p. 88

For children in the occupied territories of Ukraine, these narratives and related conclusions are part of the formation of a “moral duty” to “protect Russia from everything” and a kind of preparation for military service in the armed formations of the Russian Federation, which in current conditions has the consequence of attracting yesterday’s children from the occupied territories of Ukraine to participate in the war against their own country on the side of the aggressor.

Conclusions to Chapter 2

Children in the occupied territories of Ukraine and those who have been deported to the Russian Federation find themselves in a Russian educational environment where they are forced to study according to Russian standards, programs, and teaching materials. The latter were analyzed in detail in the study. Teaching materials contain some narratives that can lead to a change in children’s national identity from Ukrainian to Russian. These narratives can also shape Ukrainian children’s positive attitudes towards the Russian army and their desire to justify the imperialist policy of the Russian Federation in general and the realities of armed aggression against Ukraine in particular. The consequences of assimilation of these narratives by Ukrainian children pose a threat of further involvement of young people in military service in the Russian Federation, likely involvement in armed conflicts against third countries and even against their homeland, Ukraine.

Some narratives presented in this section aims at shape a so-called “*all-Russian national identity*” among residents of the occupied territories of Ukraine, particularly Ukrainian children. Russian textbooks contain messages encouraging children to treat the Russian language, culture, historical heritage, etc., as part of their new – Russian – identity, regardless of their citizenship and nationality.

The basis of forming of an “*all-Russian national identity*” is the thesis of the brotherly peoples, of the existence of their historical and cultural ties with Russia, where it has a leading role. The Russian Federation is also portrayed as the sole heir to Kyivan Rus, when all the latter’s assets – cultural heritage objects, figures, and achievements belong to Russia. The issue of language is at the heart of this narrative, as only the Russian language consolidates the fraternal nations, unites their cultures, and “*holds the fraternal family together*”²⁴⁰.

As a result of the influence of such ideas, Ukrainian children are highly likely not to identify themselves as representatives of the Ukrainian people and will not see the basis for preserving Ukrainian statehood.

The narrative of “*all-Russian national identity*” is logically embodied in the narrative of patriotism. All people living on Russian territory and under its control are presented as

240 The world around. Peoples of Russia: the road of friendship. Golden book of the Russian people, Grade 4: textbook / A. Tishkov, S. N. Rudnik, V. I. Vlasenko, O. N. Zhuravleva. Moscow: Prosveshchenie Publ., 2022. – p. 22

bearers of Russian identity. What “logically” follows from this is the so-called “*sacred duty of a Russian person*” to defend the homeland with a weapon in his or her hands during military service.

However, manifestations of patriotism as the highest “*value of the Russian person*” do not amount to “nationalism”. The latter concept is mostly identified with “Nazism” and “ultranationalism”, i.e., it is presented exclusively in a negative connotation. Such rhetoric helps justify Russia’s war against Ukraine, as it is much easier for children to accept the “legitimacy” of motives for aggression.

In order to shape a positive attitude of Ukrainian children towards military service in the Russian Federation, numerous examples of “military valor” are given, the Russian army is glorified, and all sorts of moral virtues are attributed to it. Children are told about the benefits of serving in the Russian armed forces, its prestige, and the guarantees that await those who join the ranks of the Russian army. It should shape the child’s perception of the army as an highly favorable environment for personal development and personality formation, which should lead to necessary actions required by the state in the future.

In order to easily and quickly involve children in the aggressive foreign policy of the Russian Federation, educational materials also contain information about the legitimacy, and sometimes even necessity, of Russia’s territorial expansion and the expansion of its borders for the sake of its prosperity and power. Spreading Russian influence into new lands and assimilating their peoples is a worthy cause. Accordingly, the collapse of the USSR should be perceived by children as a tragedy that divided a single multiethnic nation. This is why the Russian Federation has the right and even should influence the newly independent states. There is an over-emphasis on the fact that a significant proportion of Russians live in these countries and that the Russian language is quite widespread. In the case of “threats” that are sometimes “received” from these states, such as “violation of the rights of the Russian-speaking population,” aspiration to join NATO, or “development of weapons of mass destruction,” the Russian Federation has the right to use military force.

In this way, children in the occupied territories and children deported to the Russian Federation are considered bearers of Russian identity in a spirit of love and respect for Russia as their homeland. As a consequence, they should be ready to join the ranks of the Russian army to defend the Russian Federation against various external threats, including armed aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

RUSSIAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY REGARDING UKRAINIAN CHILDREN AND INTERNATIONAL LAW



RIGHTS TO EDUCATION AND ITS DEFINITION IN INTERNATIONAL LAW

*Education is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realizing other human rights. [...] Education has a vital role in promoting human rights and democracy...*²⁴¹

Part 2 of Article 1 of the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education defines that the term “**education**” “*all types and levels of education, and includes access to education, the standard and quality of education, and the conditions under which it is given.*”²⁴² In a broader sense, education should be understood as “*all actions by which a human group transmits to its descendants a set of knowledge and skills, as well as a moral code that allows the group to exist*”²⁴³.

241 General Comment No. 13 (Twenty-first session, 1999) on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, E/C.12/1999/10. URL: https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/CESCR_General_Comment_13_en.pdf

242 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960. URL: <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-against-discrimination-education>

243 Beiter, Klaus Dieter (2005). The Protection of the Right to Education by International Law. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, c. 19

The right to education is a fundamental human right that aims to ensure the comprehensive development of an individual, community, and society. The right to education was first enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948²⁴⁴.

In the future, the right to education was additionally established and developed in various international treaties, in particular:

- UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960);
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965);
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966);
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979);
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989);
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990);
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
- European Convention on Human Rights (1950) (ECHR).

The right to education is also recognized in some Conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO), in international humanitarian law, as well as in regional treaties.

Each of these international treaties, as well as the practice developed in UN subcommittees and, in particular, UNESCO, formed a separate system of specific rules and values that must be achieved in order to implement the right to education properly. Later, this system was taken into account by the former UN special rapporteur on the right to education, Katarina Tomasevski, who developed the so-called 4As concept – the concept is not mandatory for implementation, but according to specific criteria, it is possible to assess whether the right has been implemented under international law. The actual name of the concept was formed by the first letters of the four standards that make up this concept²⁴⁵.

1 Availability

education is free, there is appropriate infrastructure and trained personnel, and the state can support education appropriately.

244 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1984, UN General Assembly. URL: <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>

245 General Comment No. 13 (Twenty-first session, 1999) on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, E/C.12/1999/10. URL: https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/CESCR_General_Comment_13_en.pdf

2 Accessibility

the education system is non-discriminatory and accessible to all; this right is enshrined in the legal sphere of national and international law, in addition, positive steps are taken in parallel to attract the most marginal strata of the population.

3 Acceptability

the content of education is relevant, non-discriminatory, cultural and qualitative; the schools are safe, and the teachers are professional.

4 Adaptability

education develops along with changing needs of society and tackles inequalities such as gender discrimination; education is adapted according to local needs and context.

II

EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION THROUGH THE PRISM OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Nazi theory indeed specifically denies that such a thing as 'the truth' exists. [...] The implied objective of this line of thought is a nightmare world in which the Leader, or some ruling clique, controls not only the future but the past. If the Leader says of such and such an event, 'It never happened' – well, it never happened. If he says that two and two are five – well, two and two are five. This prospect frightens me much more than bombs.

*George Orwell*²⁴⁶

The UN Secretary General's note on the impact of armed conflict events on children states that "education is critical during armed conflicts. Although everything around may be chaotic, learning at school should be expected"²⁴⁷.

Developing the opinion and agreeing that armed conflict itself poses a serious threat to life and health, international law experts have established separate provisions in general international law that ensure the right to education in general and also – in international humanitarian law (IHL) – relating exclusively to situations of armed conflict. Here it is worth noting that the norms of international human rights law (IHRL) continue to operate in conditions of armed conflict. Depending on the specific situation, they can act independently along with the norms of IHL, or the latter can act as special norms (*lex specialis*) clarifying the norms of IHL in conditions of armed conflict²⁴⁸.

In particular, the norms of IHL regulate educational institutions' status as civilian objects under protection and cannot be military targets²⁴⁹, and also determine the behavior of the Occupying Power in relation to educational institutions in the controlled territory. IHL establishes the obligation of the state that occupies a specific territory to properly

246 George Orwell. Looking back on the Spanish War. URL: https://orwell.ru/library/essays/Spanish_War/english/esw_1, para.4

247 Impact of armed conflict on children, A/51/306, General Assembly, 1996. URL: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/223213>

248 Advisory opinion of 8 July 1996, "Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons", The International Court of Justice, 1996. URL: <https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/95/095-19960708-ADV-01-00-EN.pdf>, para. 25;

Judgement in the case concerning Armed Activities on the Territory of the Congo (Democratic Republic of the Congo v. Uganda), The International Court of Justice, 2005. URL: <https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/116/116-20051219-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>, para. 216

The Judgement in the case of Varnava and Others v. Turkey, The European Court of Human Rights, 2009. – URL: [https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng/#/%22itemid%22:\[%22001-94162%22](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng/#/%22itemid%22:[%22001-94162%22), para. 185

249 Art. 56 of the Convention (IV) respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and its annex: Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land. The Hague, 18 October 1907. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_222#Text

Art. 52(3) of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol 1), 1977. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_199#Text

manage and promote the proper operation of educational institutions, and Art. 38 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child obliges states to comply with IHL norms regarding children in armed conflict. According to many researchers²⁵⁰, Art. 43 of the Hague Regulations of 1907 obliges the parties to the conflict to “*re-establish and insure, as far as possible, public order and safety*”²⁵¹ also applies to the field of education. This is mainly due to the fact that this article enshrines the basic principle of *status quo ante bellum*, which provides for the duty of the Occupying Power to preserve and maintain as much as possible the legal status that existed in the territories before their occupation.

The following provision in the context of education was revealed in Art. 50(1) of Geneva Convention IV of 1949: “*The Occupying Power shall, with the cooperation of the national and local authorities [note. of the occupied territories], facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children*”²⁵². In the educational process, discrimination is prohibited not only at the level of general norms protecting human and child rights but also at the level of IHL norms, in particular, a similar provision is contained in Art. 27 of Geneva Convention IV of 1949.

Although the content of the wording “facilitate proper work” must be established in each specific case, **the Occupying Power is obliged to ensure the continuity of education, observing negative and positive obligations**. Negative obligations include avoiding the requisition of personnel, premises, or equipment of institutions, while positive obligations include actively supporting and encouraging their work, supplying them with basic necessities, etc²⁵³.

Based on all of the above, the Russian Federation first ignores the principles of “availability” and “accessibility” of education because the functioning of Ukrainian educational schools in the occupied territories has been stopped. Accordingly, the opportunity to study according to the Ukrainian educational program does not exist. Secondly, those narratives that offer educational standards and materials of the Russian Federation for Ukrainian children who are in the occupied Ukrainian territories or deported to the Russian Federation do not meet the mentioned educational criterion of “acceptability”. The key and unacceptable thing are that in education, the Russian Federation treats Russian children and Ukrainian children deported to the Russian Federation and living in the occupied territories equally. At the same time, the Russian authorities do not recognize the fact of their occupation of the territories of Ukraine, as a result of which they refuse to

250 The 1949 Geneva Conventions: A Commentary. Edited by Andrew Clapham, Paola Gaeta, Marco Sassòli, Oxford Commentaries on International Law, Oct 2015. URL: <https://opil.ouplaw.com/display/10.1093/law/9780199675449.001.0001/law-9780199675449>, p. 1488

251 Art. 43, Convention (II) with Respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land and its annex: Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land. The Hague, 29 July 1899. URL: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/hague-conv-ii-1899/regulations-art-43#:~:text=43-,Art.,in%20force%20in%20the%20country>

252 Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. URL: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciv-1949/article-50?activeTab=undefined>

253 Commentary of 1958 to the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. URL: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Comment.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=41266EBF07176FEFC12563CD0042C4CE>, p. 285-287

comply with the norms of IHL. As a result, Ukrainian children are forced to study “irrelevant” educational theses that do not consider their belonging to the Ukrainian national group. It is an example of “indirect discrimination”, when, despite significant differences, two groups, Russian and Ukrainian, are placed in the same educational conditions – compulsory study according to Russian standards as a prerequisite for obtaining secondary general education. At the same time, Ukrainian children find themselves in a worse situation because they are deprived of access to Ukrainian standards and spend most of their childhood under the conditions of “Russian educational influence”, which leads to the “blurring” of their own identity and assimilation with the Russian group.

It, in turn, violates Art. 8 and 20 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which oblige the state to respect the child’s right to preserve individuality and to ensure that education is focused on fostering respect for one’s own cultural identity, the country of origin. Since the child does not yet have a formed worldview or is only on the way to its formation, the preservation of individuality largely depends on the content of the educational materials of the educational process. The more purposeful manifestation certain educational narratives have, the more vulnerable the child is to their influence. Russian educational policy is designed for the vulnerability of Ukrainian children. In other words, the preservation of Ukrainian individuality in the occupied territories of Ukraine during the implementation of the educational process is a direct obligation of the Russian Federation, which it does not fulfill. Instead, the Russian Federation inculcates “national Russian civic identity” in children from the occupied territories.

In addition, the stated principle of “acceptability” of education is also ignored due to the imposition of narratives in the educational process that justify the armed aggression of the Russian Federation. We are talking, in particular, about separate sections of educational materials on “the danger of NATO”, “discrimination of the Russian-speaking population in the CIS countries”, “the need for the Russian Federation to protect its subjects”, etc. In general, these theses cannot be part of the educational process because they do not even meet the educational goals of any of the specified educational subjects in the Russian Federation and are open manipulations to form a loyal attitude towards the international crimes of the Russian Federation.

It also violates the principles mentioned above and the norms of IHL, which regulate the legal regime of the occupied territory since the Russian Federation considers the occupied territories of Ukraine as its own. As a result, the Russian Federation ignores the *status quo ante bellum* and the continuity of education and implements its Russian standards instead of Ukrainian ones. Militarization and similar assimilation of the population in conditions of occupation cannot comply with Art. 50(1) of Geneva Convention IV of 1949. We believe that this article reflects the principle of “proper education”, which implies the need for the proper functioning of educational institutions in the occupied territory and the obligation to ensure the rights to preserve identity, cultural identity, and the prohibition of militarism propaganda. Only in that case can education be considered “proper”. The given interpretation of the principle of “proper education” corresponds to the standards of international human rights law, which continues to operate in conditions of armed conflict.

Although the Russian Federation does not comply with IHL, particularly the norms mentioned above, only serious violations can be recognized as war crimes. The latter is recognized in international law as outlined in Art. 8 of the Rome Statute. Despite a relatively comprehensive list of war crimes, international law does not contain a crime that would directly cover the Russian educational policy towards Ukrainian children.

The Rome Statute contains several components of international crimes, the content of which could potentially cover the actions of Russian officials:

1. WAR CRIMES

- Art. 8(2)(a)(v) – Compelling a prisoner of war or other protected person to serve in the forces of a hostile Power;
- Art. 8(2)(b)(xv) – Compelling the nationals of the hostile party to take part in the operations of war directed against their own country;
- Art. 8(2)(b)(xxi) – Committing outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment;
- Art. 8(2)(b)(xxvi) – Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into the national armed forces or using them to participate actively in hostilities.

2. A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

- Art. 7(1)(h) – Persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act or crime within the jurisdiction of the Court.

War crimes

Based on the above four components of war crimes, they can be conditionally divided into two blocks: forced military service on the side of the Occupying Power and outrages upon human dignity.

The first group of crimes is a severe violation of Art. 51 of Geneva Convention IV of 1949. Two crimes from this group under Art. 8(2)(a)(v) and Art. 8(2)(b)(xv) of the Rome Statute provide for the coercion of the civilian population of the occupied territory into military service for the Occupying Power in its ranks or its benefit.

International law also clearly establishes in Art. 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)²⁵⁴ and Art. 51 of Geneva Convention IV of 1949 banning any war propaganda. The use of propaganda has been repeatedly condemned, in particular, Resolution 110(II) of the UN General Assembly emphasizes the inadmissibility of *“all form of propaganda, in whatsoever country conducted, which is either designed or likely to provoke or encourage any threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression”*²⁵⁵.

254 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966. URL: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

255 General Assembly Resolution 110(II), “Measures to be taken against Propaganda and the Inciters of a new War”. URL: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/209883?ln=zh_CN

Based on the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, coercion under Art. 8(2)(a)(v) and Art. 8(2)(b)(xv) of the Rome Statute must be implemented by an act or threat²⁵⁶. At the same time, such an action or threat must be real, one that can be carried out or at least perceived as such by the victim. Russian educational policy within the framework of the militarization of children through school textbooks can hardly be perceived as an obvious manifestation of such an action or threat, but one must take into account the coercive environment in which the child is placed.

At the same time, coercion should be purposeful, not indirect and vague. Such purposefulness can be found in the general algorithm of Russian educational policy in the process of imposing complex interconnected narratives (belonging to the Russian people ➔ patriotic attitude to the Russian Federation ➔ militarization of the educational process ➔ inter-ethnic conflicts in the “CIS States” and violations of the rights of the Russian-speaking population ➔ readiness in the future to defend the Russian Federation by military means), so that the child “voluntarily” decides to join the ranks of the occupier’s armed forces.

In this chain, the militarization of education is, in fact, an element of a much larger one – the future involvement in military service. Despite the alleged potential “voluntariness” of military service for future generations of Ukrainian children, the Russian Federation creates a coercive environment in which a child can, with a high degree of probability, join military service on the side of the Occupying Power. Since international law dynamically responds to modern challenges, creating such conditions in the context of Russian aggression in Ukraine should be qualified as coercion. Examples of the dynamic response of international law to similar situations can be seen within the framework of genocide (**forcible transfer** of children from one group to another) and the crime against humanity (**forced displacement** of the civilian population). They can be committed by using the existing or created environment that forces people to “voluntarily” move, as happened, for example, with the civilian population in the occupied territories of Ukraine during the aggression of the Russian Federation²⁵⁷.

Currently, it is known that the Russian Federation conducted 16 conscription campaigns in occupied Crimea. As a result, at least 34,000 people were recruited for military service in the Russian Federation, and another 3,000 were to be recruited during the last conscription campaign in the fall of 2022²⁵⁸. Conscription campaigns are also taking

256 Elements of Crimes, The International Criminal Court, 2013. URL: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/Elements-of-Crimes.pdf>, p. 11, 17

257 Elements of Crimes, The International Criminal Court, 2013. URL: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/Publications/Elements-of-Crimes.pdf>, p. 3-4

258 Report on the results of a study of the policy of the Russian Federation on the violent change in the demographic composition of the population of the occupied Crimean Peninsula, Regional Center for Human Rights, 2021. URL: <https://cutt.ly/h2LGXym>, p. 39-40;

Analytical report “Forcible mobilization of Ukrainian citizens by the Russian Federation in the occupied territory of Ukraine: facts and legal qualification”, Ukraine SAM Coalition, 2022. URL: https://zmina.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/01/mobilization_ukr.pdf, p. 30-31;

Publications on the media website “RIA. News. Crimea” dated 20.10.2022 and 24.10.2022, respectively. URL: <https://archive.ph/R6ozN> and <https://archive.ph/OFGtm>

place in the occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions²⁵⁹. In addition, as part of the recently announced “partial” mobilization after the large-scale aggression, there are reports of the involvement of at least several thousand Crimeans in hostilities against Ukraine²⁶⁰. Since such conscription and mobilization is a direct violation of the above-mentioned articles of the Rome Statute (Art. 8(2)(a)(v) and Art. 8(2)(b)(xv)) of the Rome Statute), the implementation of Russian educational policy towards Ukrainian of children should be considered complicity in the form of facilitating such recruitment and/or mobilization, if it is established that such persons studied according to the relevant school manuals (Art. 25(3)(c) and Art. 25(3)(d) of the Rome Statute).

Another war crime is recruiting or recruiting children under the age of fifteen into national armed forces or using them to participate in hostilities actively (Art. 8(2)(b)(xxvi) of the Rome Statute. Unlike the above crimes, in this case, IHL aims not only to prohibit the coercion of the civilian population of the occupied territory into military service but also to exclude even the genuine voluntary involvement of children in the armed conflict. This composition of the crime cannot cover the actions of the Russian Federation during the implementation of the educational policy because the imposition on children certain narratives is not a form of recruitment or recruitment for participation in hostilities. At the same time, in the case of establishing the circumstances of the involvement of children of this age in the armed forces or hostilities, the implementation of the mentioned educational policy of the Russian Federation can also be considered as complicity in the form of facilitating the commission of a crime under Art. 8(2)(b)(xxvi) of the Rome Statute (Art. 25(3)(c) and Art. 25(3)(d) of the Rome Statute).

259 “Decree of the Head of the DPR” “On the establishment and work of the draft commission of the Donetsk People’s Republic and draft commissions in districts (cities without district division) in October-December 2017” No. 197 of 26.07.2017. URL: <https://archive.vn/Ha7ae>

“Decree of the Head of the DPR” “On the establishment and work of the draft commission of the Donetsk People’s Republic and draft commissions in districts (cities without district division) in April-July 2018” No. 56 of 01.03.2018. URL: <https://archive.vn/veRHw>;

“Decree of the Head of the DPR” “On the conscription of citizens born in 1994-2003 for military service in April-July 2021” No. 79 of 25.03.2021. URL: <https://archive.vn/Zt21D>;

“Decree of the Head of the DPR” “On the conscription of citizens born in 1994-2003 for military service in October-December 2021” No. 305 of 01.10.2021. URL: <https://archive.vn/1HQQE>;

“Decree of the Head of the LPR” “On compulsory training in military specialties for soldiers and sergeants in the People’s Militia of the Luhansk People’s Republic” No. YF-150/21 of 01.04.2021. URL: <https://archive.vn/N7uex>;

Decree of the “Head of the LPR” “On the conduct in April-September 2021 of compulsory training in military specialties for soldiers and sergeants in the People’s Militia of the Lugansk People’s Republic” No. YF-150/21 of 01.04.2021. URL: <https://archive.vn/Avl9k>

260 The program “Main interview” on the air of the TV channel “Millet”, Telegram channel “Aksenov Z 82”, 2022. URL: <https://archive.ph/2CH7w>;

I fully support the initiative of the Head of the Chechen Republic, Telegram channel “Aksenov Z 82”, 2022. URL: <https://archive.ph/4GgFO>;

Mobilized reservists took the oath of office in Sevastopol, RIA News. Crimea, 2022. URL: <https://archive.ph/5L64Q>;

Operational information on the situation in the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol as of January 9, 2023, Representation of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/ppu.gov.ua/posts/544702484370448>

Moreover, the last among the mentioned provisions of the Rome Statute is a war crime, according to Art. 8(2)(b)(xxi) – violation of human dignity, in particular offensive and humiliating treatment, which is the result of a severe violation, in particular, Art. 27 of Geneva Convention IV of 1949.

Human dignity is a specific psycho-emotional state when a person feels comfortable in his own eyes and society and is on equal terms with other members. This condition can manifest itself in various situations, particularly concerning certain patriotic and cultural feelings and belonging to a specific national group. For example, forcing a Ukrainian to sing the Russian anthem, kiss the Russian flag, deface Ukrainian symbols, and “dehumanization” through insulting expressions such as “Nazi, Fascist, Bandera resident” can be considered humiliating treatment.

In the context of Russian educational policy, forcing Ukrainian children to agree with the “legitimate motives” of Russian aggression, to belong to the Russian national group, to have a patriotic attitude towards the aggressor, and to be ready to die for him in battle can be considered humiliating treatment. Moreover, when similar actions occur concerning children whose relatives died, were injured, or lost their homes due to shelling or other actions of the Russian military, justifying the aggression of the Russian Federation can be incredibly humiliating for children.

At the same time, the revealed narratives of the Russian educational policy are presented quite neutrally and generalized for all students, so it is difficult to claim that they are “offensive” to a specific child and are aimed directly at him.

The younger the child is, the more likely his worldview and identity are still in the formative stage. Accordingly, a situation may arise when the child is unaware of his humiliation because he has not yet fully understood the meaning of belonging to a specific national group. Even in this situation, this alone can be considered humiliating treatment. The “splitting” of a child’s national identity into another group or the artificial creation of conditions to prevent the formation of such an identity in one way or another affects that person’s dignity.

Based on the above judgments, it is impossible to unequivocally state that any of the mentioned war crimes were committed only by introducing propaganda narratives to Ukrainian children. Nevertheless, such actions still violate the norms of IHL. In this context, it is worth paying attention to the fact that Art. 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine currently criminalizes severe violations of IHL, but also “other violations of the laws and customs of war”. In turn, Art. 146 of the Geneva Convention IV of 1949 leaves it to the State’s discretion which measures must be applied to stop other violations of IHL, which does not exclude the establishment of criminal liability for them.

The above does not mean automatic criminal responsibility for any violation of IHL. According to Art. 11 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine is only a “socially dangerous act”, and the application of criminal liability must be proportional to the committed act. For qualification under Art. 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine in national legal practice is not enough to establish only the use of Russian textbooks with certain

narratives in the occupied territory. It is also necessary to establish that a specific textbook with the narratives defined in it is actually used to teach Ukrainian children. This approach should be comprehensive and comprehensive, and not based on just a few examples.

Crime against humanity – discriminatory persecution

Art. 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute provides responsibility for such an international crime as discriminatory persecution. Its provision reads as follows: *“intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights contrary to international law by reason of the identity of the group or collectivity”, “against any identifiable group or collectivity on [...], national, ethnic, cultural, [...] or other grounds [...] in connection with any act [note. e.g., crime against humanity] [...], or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court”*²⁶¹.

The essence of this crime is to commit an illegal act based on discrimination against a person due to a specific characteristic, for example, his belonging to a specific group. In the case of children, we are talking about the Ukrainian national group with its cultural customs, traditions, and language.

Actions covered by the concept of persecution are widely represented in international law. Under customary international law, to qualify as a crime of persecution, it is not required to be connected with the commission of another crime against humanity or a war crime based on discrimination against a person based on a particular characteristic. The existence of such a connection, based on the literal content of the article, is instead a way of limiting the subject jurisdiction of the ICC²⁶². At the same time, this does not limit other international judicial institutions and national courts in prosecuting relevant acts.

The practice of some international criminal tribunals shows that discriminatory persecution can even include *“interference with political, social or economic rights”*²⁶³, including civil ones, such as: passing discriminatory laws, preventing members of an ethnic or religious group from aspects of social, political and economic life, in particular to professions, business, educational institutions, civil service, prohibition of *“use of a*

261 Ст. 7(1)(h), 7(2)(g), The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998. URL: https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_588#Text

262 The Prosecutor v. Feidinand Nahima, Case № ICTR-99-52-A, The Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, 2007. URL: <https://ucr.irmct.org/LegalRef/CMSDocStore/Public/English/Judgement/NotIndexable/ICTR-99-52/MS31299R0000555179.PDF>, para. 970, 985-86; 988, 995;

The Prosecutor v. Zoran Kupreskic, case № IT-95-16-T, Judgement, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, 2000. URL: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/kupreskic/tjug/en/kup-tj000114e.pdf>, para. 580-581

263 The Prosecutor v. Zoran Kupreskic, IT-95-16-T, Judgement, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, 2000. URL: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/kupreskic/tjug/en/kup-tj000114e.pdf>, para. 615

*national language [...]; systematic destruction of monuments or buildings representative of a particular social, religious, cultural or other group*²⁶⁴ etc.

Suppose we look at the above practice through the lens of Russian educational policy regarding Ukrainian children. In that case, the Russian Federation first interferes with the fundamental rights of children, which are provided for by the mentioned Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ICCPR, and the ECHR. The fundamentality of these rights lies in their violation affecting the child's identity, the determination of the future of children as representatives of a specific national group, and the potential participation in an armed conflict against their own state.

The implemented Russian educational policy aims to assimilate Ukrainian children, preventing the members of the Ukrainian national group from participating in its national, cultural, and educational life, particularly by depriving them of access to Ukrainian education. Given the cited case law of the tribunals, such actions are covered by discriminatory harassment.

On the other hand, discriminatory harassment, in its literal meaning, is an active action directed directly against a group or its representatives. In addition, at first glance, the Russian Federation neutrally implements Russian educational standards in the occupied territory and does not purposefully persecute Ukrainian children for their identity, which is difficult to prove in practice. Even if one agrees that certain educational narratives may contain signs of targeted persecution, some of them existed in Russian educational materials until 2014. It may give the impression that the actions of the Russian Federation are not "intentional". Therefore, to qualify as a crime, it is necessary to prove that the occupation and the introduction of Russian education in the occupied territory is not just a coincidence but a purposeful policy for the assimilation of Ukrainian children.

The existence of such a policy is confirmed by the fact that since 2014, the Russian Federation has been massively and systematically committing international crimes in the occupied territories of Ukraine, implementing a colonization policy to displace the Ukrainian population and replace it with Russian ones. In particular, by depriving Ukrainian citizens of their property, forcing them to obtain Russian citizenship, deporting and forcibly displacing them, putting them under criminal prosecution, restricting travel and freedom of expression, etc.

The element of education becomes a prominent tool of the specified comprehensive policy because it makes it possible to form from a whole generation of the civilian

264 The Prosecutor v. Zoran Kupreskic, IT-95-16-T, Judgement, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, 2000. URL: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/kupreskic/tjug/en/kup-tj000114e.pdf>, para. 595, 612, 615;

The Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic, case № IT-94-1-T, Judgement, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, 1997. URL: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/tadic/tjug/en/tad-ts70507JT2-e.pdf>, para. 703-704, 710;

The Prosecutor v. Miroslav Kvocka, case IT-98-30/1-T, Judgement, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, 2001. URL: <https://ucr.irmct.org/LegalRef/CMSDocStore/Public/English/Judgement/NotIndexable/IT-98-30%231/JUD12R0000034829.TIF>, para. 186

population in the occupied territory individuals with a “Russian common citizen identity”. In light of the revealed narratives at the level of state educational standards and conditions of occupation, the Russian Federation could not help but know that introducing Russian education in the occupied territory would lead to actual discrimination against the Ukrainian population. The revealed narratives of the Russian educational policy cause tremendous damage to Ukrainian children, including those deported to the Russian Federation, because these narratives do not change the identity of Russian children.

Another factor to consider is the nature of the criminal acts, which are covered by discriminatory prosecution. Deportation and torture on discriminatory grounds are typical examples, and less typical are the mentioned adoption of discriminatory laws, exclusion from professions and educational institutions, etc. The assimilation and militarized educational policy in the occupied territory has not yet been the subject of a trial under this crime, although it meets its elements.

In summary, the implementation of the educational policy of the Russian Federation for Ukrainian children, based on the identified abscesses in the standards and educational materials, can be the basis for the qualification of a crime against humanity – discriminatory persecution. In our opinion, “atypicality” cannot be a reason for rejecting the proposed qualification.

However, such a conclusion for law enforcement agencies of Ukraine does not simplify the legal qualification. The Criminal Code of Ukraine does not contain crimes against humanity, a significant shortcoming of the current code. Thus, in national law, such actions can be qualified only under Art. 161 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine – “Violation of the equality of citizens depending on their racial, national, regional affiliation, religious beliefs, disability and other grounds”, the essence and responsibility of which can hardly be considered proportional to the consequences.

Evidence of genocide

The Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia emphasized that, among other criminal acts, incitement and war propaganda can also be criminalized, particularly as evidence of the accused’s intent to commit genocide²⁶⁵. At the same time, the actions of the Russian Federation within the framework of the researched educational policy and narratives of the Russian textbooks can hardly be an example of “direct and public calls to commit the crime of genocide” because the textbooks do not contain theses that encourage the physical extermination of the Ukrainian national group.

The educational policy of the Russian Federation could be considered within the framework of the broader genocidal policy of the Russian Federation during the armed aggression against Ukraine. However, it would hardly have an independent significance.

265 Prosecutor v Brđanin, Judgement, IT-99-36-T, 01 September 2004, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. URL: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/brdanin/tjug/en/brd-tj040901e.pdf>, para. 4, 80, 83, 330

The assimilation policy of the Russian Federation in educational activities can lead to the actual destruction of the Ukrainian national group in the occupied territory and Ukrainian children who were deported to the Russian Federation. However, despite such consequences, these actions are not covered by today's understanding of genocide under Art. 6 of the Rome Statute.

Such a policy proves in favor of the genocidal character of the actions of the Russian Federation against the Ukrainian national group within the framework of Art. 6(e) of the Rome Statute – the deportation of Ukrainian children to the Russian Federation and their transfer to another group because the assimilationist educational policy of the Russian Federation negatively affects their Ukrainian identity, imposes on such children the idea of belonging to the Russian people, and forms in them a “general Russian civil identity” and instills patriotic feelings towards the “new” Motherland – the Russian Federation²⁶⁶.

In this context, it is worth mentioning the so-called “cultural genocide”, which is not covered by Art. 6 of the Rome Statute. It involves “*attacking only the cultural or sociological characteristics of a human group in order to annihilate these elements which give to that group its own identity distinct from the rest of the community*”²⁶⁷. Examples can be the destruction of cultural monuments, language, as well as “*history, traditions, the relationship between its members, the relationship with other groups, the relationship with the land*”²⁶⁸. Thus, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia claimed that cultural genocide is additional evidence of other genocidal acts under Art. 2 of the Genocide Convention and Art. 6(e) of the Rome Statute of the ICC²⁶⁹.

Based on the practice of international tribunals and taking into account the context of Russian aggression, one can rather say that the educational policy of the Russian Federation towards Ukrainian children is a kind of instrument of «cultural genocide» on the part of the Russian Federation, which can be qualified as a crime against humanity – discriminatory persecution, about which has already been stated above²⁷⁰.

266 Communication pursuant to Art. 15 of the Rome Statute “Responsibility of the Russian Federation Officials for Genocide in Ukraine for Forcibly Transferring Children of the Group to Another Group”, Regional Center for Human Rights and the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention, 2022. URL: https://www.lemkininstitute.com/_files/ugd/9bc553_b7b957498faa441cbe88e21bf717bfe7.pdf

267 The Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, Judgement, IT-98-33-T, 02 August 2001, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. URL: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/krstic/tjug/en/krs-tj010802e.pdf>, para. 580

268 The Prosecutor v. Vidoje Blagojevic and Dragan Jokic, Judgement, IT-02-60-T, 17 January 2005, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. URL: https://www.icty.org/x/cases/blagojevic_jokic/tjug/en/bla-050117e.pdf, para. 666

269 The Prosecutor vs. Radislav Krstic, Judgement, IT-98-33-T, 02 August 2001, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. URL: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/krstic/tjug/en/krs-tj010802e.pdf>, para. 580

270 The Prosecutor v. Momčilo Krajišnik, IT-00-39-T, Judgement, The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, 2006. URL: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/krajsnik/tjug/en/kra-jud060927e.pdf>, para. 781-783

In its official position on the genocide of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adheres to a broader approach: *“Children who are forced to study under new «programs» are in fact subjected to forced transfer from one group to another”*²⁷¹. In this case, implementing the educational policy of the Russian Federation in the occupied territory is considered an independent act of genocide. Although this approach has not yet been evaluated in international law, it cannot be rejected entirely because international law must be dynamic and respond to the present conditions.

The national law enforcement agencies of Ukraine should consider the Russian Federation’s educational policy regarding Ukrainian children in the occupied territories of Ukraine and in the Russian Federation, at least for the formation of an additional evidence base in the framework of the proceedings under Part 1 of Art. 442 of the Criminal Code, including the transfer of this information to the International Criminal Court.

CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 3

The right to education is one of the fundamental human rights because, thanks to education, a person can become an independent member of society, bring the fruits of his thinking into it and respond to destructive social factors, including those imposed from the outside. This right is especially important for children because consciousness is subject to any narratives at a young age. The child’s individual characteristics depend on the establishment of fundamental human values in the spirit of respect for human rights.

Russian educational policy towards Ukrainian children violates many fundamental international treaties, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. As a result of such actions, the assimilation of Ukrainian children with Russian children takes place, and the cult of war and national enmity spreads in the conditions of armed aggression of the Russian Federation for the potential involvement of children in hostilities against Ukraine.

The introduction of educational narratives of the Russian Federation regarding Ukrainian children may indicate a number of international crimes, in particular, war crimes under Art. 8(2)(a)(v) and Art. 8(2)(b)(xv) of the Rome Statute in the form of complicity. It meant the promotion of mobilization, conscription for military service and involvement in hostilities. The Russian Federation is creating an environment of a coercive nature, which in the long run may lead to allegedly “voluntary” military service of Ukrainian children in the ranks of the occupation forces or on the side of the Russian Federation. In addition, the educational policy of the Russian Federation is a humiliating treatment for Ukrainian children, who are forced to be patriots of the Russian Federation and to recognize the “legitimate” motives of armed aggression. Although some children are still forming their identities, this should not exempt them from responsibility for a war crime under Art. 8(2)(b)(xxi) of the Rome Statute.

271 Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine On the Statement of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine “On the Russian Federation’s Commitment of Genocide in Ukraine”, 2022. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2188-20#Text>

It can also be argued that the Russian Federation committed a crime against humanity – discriminatory persecution (Art. 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute). The Russian Federation deprives Ukrainian children of their fundamental right to Ukrainian education and the preservation of their identity and cultural identity, as Russian education is destructive for them, and Ukrainian education is inaccessible. These circumstances are evidence of the so-called “cultural genocide”, which serves as additional evidence of the genocide of the Russian Federation against the Ukrainian national group under Art. 6(e) of the Rome Statute – deportation and transfer of Ukrainian children to Russian families during the armed aggression of the Russian Federation.

From the point of view of national legal qualifications, Ukrainian law enforcement agencies should pay attention to Art. 438 of the Criminal Code within the framework of potential war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law, as well as on Art. 161 of the Criminal Code – regarding discriminatory persecution and incitement of national enmity and Art. 442 of the Criminal Code to supplement the evidence base of the crime of genocide committed by the Russian Federation against the Ukrainian nation.

CONCLUSIONS

In violation of international law, the Russian Federation has declared the annexation of Ukraine's territories, extended its own legislation to them, and forcibly imposed Russian educational standards on Ukrainian children. Such conditions of prolonged occupation of a part of Ukraine's territory by the Russian Federation have far-reaching consequences for many spheres of Ukraine's socio-political structure.

The state educational standards of the Russian Federation contain federal and regional components, as well as an educational institution component. The standards are approved by the relevant ministries of the Russian Federation and are a set of requirements that must be implemented in the general school curricula, which are later reflected in textbooks, workbooks, and teaching materials.

The Russian Federation considers the occupied territories of Ukraine to be part of its own state, and therefore treats Ukrainian civilians as its own Russian population in any region of the Russian Federation. As a result of such actions, Ukrainian children fall into the Russian educational system and, under the influence of any narratives stipulated by Russian educational policy, are deprived of access to Ukrainian education. The process of introducing Russian education is coercive, as it is impossible to avoid the Russian school curriculum or to choose an alternative curriculum.

A study of Russian educational standards, programmes, and concepts of the Russian Federation at primary, general, and secondary education levels revealed narratives that aim to make children realize that they are part of the Russian people, patriots of “motherland,” the Russian Federation, for which they are ready to fight and give their lives. The longer a Ukrainian child studies according to Russian educational programmes, the more these narratives become ingrained in his or her mind. This leads to the assimilation of the Ukrainian population into Russian society, the destruction of the Ukrainian nation in the occupied territories, and complicates their future de-occupation and reintegration.

In the process of teaching specific subjects in schools using textbooks from the federal list, which are compulsory for educational institutions, the narratives of the standards and programmes are significantly expanded and deepened. This is evidenced by the content of the analysed study materials for the compulsory subjects in the Russian Federation: “The world around,” “Social studies,” “Basics of religious cultures and secular ethics,” “Basics of life safety” and “Geography,” and for optional subjects: “Basics of the spiritual and moral culture of the peoples of Russia” and “World art culture.”

In particular, in the teaching materials for the subjects mentioned above, the Russian language and culture are presented to Ukrainian children as a factor uniting them into a single whole with the Russian people, forming a sense of belonging to the latter. Any reference to the national characteristics of the Ukrainian people is avoided, and the formation of a national identity in Ukrainian children is excluded. Ukraine’s history and its figures are presented as exclusively Russian, and the Russian Federation is presented as the sole owner of the historical, scientific, and cultural heritage of Rus (Kyivan Rus), the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. This together destroys the child’s connection to Ukraine as a whole, destroys his or her Ukrainian identity, and forms a new Russian identity.

By implementing the narrative of belonging to the Russian nation, educational materials form Ukrainian children’s vision of the Russian Federation as their own homeland and a patriotic attitude towards it. In addition, children are warned against nationalism, which, according to Russian textbooks, necessarily contains chauvinism and Nazism. In reality, the teaching materials attempt to shape the idea that the exercise of the right to self-determination by other peoples is a manifestation of “ethnic separatism” that divides the Russian Federation. Russia’s aggression demonstrates that Ukrainians are seen as “nationalists” because of their desire to develop their own statehood. Such an educational narrative contributes to Ukrainian children’s acceptance of the motives behind Russian armed aggression.

The development of a patriotic attitude towards Russia in Ukrainian children should also be manifested in practice through the ability to defend the “new motherland” during military service in Russia, which is the “sacred duty of a Russian person”. Sacrificing one’s life to fulfil such a “duty” is presented as a particularly honourable act, regardless of age. In order to foster a positive attitude towards war and military service in general, textbooks are overflowing with examples of “Russian army victories during the domestic wars in moments of defending Russia from the enemy”. War itself and military service are portrayed in a romanticized and heroic manner, presented as an opportunity to take advantage of a social lift, where various guarantees and advantages that can be obtained in the case of military service are noted.

The result is a militarization of children’s consciousness, which together can lead to “conscious and sincere” participation of Ukrainian children in armed aggression against Ukraine as part of the Russian army or on its side.

Children are also imposed the imperialist essence of their “motherland,” the Russian Federation, which must constantly expand its borders by seizing new territories, resettling and assimilating the population. This can be done both by “soft power” — indirect influence and interference in the internal policies of other states — and by military means. In the same context, the vision is formed that interethnic armed conflicts are taking place in the “former USSR countries,” the “CIS countries,” in particular due to discrimination against the Russian-speaking population, when in the Russian Federation itself “there are no such problems”. The Russian Federation cannot stand aside, seeking to “protect its subjects” from such threats, in particular from EU, NATO and US countries, the risk of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, and therefore the Ukrainian patriotic children of the Russian Federation together with its citizens have a “duty” to defend the Russian Federation with weapons in their hands.

That is, Ukrainian children are under the persistent, consistent and overarching influence of Russian education, which aims to impose on them a Russian identity and a willingness to perform military service in the Russian army, particularly against the “nationalists” in Ukraine. Such narratives are another element of the colonization policy of the Russian Federation to change the consciousness of the population of the occupied territories in order to complicate their reintegration after liberation.

Russian educational policy violates a number of norms of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in particular the principle of status quo ante bellum²⁷², the principle of “proper education,” children’s rights to preserve their identity, cultural identity and prohibition of propaganda for war, the right of parents to provide education for their children in accordance with their own ideological beliefs.

Education is an element of facilitating the commission of a war crime under Article 8(2)(a)(v) and Article 8(2)(b)(xv) of the Rome Statute of the ICC: the conscription, mobilization, and enlistment of civilians in occupied territories. Individual criminal liability is also possible for the perpetrators of education policy for complicity in the above war crime (Articles 25(3)(c) and 25(3)(d) of the Rome Statute).

Assimilation, destruction and preventing the formation of a Ukrainian identity can be forms of degrading treatment of children and a war crime under Article 8(2)(b)(xxi) of

272 It is the duty of the occupying state to preserve and maintain as far as possible the legal condition and conditions of social life which existed in the territory concerned prior to its occupation.

the Rome Statute. The fact that some children are only at the stage of forming their own identity is no exception.

This war crime can be qualified in the context of national criminal proceedings under Article 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. This article establishes liability for both weighty violations of international humanitarian law and other violations of the laws and customs of war. The Russian Federation's educational policy disregards a number of norms of international humanitarian law, in particular Article 43 of The Hague Regulations of The Hague Convention IV of 1907 and Articles 50-51 of the Geneva Convention IV of 1949 and may therefore also be assessed under Article 438 of the Criminal Code, which is permitted under international humanitarian law (Article 146 of the Geneva Convention IV of 1949).

The Russian Federation's educational policy contains signs of so-called "cultural genocide," as there are attempts to sever ties between Ukrainian children and Ukraine, Ukrainian history and Ukrainian society, accompanied by the imposition of traits of the Russian national group on them. The circumstances of such acts can significantly add to the evidence base of the genocidal intent of the Russian Federation as part of its armed aggression, in particular under Article 6(e) of the Rome Statute: deportation of Ukrainian children to the Russian Federation and their transfer to another group, as the educational policy of the Russian Federation allows disclosing further "consequences of transfer" of Ukrainian children to the Russian group.

The Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada has taken the position that the placement of Ukrainian children in conditions of Russian educational policy is an example of a "transfer" of children to another group and an act of genocide. International criminal tribunals have not yet assessed this interpretation of Article 6(e) of the Rome Statute, but international law cannot be ruled out to respond to the offence in question, as the Russian Federation's long-term educational policy leads to the destruction of part of the Ukrainian national group.

In light of this, the circumstances of the implementation of the Russian Federation's education policy in the occupied territories may significantly add to the Ukrainian criminal proceedings for genocide under Art. 442 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine.

It can be argued that the Russian Federation has committed a crime against humanity in the form of discriminatory persecution (Article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute) as the Russian Federation interferes with the fundamental rights of Ukrainian children, denying them access to Ukrainian education on the basis of their belonging to the Ukrainian national group and imposing Russian education with its unacceptable narratives on them. Education policy is part of a much broader colonization policy of the Russian Federation and administrative practices of human rights violations in the occupied territories since 2014. From the perspective of international criminal tribunals, in particular the Nuremberg Tribunal, deprivation of access to educational institutions can be interpreted as an element of discriminatory persecution.

Given the indications of a crime against humanity, at the national level, the Russian Federation's educational policy may be assessed in criminal proceedings for discrimination against Ukrainian children under Article 161 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code. At the same time, this article, while capable of encompassing discriminatory persecution in a specific case, does not provide for responsibility for international crimes.



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