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## **Ukraine and the Ukrainian Question in 1914–1923**

### **Abstract**

The article analyzes the development of the “Ukrainian question” during the First World War and its aftermath – a period when a new world order was emerging along with new nation-states in Central and Eastern Europe. Born in the mid-nineteenth century, the Ukrainian “national project” evolved from cultural to socio-political demands. It culminated in the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921/1923, when an independent Ukrainian state emerged. Unlike Poland and the Baltic states, Ukrainian statehood did not last long. In March 1921, the western part of Volyn was ceded to Poland. Virtually all of Greater (Dnipro) Ukraine became part of the communist USSR. In 1923, the Entente Council of Ambassadors recognized the sovereignty of the Second Polish Republic over Eastern Galicia. In addition, after the First World War, Carpathian Ruthenia was ceded to Czechoslovakia, Bukovyna to Romania, and Ukrainians, as historian Stanislav Kulchytskij aptly noted, became “the only large nation of Austria-Hungary that did not achieve its own statehood after its collapse”. At the same time, the experience of state-building in 1917–1921/1923 became crucial for the Ukrainian national movement in the twentieth century.

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## Introduction

Ukrainians entered into the twentieth century divided between two empires, the Russian and Austro-Hungarian. In Romanovs’ Russia, Ukrainians, who were called “malorosy (Little Russians)” there, lived roughly in nine provinces of Volyn, Kyiv, Podillia, Poltava, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kherson, Katerynoslav and Tavria. They made up the majority in all of the above administrative units. For example, according to the 1897 census of the Russian Empire, which was conducted on a language basis, most Ukrainians lived in Poltava province (93%), and the least in Kherson (53.5%). The only exception was the Tavria province, which included the Crimean Peninsula. A little over 42% of Ukrainians were recorded there. At the same time, in the mainland of the Tavria province, which included Dnipro, Melitopol, and Berdiansk districts, the share of Ukrainians was over 60% (Maiorov, 2014).

In the Habsburgs’ Austria, Ukrainians were called “*rusyn* (*Ruthenian*),” and their main places of residence were localized in Eastern Galicia, Northern Bukovina and Carpathian Ruthenia. According to the 1900 census, the share of Ukrainians (determined by religion) in Austria-Hungary was 8% of the total population of the empire. In general, the Russian Empire owned 85% of Ukraine, and the Austro-Hungarian one – 15% (Hrytsak, 2021). In both states, Ukrainians lived mainly in rural areas and their percentage among urban residents was negligible. This applied to both large and small cities in the Ukrainian provinces of the Russian empire, such as Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa, and Katerynoslav, and to cities and towns in the Austria-Hungary, such as Lviv, Ternopil, Stanislaviv, Chernivtsi, and so on.

Despite the absence of an independent Ukrainian state on the map of Europe, Ukrainians kept trying to develop their cultural life

and build their own national identity. Of course, this was taking place within the conditions given to them by the Romanovs and the Habsburgs. In Russia, the Ukrainians' opportunities for national and cultural development were worse. A similar situation applied to the Polish national movement, which was considered an even greater threat to the authorities. The Russians feared that the Polish uprisings of 1830–1831 and 1863 could become a “bad” example for Ukrainians (Plokhyi, 2016). The birth of the modern “Ukrainian project” can be conditionally defined as the middle of the nineteenth century.

The poet Taras Shevchenko was an iconic figure for Ukrainians. His difficult fate and his experience of survival in the Romanov empire inspired many generations. Moreover, he was involved in the activities of the first Ukrainian illegal political organization in the Russian Empire, the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius. The structure emerged around 1845 and lasted only a few years. Its creation was greatly influenced by the revolutionary events in Europe of 1848–1849, better known as the Spring of the Nations. The manifesto of the organization was called “The Book Ukrainian People’s Existence.” It contained the idea of integrating the Slavic peoples (including Ukrainians) into a federal republic with autonomous rights for each subject. Historian Serhii Plokhyi notes that

Through their writings and activities ... Shevchenko and other members of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius launched what we now call the Ukrainian national project. For the first time, they used the findings gathered by collectors of antiquities, folklorists, and linguists to formulate a political program that would lead to the creation of a national community. Over the next century, the ideas propagated by the members of the Brotherhood and presented to a wide audience in Shevchenko’s passionate poetry would bring about profound transformations in Ukraine and the entire region (Plokhyi, p. 216).

After stopping the activities of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the Russian imperial authorities continued to suppress the Ukrainian national movement, paying special attention to the use of the Ukrainian language. In particular, in 1863, a ban was

imposed on the publication of religious, educational, and training books in Ukrainian (the so-called “Valuyev Circular”). Another attack on the national movement of Ukrainians was marked by the Ems Ukaz of Alexander II in 1876, which ousted the Ukrainian language from many spheres of life and banned the import of Ukrainian-language literature from abroad. At that time, Mykhailo Drahomanov, a well-known thinker and professor at St. Volodymyr University of Kyiv, was also forced to leave the Russian partition of Ukraine. He was the first Ukrainian socialist and a supporter of Ukraine’s autonomy within a federal Russia. The emergence of the first Ukrainian political party in the Russian empire, the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP), in Kharkiv in 1900 was evidence of the strengthening of the Ukrainian national movement in Dnipro Ukraine. Its initial program was based on the brochure titled *Samostina Ukraina* by Mykola Mikhnovskyi, which contained the thesis of “one, united, indivisible, free, independent Ukraine from the Carpathian Mountains to the Caucasus” (Mikhnovskyi, 1967, p. 27). However, the RUP later abandoned this program and switched to the traditional autonomist principles of the Ukrainian movement of that time. The revolution of 1905–1907 in Russia, despite expectations, did not solve the key issues of state restructuring and modern transformation of the empire, leaving these problems for the years to come.

In the Habsburg empire, Ukrainians had much greater opportunities for the development of a national and cultural movement, and its regime was much more liberal than Russia’s. The Spring of the Nations contributed to the creation of the Supreme Ruthenian Council in Lviv in 1848, the first Ukrainian national political organization in Galicia, which functioned until 1851. Unlike the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, its activities were fully legal, and its members demanded the division of Galicia into eastern (Ukrainian) and western (Polish) parts, the integration of areas with a dense Ukrainian population (Eastern Galicia, Northern Bukovina, and Carpathian Ruthenia) into one administrative unit, “Ukrainization” of various spheres of cultural and social life, and so on (Holovna Ruska Rada, 2002). A key role in the national revival in Galicia belonged to the Greek Catholic clergy, whose representatives

created both the aforementioned Supreme Ruthenian Council and other Galician Ukrainian organizations, including the cultural and educational society Prosvita, which was founded in Lviv in 1868.

At the end of the nineteenth century, relations between the Ukrainian activists in Austria and Russia became increasingly close. This was facilitated by the relatively liberal regime in Galicia, which was referred to as the “Ukrainian Piedmont”. An important role in these processes belonged to Professor Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, a native of Chełm, a well-known twentieth-century Ukrainian historian and a public and political figure who worked on both sides of the border, in Kyiv and Lviv. As noted by S. Plokhyi, his fundamental multi-volume work *Istoria Ukrainy-Rusy* “launched the Ukrainian historical narrative, completely different from the Russian one” and Hrushevskyi himself became “a key figure in the transmission of the Galician experience to the Dnieper Ukrainians” (Plokhyi, 2016, p. 257). Later, in his article “Galicia and Ukraine”, Hrushevskyi noted that in the Dnipro Ukraine “they looked at Galicia as a Ukrainian Piedmont, as that all-Ukrainian factory where national work for the whole of Ukraine should be carried out until the right time comes...” (Hrushevskyi, 2002, p. 376–382).

In 1890, the first Ukrainian political party, the Ruthenian-Ukrainian Radical Party (RURP), was founded in Lviv. Both Galicians and Dnipro Ukrainians joined in its creation and activities: M. Drahomanov, I. Franko, M. Pavlyk, and more. One of its leading figures was Y. Bachynskyi, author of *Ukraina irredenta* (1895), in which he substantiated the need for Ukraine’s political independence on Marxist principles. In particular, he noted:

...I want to put once again the issue of the future of the Ukrainian nation on the agenda – in general, not only exclusively in Austria, but also in Russia. ... One can imagine what a hard, desperate struggle awaits Ukraine; how much dedication, how much energy, physical and spiritual, it will have to draw from itself, how much material sacrifice and blood it will have to lay on the altar of the fatherland! This will be a terrible time – a time of terrible suffering and pain, but also the best time in the life of the Ukrainian bourgeoisie. Ukraine, independent! This is key. Free, great, independent, politically self-sufficient

Ukraine – united, indivisible from San [river] to the Caucasus! – this is the way! (Bachynskyi, 1924).

The first decades of the twentieth century did not significantly change Ukraine's situation. The timid and extremely inconsistent democratization of Russia in 1905–1907 was followed by an almost complete silencing of the Ukrainian movement. Nevertheless, with gradual growth of the market economy, entrepreneurs increasingly acted as patrons of the Ukrainian cultural movement. These were the conditions under which Ukrainians faced the Great War. Despite uncountable casualties and material losses, they opened up the possibility for “Russian” and “Austrian” Ukrainians to try to realize their national aspirations, which in the previous century remained mostly theoretical developments of intellectuals. In this article, we will try to analyze the development of the “Ukrainian question” during the First World War, as well as in the first postwar years, a period of the creation of a new world order and the emergence of new nation-states in Central and Eastern Europe.

### **The “Ukrainian question” during the First World War**

The war between the Entente and the Triple Alliance, which began on August 1, 1914, involved almost four dozen states, including the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires, countries that included Ukrainian territory. This event gave Ukrainians an opportunity to create their own state, although at the initial stage of the armed conflict it looked more like a utopia. The Great War was also fratricidal for Ukrainians, as they were forced to confront each other as part of enemy armies. The hostilities not only led to the emergence of refugees. They disrupted the traditional way of life for peasants, and caused massive impoverishment of the population. However, they also significantly intensified the Ukrainian national movement on both sides of the front line.

In general, the “Ukrainian question” did not receive much attention from the Entente and the Triple Alliance, and was not at the center of their plans. For Russians, the Ukrainian nation did not exist, although some Russian liberals saw Ukrainians as a separate branch

of the Great Russian people. Historian Yaroslav Hrytsak notes that German elites also “had great doubts about the real potential of the Ukrainian issue, in particular, the readiness of Ukrainians for state independence. There were no such doubts about the Polish movement. In 1916, both the Entente and the central powers declared that they would restore an independent Poland after the war” (Hrytsak, 2021, p. 213). At the same time, Russia had its own plans for the Austrian Ukrainian area and the occupied parts of Galicia and Bukovina in 1914 (Demianiuk, 2006). The Habsburgs were also not averse to expanding their own territories and, as a result of a successful counteroffensive, by the end of 1915, they captured some territory of the Russian empire, including the western districts of the Volyn province. These events led to mass evacuation of local residents deep into the Romanov state.

Many of the displaced ... were sent to the eastern districts of the province. Eyewitnesses recalled that the relocation took place in extremely difficult conditions. Many people died of starvation and disease. On the way, the evacuees sold their livestock and property, which they managed to take with them, because they could not survive on the rations they were given... Sometimes whole villages people were evacuated

wrote historian Yaroslav Shabala (2012, p. 303–304).

Ukrainian political figures on both sides of the front line declared their loyalty and support for the imperial authorities, hoping to resolve the “Ukrainian issue” and liberalize the regime after the end of the war. On the first day of the war, Ukrainian political activists created an inter-party organization in Lviv, the Main Ukrainian Council (HUR), which was intended to represent the interests of Ukrainians within Austria-Hungary. Its chairman Kost Levytskyi noted after the war:

...the leading political thought during the World War was already decisive and clear: to do everything possible until our brothers are liberated from the Russian yoke, and then to ensure the free development of the Ukrainian people in Austria, on their national territory. ...with the outbreak of the world war, our Ukrainian people in Galicia and

Bukovina... felt in their souls that the time had come: to fight for a better life through the fire and see our glorious Ukraine with our own eyes (Levytskyi, 1926, p. 734).

At the initiative of the HUR, a Ukrainian volunteer formation, the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen (USS), which numbered about 2,500 people and helped to resist the Russians on the eastern front, was formed within the Austrian army. Similarly, Polish legions also operated within the Austro-Hungarian army. These units also opposed the Russians, but for the sake of restoring the Polish state.

Another political organization of Ukrainians, the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU), operated in Eastern Galicia in parallel with the Supreme Ukrainian Council. Created by migrants from the Dnipro Ukraine staying in Austria, the SVU set out to revive Ukraine's independence. The achievement of this goal implied Russia's defeat in the war, which the organization tried to bring about in various ways – through an information campaign, publishing and educational work, forming military units from among captured Russian soldiers and officers, etc.<sup>1</sup>

The armed confrontation between the Russians and Austrians on the Eastern front sometimes led to contacts between Ukrainians on both sides of the front, which helped strengthen the Ukrainian national movement. Such an example is the arrival of the Galician Ukrainian Sich Riflemen in Volyn at the end of 1915 where they noted an extremely low level of national consciousness of the local population. In particular, in a letter dated March 2, 1916, Dmytro Vitovskyi, a centurion of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, wrote to Mykhailo Voloshyn, USS commander, about the situation in the Volodymyr district: "National identity... does not exist here. They answer, when asked: Who are you? Russian, Orthodox, Little Russian, local etc. – there was only one village in which they told me: and your men, from Galicia, say we are Ukrainians" (Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy u m. Lvovi, f. 395, op. 1, spr. 7, p. 6). The situation in Volyn was another proof of the differences in the conditions that the Ukrainian national and cultural

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1 For more about the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine, cf.: Pater, 2000.



development movement was facing in the Russian and Austrian empires. Under such circumstances, cultural and educational work among the population in the western districts of the Volyn province was of great importance. A key influence on this process was the activity of the aforementioned USS Legion in the region. The coordination of schooling among the Ukrainian population in the territory occupied by the central powers was handled by the Bureau of Cultural Assistance for the Ukrainian Population of the Occupied Lands, an organization that was established in 1915 in Lviv under the auspices of the aforementioned Union for the Liberation of Ukraine. It was headed by Ukrainian historian and public figure Ivan Krypiakevych (*Ibidem*, spr. 1, p. 4). Ukrainian schools established by the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen in the western districts of Volyn province were the first Ukrainian-language educational institutions in the Romanov Empire (Hrytsak, 2021). Historian Oksana Kalishchuk notes that between 1916 and 1918, according to various estimates, 150 to 250 Ukrainian schools opened in the region (Kalishchuk, 2003). For comparison, in Galicia, on the eve of the Great War, there were 2,500 primary schools with Ukrainian language instruction (Plokhyi, 2016).

In parallel with the development of schooling, in the spring of 1916, the Austrians were building defensive lines on the eastern front, and the Russians were preparing for a counteroffensive under the leadership of the newly appointed commander of the southwestern front, General Alexei Brusilov. Thus, in early June of the same year, an offensive operation of Russian troops began along the entire front from Lutsk to Chernivtsi, better known as the Brusylyv (Lutsk) breakthrough of May 22 (June 4) to September 7 (Sept. 20), 1916. Within a few days, Brusilov's troops managed to regain control of certain areas. Attempts by Austrian troops to launch a rapid counteroffensive were unsuccessful, but they succeeded in building effective defensive lines that prevented the Russians from continuing their progress (Pasiuk, ed. 2006; Reient, ed., 2015). It was the revolutionary year of 1917.

### **Ukrainian revolution of 1917–1921/1923**

The 1917 Revolution in Russia had fateful consequences, both at the global level and in the regional dimension. The dynamic development of events that was initiated by the abdication of Emperor Nicholas II contributed to the growth of national movements in the former empire. These trends were also observed in the Ukrainian provinces. In Ukrainian historiography, the term “Ukrainian Revolution” is used, on the one hand, as a product of the February Revolution in Russia and a phenomenon that took place in conjunction with Russian events of the time. On the other hand, it that had its own characteristic features, a national-democratic orientation, and eventually it led to the formation of Ukrainian statehood. A dominant feature of Ukrainian historiography is the characterization of the events of 1917 in Russia in the context of the history of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921/1923 as a process that eventually led to the formation of the Ukrainian statehood.

The chronological outline of the Ukrainian Revolution covers the years 1917–1921/1923 and includes three stages: 1) Formation and activities of the Ukrainian Central Council, creation and proclamation of independence of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UPR) (March 1917 – April 1918); 2) Pavlo Skoropadskyi’s Ukrainian State (Hetmanate) (April – December 1918); 3) UPR Directorate (December 1918 – late 1920, some events of the revolution in 1921, followed by its decline) (Verstiuk et al, 2011). At the same time, the Western Ukrainian People’s Republic (ZUNR) is a separate page in the history of the Ukrainian Revolution. Regarding the chronology of the revolutionary events, it should be noted that some historians also use the following time frame: 1914–1923 or 1917–1921.

The Central Council of Ukraine (UTSR) was established shortly after the February Revolution in Russia on March 4 (17), 1917, and initially served as a representative body of social and political organizations, and after the All-Ukrainian National Congress (April 1917), it served as a parliament. It was headed by the aforementioned historian Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, who in the spring of 1917 published a brochure titled *Khto taki ukraintsi i choho vony khoczut* [Who Ukrainians are and what they want], in which he stated, in particular, that

Ukrainians do not want any more ... slavery either to themselves or to anyone else in Ukraine and in the entire Russian state. Together with the other peoples of Russia, they overthrew the tsar and rose up against the oppressors of the Ukrainian people, and won freedom for the peoples of Russia. And now this freedom must be established... (Hrushevskyi, 1991, p. 115).

According to Hrushevsky, the “affirmation of freedom” involved the realization of the idea of Ukraine’s autonomy within Russia. This was confirmed by the first proclamation of the URSR of March 9 (23), 1917. “To the Ukrainian nation.” Among other things, it stated:

The age-old shackles have fallen off. Freedom has come to all the oppressed people, to all the enslaved nations of Russia ... For the first time, the thirty-five million Ukrainian people will be able to say for yourselves who you are and how you want to live as a separate nation. From now on, in the friendly family of free nations, you will begin to forge a better life for yourselves with a mighty hand. ... Ukrainian Nation! You are standing before a new path of life (Verstiuk et al., ed., 1996, p. 38–39).

Almost throughout the entire period of its existence, the URSR was faithful to the concept of Ukraine’s territorial autonomy within democratic Russia, as evidenced by its first three state and political acts, the Universals. For example, the first Universal of June 10, 1917, stated: “May Ukraine be free. Without separating from the whole of Russia, without breaking with the Russian state, let the Ukrainian people in their land have the right to direct their own lives...” (Persnyi Universal Ukrainskoi Tsentralnoi Rady of 10 June 1917). In the second Universal of 3 July 1917, The URSR reaffirmed its autonomist position, as well as its readiness to cooperate with national minorities:

We, the Central Council, which has always stood for not separating Ukraine from Russia, in order to strive together with all its peoples for the development and welfare of all Russia and for the unity of its democratic forces ... Striving for an autonomous system in Ukraine, the Central Council, in agreement with the national minorities of Ukraine,

shall prepare draft laws on the autonomous structure of Ukraine...  
(Druhyi Universal Ukrainskoi Tsentralnoi Rady of 3 July 1917).

The Third Universal of the Ukrainian Central Council of November 7, 1917, played an important role in the state-building processes by Ukrainians. It was proclaimed after the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, staged a *coup d'état* and seized power in St. Petersburg. The Third Universal declared the creation of an autonomous Ukrainian People's Republic (UPR) within a federation with the Russian state. This document outlined the territory of the UPR, which was to cover nine provinces where the majority of the population was Ukrainian, namely Volyn, Kyiv, Podillia, Poltava, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kherson, Katerynoslav, and Tavria (excluding Crimea). This legal act left open the question of the final borders of the republic and contained references to the possible future expression of the will of the local population to join the UPR in some areas of Kursk, Voronezh, Chełm, and other areas where Ukrainians were the majority. In the Third Universal, the UTSR declared the protection of the rights of national minorities and granted the right of national and personal autonomy to Russians, Jews, Poles, and other ethnic groups. The idea was that these national groups would be granted freedom of self-government in matters of their national life (Tretii Universal Ukrainskoi Tsentralnoi Rady of 7 November 1917). The revolutionary events in Russia in 1917 also had a positive impact on the activation of other national groups in the Dnipro Ukraine, including Poles, Jews, Crimean Tatars, and other communities. In March 1917, a congress of all Polish organizations was held in Kyiv. As a result, the Polish Executive Committee of the Association of Polish Organizations (later the Polish Executive Committee in Russia) was established, which began to create its own regional branches (cf. Potapenko, 2012, 2011; Jabłoński 1948).

The last IV Universal of the UTSR, adopted on January 9 (22), 1918, proclaimed the independence of the Ukrainian People's Republic from Russia and thus marked the rejection of the traditional concept of autonomy. This legal act was about the creation of an independent, free and sovereign state of the Ukrainian people, which sought peaceful coexistence with its neighbors: Russia, Poland, Austria, Romania, Turkey and other states (Chetvertyi Universal Ukrainskoi

Tsentralnoi Rady of 22 January 1918). On the same day, the UTSR adopted the law “On National and Personal Autonomy,” which granted it to Russians, Jews, and Poles living in the UPR. Other national groups – Belarussians, Czechs, Moldavians, Germans, Tatars, Greeks and Bulgarians also received the right to a national autonomy (Zakon Ukrainskoi Tsentralnoi Rady “Pro natsionalno-personalnu avtonomiu” of 22 January 1918).

The declaration of independence gave the UPR subjectivity in negotiations with Germany, which was seen as an ally against Bolshevik Russia. The historian Yaroslav Hrytsak rightly notes that in 1918, Lithuanians, Estonians, Belarussians, Georgians, Armenians, Azerbaijanis, and Latvians declared independence under similar circumstances. They all sought the support of the Germans in their confrontation with the Bolsheviks (Hrytsak, 2021).

The Germans helped the UTSR liberate Ukraine from the Bolsheviks, but the socialist experiments of the Ukrainian authorities caused serious concern on the German side. A coup soon followed, and a more conservative Pavlo Skoropadskyi came to power. With the support of German and Austro-Hungarian troops, the latter proclaimed the creation of the Ukrainian state. Skoropadskyi’s administration has been characterized as a period of stability, attentive as to successful administration, showing positive trends in the education sector, and maintaining the security situation (Mędrzecki, 2000; Pyrih, 2011). The defeat of the central powers in World War I and the end of the armed conflict on the western front led to the fall of Skoropadskyi’s government. In the last weeks of his government, on November 14, 1918, he proclaimed a federal union of the Ukrainian state with non-Bolshevik Russia, which in fact indicated a return to the autonomist concept of the Ukrainian People’s Republic.

...The bloodiest war is over, and the peoples of the world are facing a difficult task: to lay the foundations for a new life. Among the other parts of long-suffering Russia, Ukraine has had the luckiest fate. Ukraine was the first country to restore order and legality. With the friendly assistance of the Central Powers, it has remained calm until today. ... Now, after the great unrest that Russia has ever experienced,

the conditions of its future existence must certainly change. The ancient power and strength of the Russian state should be restored on federal principles. Ukraine is entitled to one of the most important positions in this federation...,

Pavlo Skoropadskyi's federal charter stated (*Hramota Hetmana vsiei Ukrainy do vsikh ukrainskikh hromadian i kozakiv*, 1918).

A real federation with Russia never happened, however, and in December 1918, the power in Dnipro Ukraine passed to the UPR Directorate. However, in the difficult socio-political conditions, the government body failed to properly organize the activities of the state administration in the country, and generally had little control over the socio-political and security situation. The year 1919 was marked by a wave of Jewish pogroms throughout Ukraine. In particular, on January 11, perpetrators set off from Zhytomyr to the town of Troianiv. Wagons with seven armed Cossacks and three women arrived and began looting Jewish homes. The Jewish community could not resist the armed attackers. In this situation, local Orthodox Christian Ukrainian peasants came to the defense of the Jews. They killed one attacker, two attackers escaped, while the rest were detained. The peasant assembly decided to punish the criminals with the death penalty (Makhorin, 2017). Regarding these events, which are poorly studied in Ukrainian historiography, the Directorate adopted a "Resolution on the adoption of the charter of the emergency provisional commission to investigate the events in Zhytomyr on January 7–13, 1919," in early March 1919 (*Postanova pro ykhvalennia statutu nadzvychainoi slidchoi komisii...* of 03 March 1919). In some towns, the Bolsheviks were the ones who incited the Jewish pogroms. In particular, Symon Petliura noted in a telegram of June 8, 1919: "In Volochysk, after the entry of the Ukrainian army, the Cossacks arrested a worker who incited Cossacks to commit a Jewish pogrom. I order the provocateurs to be shot, informing the population" (Komarnytskyi, 2003, p. 38–46). The investigation of anti-Jewish action was also related to the "Order of the UPR Directorate on the appointment of the head of the Special Provisional Commission to investigate anti-Jewish pogroms" of July 4, 1919 (*Nakaz Dyrektorii UNR pro pryznachennia holovy Osoblyvoi*

slidchoi komisii... 4.07.1919 r.). In general, the Jewish pogroms in Ukraine in 1919 are one of the least studied issues in contemporary Ukrainian historical scholarship, and at the same time an issue that attracts special attention in Western historiography.

In the fall of 1918, The Ukrainian National Revolution also covered the post-Austrian territories of Eastern Galicia, Northern Bukovina, and Carpathian Ruthenia. In particular, in mid-October, the Ukrainian National Council, headed by Yevhen Petrushevych, was formed in Lviv. Its creation was preceded by an Austrian attempt to reorganize the empire into a federation. At the same time, the Poles also saw Eastern Galicia as part of their future state. At the end of October 1918, a Polish temporary (transitional) government was established in Krakow – the Polish Liquidation Committee of Galicia and Cieszyn Silesia. This committee planned to take over Lviv as well. In fact, since early November, Ukrainian state-building processes have been taking place here, as well as a Polish-Ukrainian armed confrontation. On October 19, the newly formed Ukrainian National Council proclaimed a Ukrainian state in eastern Galicia. On November 1, Ukrainians took control of Lviv, and on November 13, they adopted the constitution of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR). At the end of November 1918, the Poles managed to force Ukrainians out of Lviv, but the Polish-Ukrainian war for Eastern Galicia continued (БН ПАУ і ПАН, ман. 4064, 4104, 4292, 4311) (cf. Lytvyn & Naumenko, 1995; Lytvyn, 1998).

On January 22, 1919, the Act of Unification of the UPR and ZUNR took place in the center of Kyiv on St. Sophia Square. The respective universal stated: "...From now on, the parts of a single Ukraine that have been separated for centuries, the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (Galicia, Bukovina, and Uzhhorod Rus) and the Greater Dnipro Ukraine, are merging together. The age-old dreams that the best sons of Ukraine lived and died for have come true. From now on, there is a united independent Ukrainian People's Republic" (Akt zluky UNR i ZUNR of 22 Jan. 1919). Under pressure from the Bolsheviks, the UPR directorate hastily left Kyiv and sought new allies. A serious threat to it was posed by the so-called "white Russian" movement, the Russian Volunteer Army of Anton Denikin, who did not see an independent Ukraine in his national concept. The leadership of

the ZUNR, like the UPR, was also losing sovereignty over its state territories, yielding to the Poles, and needed external support. The question of choosing allies was extremely difficult for both Galicians and Dnipro Ukraine dwellers. Serhii Plokyi rightly notes that:

Westerners did not see any problem in an alliance with the anti-Bolshevik and anti-Polish White Army. Easterners, for their part, viewed the Poles, despised by the Galicians, as potential allies in the fight against the Bolsheviks and the Whites, while some semi-independent atamans were not averse to joining the Red Army. United by ideology and circumstances, the two sides still waged their own wars (Plokyi, 2021, p. 285–286).

The Ukrainian national project encountered similar projects of its neighbors. The Bolsheviks, despite declaring the nations' right to self-determination, saw Ukraine as a Soviet state in an alliance with communist Russia. For the White Guards, the Ukrainian territory was part of "one and indivisible Russia." The Poles also had their own concepts for the revival of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which were presented to R. Dmowski and J. Piłsudski. Despite the differences in the vision of the future territorial structure of Poland, both programs envisioned Volyn and Eastern Galicia as non-negotiable parts of the revived state. At the same time, Hungary and Czechoslovakia claimed Carpathian Ruthenia, Romania sought to incorporate Northern Bukovina, and the northern border of Ukraine became the subject of debate with the leaders of the Belarusian People's Republic, but they did not continue due to the seizure of Belarusian lands by the Bolsheviks.

In such circumstances, Ukrainians hoped for a fair international arbitration. However, at the final stage of the Great War, it was already clear that the Entente powers, which supported non-Bolshevik Russia and Poland, had little interest to the "Ukrainian question." During the war, the Polish political emigration actively worked to convey the need for a just solution to the "Polish question" in the international arena. This issue was also supported by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson. In Western Europe, France had a special sympathy for Poland, which was especially noticeable



during the Paris Peace Conference, which summarized the results of the Great War (Lytvyn, 1998). It was thanks to the deployment of General Józef Haller's army, formed in France from Polish prisoners of war to the Polish-Ukrainian front, that the Poles gained a significant advantage in 1919: they pushed the Ukrainian Galician Army beyond the Zbruch River, occupied a significant part of the former Volyn province and included it in Polish temporary administrative units.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the success of the Poles in the war with the Ukrainians and their international support by the Entente powers contributed to their occupation of Eastern Galicia and Western Volyn and the establishment of a temporary administration in these territories. The Entente countries, as allies of non-Bolshevik Russia, also supported the "white" movement that opposed the Ukrainian People's Republic. Historian M. Lytvyn notes:

Clemenceau wrote that he could not forgive Ukrainians for the 'shameful peace in Brest-Litovsk'. He believed that the Ukrainian national idea was supported by Germany, believing that Austria-Hungary and the Ukrainians of Galicia within it fought against the Entente, reproached the Central Council and the Hetman for their alliance with Berlin and inviting German troops to Ukraine in the spring of 1918 (Lytvyn, 1998, p. 257).

At the end of June 1919, the Entente officially agreed to the occupation of Eastern Galicia by Poland (Lytvyn, 1998).

It is worth noting that Ukrainians were not only in conflict with their neighbors. In particular, the Ukrainian Central Council offered

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2 This refers to the Civil Administration of the eastern territories and the Civil Administration of the Volyn and Podillia Front. Cf.: Zarządzenie Komisarza Generalnego Ziem Wschodnich z dnia 7 czerwca 1919 r. dotyczące utworzenia Okręgów administracyjnych: Wileńskiego, Brzeskiego oraz Zarządu powiatów wołyńskich, Dziennik Urzędowy Zarządu Cywilnego Ziem Wschodnich (DzU zczw), 1919, No 5, item. 41, p. 37-40; Zarządzenie Komisarza Generalnego Ziem Wschodnich z dnia 9 września 1919 r. dotyczące utworzenia okręgu administracyjnego Wołyńskiego i uprawnień komisarza Okręgowego Wołyńskiego, DzU zczw, 1919, No 17, item. 153, p. 161; Rozkaz Naczelnego Wodza Wojsk Polskich z dnia 17 stycznia 1920 r. w przedmiocie utworzenia Komisarjatu Ziem Wołynia i Frontu Podolskiego, Dziennik Urzędowy Zarządu Cywilnego Ziem Wołynia i Frontu Podolskiego, 1920, No 1, item. 1, p. 1-6.

cooperation to the Russian Provisional Government within the framework of the concept of autonomy, and Hetman Pavlo Skoropadskyi even proclaimed a federal union between Ukraine and non-Bolshevik Russia at the end of his rule. “For both the Russian left and the Russian right, the idea of Ukraine as a separate, even autonomous state was a curse. National differences turned out to be stronger than ideological proximity,” says historian Yaroslav Hrytsak (2021, p. 222).

Despite the Polish-Ukrainian war over Eastern Galicia and Western Volyn, the two rivals managed to unite in the face of the Bolshevik threat in the spring of 1920. On April 21, 1920, in Warsaw, Polish Foreign Minister Jan Dąbski and UPR Foreign Minister Andriy Livytskyi signed a secret political convention. Soon it received a popular and historiographical name, the “Warsaw Pact” or “Piłsudski–Petliura Union” (Pisuliński & Skalski, eds., 2020). According to the treaty, the Polish government recognized the Directorate of the Independent Ukrainian People’s Republic as the supreme authority of the UPR. Three days later, on April 24, a Military Convention was signed, which outlined a joint Polish-Ukrainian anti-Bolshevik military action. The Warsaw Pact provided for territorial concessions by the Ukrainian party in exchange for international recognition of the UPR and military assistance in the war against the Bolsheviks. The UPR government recognized eastern Galicia and western Volyn as part of the Polish state (Pisuliński & Skalski, eds. 2020).

The signing of the agreement with the Poles led to sharp criticism of Symon Petliura. Mykhailo Hrushevskyi called him a “new Teteria” and referred to the treaty an “extravagancy,” “provocation” and “machination” that stained Ukraine’s image for European politicians (Hrushevskyi, 1920). The head of the ZUNR, Yevhen Petrushevych, also protested. At the same time, the moral authority of the Greek Catholics, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi, responded positively to the agreement. Petliura himself later wrote: “Only a dishonest demagogue can afford to say that ‘Petliura sold’ Galicia and Volyn. Petliura, to tell the truth, bears responsibility for the historical ‘sins’ and shortcomings of Ukrainian disorganization, lack of culture and unfavorable circumstances in the life of the Ukrainian nation” (Petliura, 1994, p. 254).

The military success of Polish and Ukrainian troops in May–June 1920 was short-lived. In early July, Soviet troops crossed the Zbruch

River and began advancing into Volyn, Galicia, and further into Poland. In the occupied territories, the Bolsheviks created their own temporary authorities, the Revolutionary Committees. The short-lived Bolshevik regime was accompanied by terror and contributions. The decisive Battle of Warsaw, the “Miracle on the Vistula,” took place on August 13–25, 1920, and ended with the retreat of Bolshevik troops. The 6th Division of the UPR Army under the command of Colonel Marko Bezruchko played an important role in this. During the defense of Zamość, Ukrainians did not allow the Reds to advance deep into Poland, thus saving the entire Polish-Soviet front. In the fall of 1920, the Poles and the Bolsheviks, exhausted by the military confrontation, signed a preliminary armistice and *de facto* ended the war.

### Epilogue

Born in the mid-nineteenth century, the Ukrainian “national project” evolved from cultural to socio-political demands. This culminated in the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921/1923, when an independent Ukrainian state emerged. However, unlike Poland and the Baltic states, Ukrainian statehood did not last long. On March 18, 1921, a treaty was signed in Riga between Poland and Soviet Russia and its satellites, the Soviet governments of Ukraine and Belarus. The line of demarcation was almost exactly where the Ukrainian-Polish border was planned under the Warsaw Pact. The western part of the ancient Volyn province with Lutsk and Rivne remained under Polish control, while the eastern part, with Zhytomyr and Korosten, became part of the Soviet state.<sup>3</sup> Virtually all of Great (Dnipro) Ukraine became part of the communist USSR.

The international resolution of the status of Eastern Galicia took several more years. Nevertheless, in early December 1920, the Poles

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3 In Western Volyn, the Poles created the Volyn Voivodeship. Established by the law of February 4, 1921, the new administrative unit was one of the largest voivodeships of the Polish state. Cf.: Ustawa z 4 lutego 1921 r. o unormowaniu stanu prawno-politycznego na ziemiach, przyłączonych do obszaru Rzeczypospolitej na podstawie umowy o preliminarjnym pokoju i rozejmie podpisanej w Rydze 12 października 1920 r., Dziennik Urzędowy Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (DzU RP), 1921, No 16, item. 93, p. 216–217.

officially created three new voivodeships – of Lviv, Ternopil, and Stanislawiv.<sup>4</sup> Most Galicians did not accept the Polish authorities and they expected a fair decision by the victorious powers, therefore mostly boycotting the parliamentary elections in the fall of 1922. In the difficult domestic political and international situation related to the determination of the status of Eastern Galicia in early 1923, the Polish authorities seriously feared an uprising of Ukrainians in the spring of that year (BN PAU i PAN w Krakowie, man. 4066, p. 67; man. 4144, p. 2.). No uprising took place, and already on 14 March 1923, the Council of Ambassadors of the Entente recognized the eastern border of Poland and thus consolidated the sovereignty of the Second Polish Republic over Eastern Galicia (*Republika* 1923, 68, 15 March, p. 1, *Dziennik Wołyński* 1923a, p. 16, 1923b, p. 17, 1923c, 19–20, p. 1, 1923d, p. 1; Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie; Derzhavnyi arkhiv Ivano-Frankivskoi oblasti; Materski 1981). In addition, after the First World War, Carpathian Ruthenia was ceded to Czechoslovakia, Bukovina to Romania, and Ukrainians, as historian Stanislav Kulchytskyi aptly noted, became “the only large nation of Austria-Hungary that did not achieve its own statehood after its collapse” (Kulchytskyi, 1999, p. 268).

Why did the Ukrainian nation-state, unlike Poland or the Baltic states, fail to survive? The historian Serhii Plokhyy tried to formulate an answer to this complex question:

There are many reasons. One of them was the presence of more powerful neighbors who had claims towards Ukrainian territories. But the key factor was the immaturity of the Ukrainian national movement and the too-late acceptance of the idea of statehood and independence in both the Austrian and Russian parts of Ukraine. ...Despite the failed attempt to create a single state out of Habsburgian and Dniipro Ukraine, the ideal of a unified and independent statehood became the main element in the new Ukrainian creed (Plokhyy, 2016, p. 296).

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4 Ustawa z 3 grudnia 1920 r. o tymczasowej organizacji władz administracyjnych 11 instancji (województw) na obszarze b. Królestwa Galicji i Lodomerji z W. Ks. Krakowskiem oraz na wchodzących w skład Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej obszarach Spisza i Orawy, DzU RP, 1920, No 117, item. 768, p. 2064–2066; Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe, Departament Sprawiedliwości MSW, I 300.58.14.

The Ukrainian national movement remained captive to the romantic ideals of nineteenth-century autonomy and federalism, which ultimately had a negative impact on the outcome of the liberation struggle. At the same time, the Polish and Finnish national movements in the nineteenth century clearly articulated the concept of national independence, which led to the creation of nation states after the collapse of the great empire in 1918 (Hrytsak, 2021). The experience of the UPR and ZUNR became crucial for the Ukrainian national movement in the twentieth century. Many politicians would later refer to the lessons of 1914–1923, and the absence of a Ukrainian state would become the basis for the formation of the identity of Ukrainian society in interwar Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania.

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