**Introduction.** Industrial society is the stage of development of a society that replaced the traditional or agrarian feudal society. The term belongs to A. Saint-Simon. The theory of industrial society appeared in the second half of the 50s - early 60s of the 20th century. The authors of the theory were R. Aron and W. Rostow, who linked it with the spread of machine production, urbanization, domination of the market economy, and emergence of social groups of entrepreneurs and wage workers, emergence of democracy, social society and the law-governed state. Capitalism as the theory of industrial society is regarded as its early stage [1, 152]. In Belarus the prerequisites of formation of an industrial society in the socio-economic sphere appeared at the end of the 18th century - the first half of the 19th century. The article analyzes different approaches to this problem and outlines the author's concept.

**Main part.** In pre-Soviet historiography, when considering the problem of the birth and development of capitalism in Russia and its separate regions (including Belarus), much attention was paid to the role of merchant capital as the first stage of bourgeois relations, which was later replaced by industrial capital. Pre-Soviet historiography included in the period of industrial capital the emergence and active development of industry (mainly manufactory) until the 18th century, and emergence of large-scale capitalist machine production was related to the first half of the 19th century [2].

G. V. Plekhanov, describing Russia's first post-reform decades, wrote: "Capitalism has become a fact. If, after what has been said, we once again ask ourselves whether Russia will go to school of capitalism, then without doubting, one can answer with a new question: why not finish school which it has already entered?" [3, p. 270].
M. M. Pokrovsky analyzed the situation and the nature of the domestic market, the availability of working hands in terms of studying the prerequisites of formation of a powerful industry [4, p. 560]. At the end of the 18th century, in the author’s opinion, a factory of the capitalist type replaced the serf factory [4, p. 83].

In the monographic study “The Development of Capitalism in Russia”, V.I. Lenin gave a description of three main stages in the development of capitalism in industry: simple capitalist cooperation, capitalist manufactory and factory, but he began to consider the history of industry from simple commodity production, whose main tendencies tend toward capitalism [6, p. 23–24].

The attempt of individual modern historians to ascribe M. S. Balabanov the role of the Marxist-Leninist critic of the bourgeois concept of the genesis of capitalism [7, p. 10] has no basis. M. S. Balabanov was not a supporter of the Leninist concept of the history of capitalism in Russia. He believed, for example, that industrial production developed from factory mode to artisanal mode of production, nearly a higher level of industrial development in Russia in the second half of the eighteenth century, in comparison with the countries of Western Europe [6, p. 19].

The feudal nature of the manufactory in Russia in the 18th century was marked by B. I. Syromyatnikov, who believed that serfdom hindered the creation of a market of free hands, so the manufactory could become only a feudal factory, since the nature of the work determined the type of production. Studying the history of development of the textile industry, he concluded that the appearance of a large-scale manufacturing industry was based on handicraft production [8, p. 23].

P. I. Lyashchenko [9, p. 214] attributed the manufactory to the feudal industry, too and singled out a separate era of commercial capitalism in the history of Russia from the 15th century to the middle of the 19th century, considering this period transition from feudalism to capitalism [9, p. 132–133].

Both B. I. Syromyatnikov and P. I. Lyashchenko refer to the industry, whose history they are investigating, as “Russian”, but they consider the issue within the whole territory of the Russian Empire, including the national outlying areas, so their description and conclusions must be attributed to such areas as Ukraine and Belarus.

The first attempt to get rid of M.M. Pokrovsky’s theory of commercial capitalism was made by P. G. Lyubomirov who considered the manufactory based on free labour as the beginning of capitalist industry [10, p. 194].

P. Schegolev believed that it was impossible to refer the period of the genesis of capitalism in industry only to the stage of development of the capitalist factory. In his opinion, it is necessary to include in this period the time of development of manufactories, where civilian labour was used [11, p. 97].

The development of bourgeois relations and formation of an industrial society was hampered, in the opinion of many authors, by the dominance of subsistence economy and by the strengthening of serfdom [12, p. 88–189].

S. G. Tomsinsky singled out the signs of the feudal manufactory as production based on forced labour, which was headed by an advocate of serfdom [13, part 1, p. 17], referring to feudal industry all of Russia in the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century. The author’s conclusion that in the “feudal society there could be no talk of a capitalist factory” [13, part 3, p. 39] excluded the entire pre-reform period from the development of capitalism and contradicted reality. M.P. Vyatkin agreed with S.G. Tomsinsky [14, p. 24].

S. I. Solntsev thought that the manufactories were capitalist enterprises in content, but feudal in form [15, p. 24], and M.F. Zlobnikov considered the manufacturing industry period as the first phase of industrial capitalism [16, p. 146].

This problem was intensively studied by Ukrainian historians. If in the works of the 20-ies of the 20th century written by M.E. Slabchenko, А. P. Ogloblin, P. Nichiporenko, K. A. Poszihinov was believed that the manufactory in Ukraine had no economic base and its appearance was due to the policy of the authorities of the Russian Empire, which forcibly imposed certain manufactory options, then in the early 30-ies appeared a different view of the manufacturing period of the development of industry in Ukraine. For example, V. Dubrovs’ky opposed the opinion about the sluggishness of Ukrainian commercial capital and Ukrainian industry. He believed that the Ukrainian commercial capital was ready to turn into industrial capital and was in the process of turning into it simultaneously and in the same forms as in
Western Europe and Russia [17, p. 7]. He considered Glushkov's cloth manufactory as the first step in the development of industrial capitalism in Ukraine in the first quarter of the 18th century [18, p. 108].

Academician S. G. Strumilin attributed the initial stage of the development of capitalism in industry to the 18th century and believed that the very manufactory industry itself was a capitalist organization of labour [19, p. 17].

Historians of Ukraine in the 30-ies of the 20th century sought to prove that the development of capitalism in industry in the national regions did not differ from the Russian industrial centre, and all-Russian development did not differ from the West European. Thus, these views provoked the desire to find the origins of bourgeois relations as deep as possible, to indicate the pace of their development as high as possible, sometimes even distorting the real facts.

For the Belarusian historiography the period of the 20-30-ies of the 20th century was characterized by a greater interest in agrarian history. M. V. Dovnar-Zapolsky considered the entire 18th century a period of economic decline in Belarus, but nevertheless, he referred the transition to trade and monetary relations to the 16th – 18th centuries [20, p. 52–53, 66].

However, in the works on the history of Belarusian cities there was also a tendency to find the roots of bourgeois relations in the 16th -17th centuries and to attribute the wealthy town people to the bourgeois class [21].

In the late 40s - early 50s of the 20th century Eastern Slavic historiography created the concept of "priority" formation of capitalism in the Russian Empire, which was as simultaneous and identical in depth and pace of industrial development as in the most developed countries of Western Europe. There were attempts to find the beginnings of capitalism not only in certain regions of the Russian Empire, but also in certain branches of the economy.

According to B. B. Kafengauz, the Demidovs' manufactory in the 18th century became a vivid example of capitalist production [22, p. 112]. N.V. Usivugov referred the 17th century to the initial period of development of capitalism, when handicrafts grew into small commodity production and gradually turned into a manufactory [23, p. 166–197]. S. G. Strumilin believed that all manufactory production by its nature can only be capitalistic, and the use of serfs' labour does not change anything, since the very organization of labour is bourgeois in character [24].

S. G. Strumilin' concept was actively supported by some other Ukrainian researchers. Thus, V. A. Golobutsy attributed the birth of capitalist production in Ukraine to the 16th century, linking it with the disintegration of guild handicraft and the appearance of a manufactory [25].

V. A. Golobutsy argued against the concept of "priority". He noted that bourgeois elements were formed in the Russian Empire rather late and formation of merchant capital in the feudal state was not yet evidence of the development of capitalism [26, p. 11, 48, 51].

N. M. Druzhinin, who did not associate the development of new capitalist relations with the disintegration of the old feudal system, tried to sum up the results of the discussion at X International Congress of Historians in Rome. In his opinion, new capitalist relations arose under the influence of external factors and as a result of the policy of autocracy [27, p. 12, 13, 24].

Historians, who dealt with this problem in the national regions of the Russian Empire, tended to transfer all-Russian characteristics of socio-economic processes to the national soil trying to prove with the help of local material the general laws of transition from feudalism to bourgeois relations.

In the 60-ies of the 20th century in East Slavic historiography the problems of the development of capitalism were characterized by even more acute discussions.

It was noted an uneven socio-economic development of certain regions of Russia, and, for example, B.B. Kafengauz proposed a territorial-historical principle of studying the problem of the development of capitalism in certain regions of the empire [28, p. 5].

A sharp discussion was prompted by the report of V.K. Yatsunsky "The Formation of the Russian Industrial Bourgeoisie in the First Half of the 19th Century". The author gave a detailed factual material, distinguishing between the enterprises that were owned and capitalist enterprises. V.K. Yatsunsky came to the conclusion that the majority of the "industrial dynasties" of the 18th century did not pass into the 19th century, and new capitalist enterprises and their founders appeared at the beginning of the 19th century [29, p. 423].

The discussion was mainly through finding out the role of merchant's capital in the process of Russia's industrial development and formation of an industrial society. V. K. Yatsunsky report received a positive assessment of the majority of participants in the discussion.
In 1965 in the collection of articles V. K. Yatsunsky described two trends in formation of large-scale industry: the gradual consolidation of small enterprises and the emergence of numerous manufactories and factories [30].

A reasonable description of the problem of the development of capitalism was given by A.N. Pankratova: "Neither in the seventeenth, nor even in the eighteenth century, with the exception of its two or three last decades, can there be talk of neither capitalism nor the proletariat ... But this does not mean that the deepest prerequisites and historical ways of their formation should not be considered. In the 17th century, we dealt not with capitalism, but with simple commodity production [31, p. 9].

A. N. Pankratova believed that commodity production can lead to capitalism only when private ownership of the means of production arises, and the labour force acts on the market as a commodity that the capitalist can buy and exploit in the production process, in other words, when the system of exploitation of wage-workers by capitalists exists in the country [31, p. 428].

She was supported by V.K. Yatsunsky, who in a number of publications gave a general description of the socio-economic development of the Russian Empire in the 18th – 19th centuries, paying special attention to the analysis of the process of formation of an industrial society in the pre-reform period [32].

An intensive study of the problem was typical for Ukrainian and Byelorussian historians. O. O. Nesterenko noted that under the conditions of the rule of the feudal system the process of initial accumulation went very slowly and covered a fairly long period of time. On a large factual basis the researcher traced the growth of craftsmanship, the creation of simple capitalist cooperation, the appearance of manufactories, their development and growth into a factory. The monograph contains a large number of facts from the history of the emergence and development of various types of manufactories in Ukraine: landlord, state and merchant [33].

I. Derevyankin in his monograph, which had a historical-comparative character, came to the conclusion that on the eve of 1861 reform the development of capitalist manufactories in Ukraine went very quickly, whereas feudal manufactories were declining [34, p. 134].

However, even the above mentioned works could not influence the general trend in Ukrainian historiography: the desire to find the sources of industrial society as early as possible. This clearly manifested itself in the generalizing work by V. O. Golobutsky "The Economic History of the Ukrainian SSR. The pre-October Period" where the author considers the 16th century – the first half of the 17th century as the beginning of capitalist production and bourgeois relations. Thus, he again makes an attempt to prove the correctness of the concept of the early stage of the birth and development of industrial society in Ukraine [35].

The Byelorussian historiography the 60-90s of the 20th century is characterized by a particular interest in the agrarian theme but a number of works devoted to the problem under investigation emerged: the prerequisites of formation of an industrial society.

In the works of A. P. Gniezdevich, A. P. Ignatenko, V. I. Meleshko, M. T. Romanovsky the issues of development of manufactory production, urban growth, trade and craft were considered [36]. Economic development of Vitebsk in the 18th century [37], the first half of the 19th century is reflected in the work by F.I. Adashchik [37].

The study of the history of individual cities in Belarus made it possible for V. V. Chepko in the first volume of the five-volume “History of the Byelorussian SSR” to describe the socio-economic development of Belarusian cities in the first half of the 19th century [38, p. 479-506]. In more detail these same problems are considered in the monographs by V. V. Chepko and A. M. Liuty and in the works written by A. F. Vishnevsky [39].

Generalizing works on the development of industry in Belarus in the late 18th - early 20th century were the monographs by M. F. Bolbas [40], L. E. Prokopovich [41] and the PhD thesis by A.A. Bashmakov [42]. The monograph by A. M. Liuty [43] is devoted to social and economic development of Belarus in the second half of the 18th century - the first half of the 19th century.

The conclusion. Unfortunately, all of the above works, like the previous ones, were written on the basis of the Marxist-Leninist methodology and all processes were considered within the framework of this or that socio-economic formation. There was no attempt to consider the socio-economic prerequisites in the mainstream of the theory of the origin and formation of an industrial society not only in the works of modern Belarusian, but also Russian and Ukrainian researchers. This is also characteristic of works devoted to the processes of urbanization, formation of a market economy, the civil society and the rule - of - law state.
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