

## **RELATIONS BETWEEN TEACHERS OF AGRICULTURAL AND OTHER UNIVERSITIES, AND AUTHORITIES OF UKRAINE DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THE 1950s – THE MIDDLE OF THE 1960s**

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**Abstract.** The topicality of the problem of relations between the intelligentsia and the authorities is due to the objective processes in modern education and the reforms that are constantly taking place in higher education. The purpose of this study is to clarify the relationship of the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia with the authorities. The intelligentsia of Soviet Ukraine was dependent on the authorities because the state was the monopoly employer. Control over the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia and people of creative professions took place through membership in the Communist Party, creative unions, and their further involvement in responsible projects. Due to their publicity the activities of the teaching staff largely depended on loyalty to the Communist Party. The high attention of the authorities to the workers of higher education is also explained by the fact that it was they who actually were the creators of the skilled personnel of almost the entire Soviet intelligentsia. In a state of a totalitarian type the social and professional perspective of each individual was possible only in conditions of political loyalty. The political consciousness of teachers was assessed by the volume of loyal references to the Communist Party and Soviet power in lectures, reports and publications. The teachers' lectures were stenographed twice a year and tested for loyalty. Also important was the public function of lecturing on current events for the general population in residential areas, houses of culture, etc. In fact, it was a load the rejection of which would be considered as anti-Sovietism. Nevertheless, in these harsh and regulated conditions, in a narrow circle of communication with students, in families, etc. an illegal mass critical view of the intelligentsia on the political system was born, which, after 25 years, grew into an open confrontation and the victory of democracy.

**Key words:** scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia, authorities, teachers, relationships.

### **Introduction**

Relations between the authorities and the teachers of higher schools, as well as the intelligentsia as a whole, is a rather important scientific problem. The authorities could influence the employability of the teachers, and the authorities also disposed of resources: salaries, apartments, etc.; thus, the teachers were actually directly dependent on the authorities. In case of a loyal attitude to the authorities, they could have a guarantee to receive benefits from the state. Otherwise, if the teachers came in opposition to the authorities, they became, in most cases, dissidents.

The scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia as a subject of research has been popular with social scientists throughout the history of the USSR. It occupied quite a special place in the Soviet social structure, so its study was among the priorities of historiography. The researchers studied the formation of a new, Soviet intelligentsia and transformations in its environment. In a similar manner a significant number of works were devoted to the development of education, in general, and in the higher school, in particular. Any success in the development of education, as it was unanimously asserted, was due to the wise leadership of the Communist Party [1]. The specificity of this concern consisted in regular discussions of educational and scientific matters at the party meeting, which testified to the regulation of the sphere and strict guardianship on the part of the party.

There were some peculiarities in the mood of teachers of the agrarian institutes. As a rule, these were people from rural areas, their parents experienced all the problems of collectivization in the countryside, and they were more reserved in nature and did not publicly express their negative opinion about the policy of the Communist Party.

Modern Ukrainian historiography has its own approaches to the study of the intelligentsia, represented by the works of historians V. Danilenko, G. Kasyanov, O. Kolyastruk and others [2-4]. To study the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia, there is also used the biographical genre. The object of the research by S. Yusov was the fate of the historian V. Golobutsky [5]. The undoubted advantage of S. Yusov's works against the background of others is the depiction of not only a glossy biography of a scientist and teacher, but also what is called a subjective factor in history: motives for changing jobs, difficult relationships in the work team, informal connections, the health status, etc. It is obvious that

the prosographic study of the teams of Ukrainian educational institutions is a perspective undertaking, and it requires expansion of methodological tools. On the whole, the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia of this period has a certain history of study in modern Ukrainian historiography. The latter is characterized by the absence of a state-ideological order, a wide range of issues studied, biographical studies, etc.

However, this issue has not yet received sufficient coverage in the scientific literature. The period studied (1955-1965) is interesting for the relative versatility of the situation in the country – during this period, the condemnation of Stalin's policy began, some democratization of society, and then a new offensive of the communist dictatorship.

The purpose of this work is to investigate and identify the characteristic features of the relations between the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia and the authorities in the period of the second half of the 1950s to mid-1960s.

### **Materials and methods**

The study used materials from the Central Historical and other branch archives of the Archive of Ukraine. The presence of the same type of facts in different regions, different universities of different ministries gave grounds to generalize these phenomena for all the universities of the Ukrainian SSR. Also, the ministry's information about the presence of certain shortcomings in its universities made it possible to apply the deductive method, that is, to consider that such features, with a certain degree of conditionality, were inherent in each university. This could be even in the absence of confirmation of such information in the sources known to us. To understand individual facts (which, in principle, could not appear in the archives), we used surveys of teachers and scientists (or their children), who were students at the time studied.

The paper considers the historical background of activity (a descriptive method is applied), with the help of which statistical data are transmitted to the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia. Analysis and synthesis are applied as general scientific methods of scientific research. The problem-chronological method was also applied to study the relationship of the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia with the authorities and the main functions of the intelligentsia, with strict observance of the chronological sequence of the events.

The work used the chronological principle of presentation of the research materials. The principle of historicism is applied, which has become an important tool for studying the entire set of events, characteristic for higher education, through their specific historical conditionality and uniqueness.

Of great importance for the study was a comprehensive approach to the analysis of historical phenomena and facts as a requirement to take into account their diversity, their direct or indirect influence upon the position of the intelligentsia (as well as the influence of the intelligentsia upon the social and political life), and its activities due to inclusion in other processes of social life.

Consequently, the goals and objectives of the study led to the use of a combination of the principles and methods of historical knowledge, necessary to study the specifics of the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia, scientific methods for analyzing historical literature, and a set of operations for verification of the sources which made it possible to implement the tasks.

### **Results and discussion**

The Soviet Union was a state of a totalitarian type. The authorities controlled all spheres of life, interfering even in the family relations. The intelligentsia of Soviet Ukraine was dependent on the authorities because the state was their employer. Control over the people of creative professions was exercised through membership in the Communist Party, creative unions, their further involvement in responsible projects. Education was a stable state order. The kind of work and the amount of salary of each teacher depended on the specialty, qualifications and a definite higher school. Due to their publicity the activities of the teaching staff largely depended on their loyalty to the Communist Party. The keen attention of the authorities to the workers of higher education is also explained by the fact that they were actually the creators of the entire intelligentsia and represented a large group of highly educated teaching staff (Table 1) [6].

In a state of a totalitarian type, the social and professional perspective of each individual was possible only in conditions of political loyalty. The political consciousness of teachers was assessed by the volume of loyal references to the Communist Party and the Soviet power as a whole. If the degree of teachers' loyalty could be estimated from the content of their publications, the number of references to the authorities during lectures could be determined from their transcripts. The teachers' lectures were transcribed twice a year.

Table 1

**Teaching staff of higher educational institutions of Ukraine  
at the beginning of the 1962/1963 academic year**

Name of parameter	Basic full-time staff		
	Total	Including	
		Doctors of Sciences	Candidates of Sciences
Heads of departments – total	2944	729	1687
Including those who have the title of a professor	784	690	45
Associate professors	1625	39	1484
Without academic titles	535	0	158
As part of the departments			
Professors	160	90	30
Associate professors	5175	21	4650
Assistants	9067	0	1126
Senior lecturers	5284	0	738
Lecturers	3634	0	151
Total	26264	840	8382

“Guided by Lenin’s instructions, the Communist Party constantly worries about training, distribution and education of the personnel, including the scientific ones, wrote historian A. Slyusarenko [1]. This concern was manifested in regular discussions on educational and scientific matters at party meetings of various ranks, which testified to a really great attention to this sphere. Its positive moment was that the increased attention of the party required the executive power to assist the teachers in everything if a certain issue was raised in the party bodies. However, on the other hand, the high frequency of discussions of the affairs of higher education testified to the over-regulation and severe guardianship of the party, distrust, which was not in favour of the educational process. A negative consequence, arising from such attention to higher education, was also the large number of various documents that came from above. Another consequence of the all-embracing concern of the party and government for institutions and universities were regular inspections. I. Shvets, the Rector of the Kiev State University, complained at a meeting that “it is necessary to reduce the number of permanent inspection commissions. At our university one is finishing its work, two new ones are starting.” These commissions were subordinated to various levels of the party power structures. All the city organizations send commissions to consult, check, give instructions, directives, etc. [6]. The work of the teachers took place in close contact with the authorities – the party and Soviet bodies, the State Security Committee because all the education in the USSR was completely state-owned. The party bodies monitored the observance by the teacher of the ideological line, glorification of the Communist Party. The security services exercised secret supervision over the behaviour and mood of the teachers. The trade unions were supposed to be on the side of the teachers and protect their interests. For example, to resolve labour disputes. However, in the Soviet state, the trade unions were practically a state structure and did not constitute an independent force, capable of resisting the party and fulfilling their functions.

During the 2nd World War many teachers of agricultural higher schools in Ukraine for one reason or another (did not have time to evacuate, etc.) turned out to be in the territory, occupied by Germans. Most of the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia of the agricultural profile did not cooperate with the occupation authorities, and after the war they gradually returned to work in the higher educational institutions. However, the constant suspicion and fear of prosecution was significant, and further career advancement was problematic for them. In the historical period that we are considering the tension of such a situation began to decrease, and for the teachers and scientists in an agrarian biography appeared

greater possibilities to achieve certain success and occupy leadership positions. A striking example of this is Academician P. M. Vasilenko, who before the war was a Candidate of technical sciences and Head of the Department of Agricultural Machinery, and during the war was in the temporarily occupied territory. And, although direct evidence of his cooperation with the occupation authorities during this period was not established, he was to some extent constantly subjected to suspicion and criticism from the party authorities, and his position in the Ukrainian Agricultural Academy clearly did not match his really great contribution to science and training of the agricultural personnel of higher education. Only 10 years after the end of the war, during the period of partial relaxation and democratization, he was again appointed head of the department and elected an academician [7,8]. During his long scientific activities P. M. Vasilenko became the founder of a new direction in agricultural engineering, he wrote several monographs on the theory of agricultural mechanics, trained dozens of doctors and candidates of sciences; the Kharkiv National Technical University of Agriculture was named after him [8].

Among the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia of the agrarian profile in Kharkiv (the second largest city in Ukraine), a similar situation was with Migulin A. A., Teletov I. S., Suprunenko A. I., Smirnov V. G. and Pischimuka P. S., professors of the Kharkiv Agricultural Institute.

However, life did not stand still, changes affected also other large-scale but dubiously efficient events in agriculture. Among other things, during this period reclamation of virgin lands began, the widespread cultivation of corn (maize), in which the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia and Ukrainian students took an active part and, in general, made a significant contribution to the improvement of the food situation in the country. It is believed that, in contrast to the creative intelligentsia (writers, artists, etc.), among the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia of the agrarian profile, the elements of dissidence, freethinking and criticism of the existing government were manifested to a lesser extent. However, this is more indicative of “privacy” of the people from the countryside, and not of their support for the pro-communist views. This was confirmed also by the further course of history in the period of already independent Ukraine.

Considering the relationship between the authorities and higher educational establishments of this period, it is necessary to take into account the socio-political context. After the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the power of N. Khrushchev, who was inclined towards real reforms, increased in the educational sphere, this resulted in the consolidation of higher schools, their transfer to other cities, the closure opening of faculties, etc. G. Pisarenko, Head of the department of the Kiev Polytechnic Institute, described in his memoirs an interesting episode that illustrates not a simple nature of relationships between the higher schools and the state power. In the early 1960s in the Soviet Union, they sought to implement the idea of eliminating full-time stationary education in universities and replacing it with evening and correspondence courses. Despite the instruction of the Central Committee, the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute did not support this idea. As the Rector of the institute A. Pligunov later admitted, “He had problems for the boycott of the senseless proposal of the Communist Party of Ukraine” [9]. The head of the higher school was a person who bore responsibility for the entire team, who defended the interests of the organization in ministries and party structures [10]. Among the leadership of the higher schools there were also the dean, the deputy dean and head of the department. There could be an assistant dean, for example, if there were 500 students. A. Pligunov admitted that at one of the faculties of the Kiev Polytechnic Institute they kept the deputy dean illegally since there were only 496 students there [11]. In the post-war period the authorities had to reckon with the practice of part-time work in various higher schools because there was shortage of qualified personnel. So, historian V. Golobutsky in 1949-1951 headed the department at the Chernivtsi State University from a distance, that is, working in Kyiv and periodically going there [12]. In 1956, the authorities began to prohibit part-time employment, which could do harm to conscientious performance to the duties of each job. In addition, it was allowed to work only with an individual permission. “We have 70 part-time workers,” M. Semko, the Director of the Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute defended them, “but there are only 5 people from other higher schools, the rest are industrial workers or prominent scientists from research organizations. “If it is necessary to raise design to a higher level, to provide practical knowledge to the students, then “we must build our work to a greater extent on attracting industrial workers ...”, he concluded [13]. The higher schools themselves were interested in part-time jobs, and subsequently the federal government recognized it as expedient and desirable to have part-time jobs. The Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of June 9, 1960, granted the right to ministries and departments, on the terms of full-time

cooperation, to let their employees, outstanding persons of culture, science and technology, to teach on part-time terms at newly created higher schools and the higher educational establishments where specialists in the latest technology were trained. The number of such part-time teachers should not exceed 2500 people across the country [14-15].

In 1964, by a resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR of February 20, part-time jobs were also allowed for the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia. This was aimed at closer integration and development of cooperation between the highly qualified personnel of higher schools and the production teams. Now the teachers could join the work in the laboratories of enterprises, experimental, design, scientific and other organizations. However, such part-time employment was not allowed for all teachers without exception but only for certain specialties related to the development of chemistry, chemical engineering, instrumentation, radio electronics, electrical engineering and agriculture. Besides, they received only 50% of the salary of the part-time position. In any case, this was for the benefit of the intelligentsia who could receive additional income but had to be loyal since this required obtaining appropriate permission.

During the Khrushchev thaw the Communist Party valued certain traits of the teachers. We can judge about them on the basis of the analysis of the nomination of a Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Kyiv State University P. Shymko-Shmahy for the award of the Certificate of Honor of the Supreme Council for "outstanding social and political activity and in connection with the sixtieth birthday". In 1963 at the presentation, after little autobiographical data of the hero of the day, there was a description of him as a worker and a person. The set of qualities can be divided into 3 parts: 1) professional achievements; 2) participation in the public and political life; 3) the moral portrait. As evidence of the care of the authorities for the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia and higher education, in general, may be considered the variety of awards. They were presented on occasion of round dates, anniversaries, for certain achievements.

Relations between the university professors and the authorities were various, yet both of them were interested in cooperation, in normal relations with each other. Despite the unconditional dominance of the party organs, the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia was not a completely disenfranchised subordinate; it had some rights along with the duties. The authorities needed scientific and expert assistance from the intelligentsia.

A specific situation can also be stated for the teachers of technical and natural sciences. The fact is that the priority of economy of the group "A" caused increased attention to these sciences from the regional party committees. The close relationship between the higher schools and relevant enterprises on the basis of industrial practice determined the solution of various problems in metallurgy, mechanical engineering, etc., including the personnel problems. The team of workers in the production had to be armed with knowledge, so that in the conditions of a sufficient number of scientists in the technical and natural sciences, there was someone to choose the best for the higher school, especially with the participation of the regional party committees. This problem - the success of solving the personnel issues by natural scientists - was sadly stated by E. Lazarenko, Rector of the Lviv State University at a meeting of the higher school directors in 1959. He remarked that "the condition with the personnel, especially in the field of the humanities, is at a very unsatisfactory level". Generalizing the personnel problem for all higher schools, he noted: "Maybe this is not a problem for the comrades from the technical higher schools because, frankly, it was easier for them to solve this issue; in our ministry they are better understood than the representatives from the humanities and representatives of universities; yet for us this issue is acute" [16]. That is, the regional committees of the Communist Party of the industrial regions, which had industrial departments, contributed to better solution of the personnel issues at the technical higher schools. As the sources witness, the position of the teachers in the large cities, especially in the capital, was more favourable, compared to the regional higher schools. This was because of much better employment opportunities.

Nevertheless, the relations between the teachers and the authorities were established on an unequal basis because the party authorities could influence employment. That is why the dismissed (illegitimately, in their opinion) teachers appealed with complaints or repentance, first of all, to the party committees. The state authorities disposed of resources, in particular, apartments, so the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia was in a subordinate position. The bodies of the regional executive power, being unable to ensure the implementation of the decisions themselves, shifted them onto the shoulders

of the rectors. The loyal attitude of teachers to the authorities was encouraged, for example, by the participation of the higher school teachers in international forums and congresses. Not as a rule, but rather an exception and privilege was such participation of the scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia at international congresses. The specialists selected by the higher schools were supposed to be studied especially carefully for positive business qualities and perfect command of the language of the country to which they would be seconded. After that the question of their recruitment or the establishment of a trusting relationship should have been considered. The USSR was primarily interested in technical sciences [17]. It is important to note that the heads of the higher schools, their deputies and heads of departments were usually sent abroad to give lectures, and not to improve their qualifications [18-19]. Here "Soviet pride" manifested itself since it was believed that in the Soviet Union everything was better. Before leaving the Soviet Union, the State Security Committee clarified the following details: behaviour, lifestyle, family relationships, relatives and their characteristics, presence of one's relatives abroad, personal qualities, compromising evidence. Nevertheless, in these harsh and regulated conditions, in a narrow circle of communication with students, in families, etc. an illegal mass critical view of the intelligentsia on the political system was born, which after 25 years grew into an open confrontation and the victory of democracy [20].

### Conclusions

1. Numerous decisions and orders on the work of the higher education in the mid-1950s - the first half of the 1960s, on the one hand, testified about the great attention to the development of this sphere, but, on the other hand, such guardianship was evidence of distrust. The scientific and pedagogical intelligentsia suffered from these constant instructions given from above; the bureaucratic traditions of the USSR distracted them from the performance of their functions. In the conditions of a slight democratization that came after the end of the era of Stalin's rule, the Communist Party still exercised total control over the activities of the higher schools.
2. More than 10 years had passed since the World War II, and only during this period did suspicion of cooperation with the occupation authorities began to weaken, and there appeared a possibility to build one's career for the teachers who happened to remain during the war in the occupied territory.
3. Stimulation of the successful work of the employees of higher education also manifested itself in permissions (practically very rare) for business trips to other countries. However, before such business trips the intelligentsia underwent strict control and verification by the security services. The teachers' loyalty to the authorities was tested not only publicly but also secretly. The publicity of the teachers' professional activities required from them to be careful in their statements.
4. The dissident movement, which originated at that time, had in its ranks many representatives of the creative, scientific and technical intelligentsia. In harsh and regulated conditions in a narrow circle of communication with students and friends, in families, etc. an illegal mass critical view of the intelligentsia on the political system was born, which, after 25 years, grew into an open confrontation and the victory of democracy.

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