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UKRAINIAN-POLISH CENTURY-LONG CO-OPERATION: FROM THE 1920 WARSAW AGREEMENT TO STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP OF THE TWO STATES

УКРАЇНСЬКО-ПОЛЬСЬКА СПІВПРАЦЯ ДОВЖИНОЮ В СТОЛІТТЯ: ВІД ВАРШАВСЬКОЇ УГОДИ 1920 РОКУ ДО СТРАТЕГІЧНОГО ПАРТНЕРСТВА ДВОХ ДЕРЖАВ

УКРАИНСКО-ПОЛЬСКОЕ СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО ДЛИНОЙ В СТОЛЕТИЕ: ОТ ВАРШАВСКОГО СОГЛАШЕНИЯ 1920 ГОДА ДО СТРАТЕГИЧЕСКОГО ПАРТНЕРСТВА ДВУХ СТРАН

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Abstract. *The article analyzes the main stages of forming partnership relations between Ukraine and Poland, clarifies historical and political prerequisites of the Ukrainian-Polish dialogue, the role of geopolitical factors in the formation of allied relations in 1919-20, the reasons of inability to implement the 1920 Treaty of Warsaw. It has been proved that the concept of Polish-Ukrainian national reconciliation of Jerzy Giedroyc and the understanding of the intellectual elite of the two peoples became a significant ideological basis for forming a strategic partnership between Ukraine and Poland. It is determined that historical issues are the main obstacle to deepening strategic partnership relations. A mechanism for resolving controversial issues of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict past based on intercultural dialogue, is proposed.*

Key words: *Ukrainian-Polish relations, Treaty of Warsaw, strategic partnership, historical issues, understanding.*

Анотація. *В статті проаналізовано основні етапи формування партнерських відносин України і Польщі, з'ясовано історико-політичні передумови українсько-польського діалогу, роль геополітичних чинників у формуванні союзницьких відносин у 1919-1920 роках, причини неможливості реалізації Варшавської угоди 1920 року. Доведено, що вагомим ідеологічним підґрунтям для формування стратегічного партнерства України і Польщі на сучасному етапі стали концепція польсько-українського національного примирення Єжи Гедройця і порозуміння інтелектуальної еліти двох народів. Визначено, що головною перешкодою на шляху поглиблення відносин стратегічного партнерства виступають історичні питання. Запропоновано механізм вирішення суперечливих питань українсько-польського конфліктного минулого на основі міжкультурного діалогу*

Ключові слова: *українсько-польські відносини, Варшавська угода, стратегічне партнерство, історичні питання, порозуміння.*

Аннотация. *В статье проанализированы основные этапы формирования партнерских отношений Украины и Польши, определены историко-политические предпосылки украинско-польского диалога, роль геополитических факторов в формировании союзнических отношений в 1919–1920 годах, причины невозможности реализации Варшавского соглашения 1920 года. Доказано, что важной идеологической основой для формирования стратегического партнерства Украины и Польши на современном этапе стали концепция польско-украинского национального примирения Ежи Гедройца и взаимопонимание интеллектуальной элиты двух народов. Определено, что главной сложностью в процессе углубления отношений стратегического партнерства являются исторические проблемы. Предложен механизм решения спорных вопросов украинско-польского конфликтного прошлого на основе межкультурного диалога.*

Ключевые слова: *украинско-польские отношения, Варшавское соглашение, стратегическое партнерство, исторические проблемы, понимание.*

Introduction

Ukrainian-Polish relations have a long history. Often, they were confrontational, rarely partnerships, but since the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the Ukrainian Hetmanate and Polish Rzeczpospolita lost, respectively, autonomy and independence, and the national elites of the

two peoples gradually embarked on a path of political understanding. Taking advantage of the situation of the First World War, Ukraine and Poland regained their independence, and thus received a unique opportunity to start allied relations as a safeguard on the way of revival imperial ambitions by Russia from the east and Germany from the west.

Both in Ukraine [1-10] and Poland [11-15] lots of research on Ukrainian-Polish relations over the past hundred years have been done. The authors of this article have taken it into account, and in an effort to restore in memory of the contemporaries the events that preceded the conclusion of the Treaty of Warsaw in 1920, and to analyze the main stages of Ukrainian-Polish relations over the past 100 years, decided to focus on the following issues: What were the international political and geostrategic circumstances of the Treaty of Warsaw signing on 21–24 April 1920? Why wasn't the Treaty implemented? What factors caused the resumption of Ukrainian-Polish dialogue during the communist collapse in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe? Is it possible to regard the current Ukraine-Poland interstate relations as a strategic partnership relationship? The answer to these questions became the subject of our paper.

The first attempt to establish Ukrainian-Polish partnership relations can be considered the 1920 Treaty of Warsaw, which was preceded by a war between the Polish state (revived on November 11, 1918) and West Ukrainian People's Republic (WUPR) proclaimed on November 13, 1918 on the ethnic Ukrainian lands of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The outbreak of the Polish-Ukrainian war in Galicia caused great concern for the Western states. The war was not a part of their plans related to the needed consolidation of Poland and fight against Bolshevism in Russia. France considered it necessary to create a security system in Europe that would deter Germany. The important part in it was assigned to Poland as a reliable ally instead of lost Russia. The existence of such Poland provided for its strengthening at the expense of West Ukrainian lands. The United Kingdom traditionally sought to maintain a balance of powers in Europe and preferred not to allow strengthening of France and, accordingly, of Poland, and therefore considered options for the accession of Eastern Galicia to Ukraine as a part of federal Russia, or even to Czechoslovakia. The US position was controversial.

On June 25, 1919, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Paris Peace Conference decided to allow Polish troops to temporarily occupy Eastern Galicia as far as the Zbruch River. On November 21, the major powers approved a compromise decision that granted Poland a 25-year mandate from the League of Nations, on which expiration Warsaw pledged to hold a plebiscite, and till that time Eastern Galicia was promised autonomy. However, this decision had never been implemented. Warsaw began to exert pressure on the governments of the great powers and on December 22, 1919, the Entente's decision was cancelled.

In the fall of 1919, the fighting in the East was halted. The Head of the Polish state, Józef Pilsudski, was waiting for the results of Bolsheviks' struggle against Denikin. He gave up launching a joint offensive with the 'white' army, which was insisted on by Western leaders, and reckoned on emaciation of both sides. The process of forming an effective military-political alliance (the Baltic-Black Sea Union) in early 1920s with participation of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Poland and the Ukrainian People's Republic (UPR) slowed down significantly after the decision of the Supreme War Council of the Entente (January 16, 1920) to lift the economic blockade of Bolshevik Russia and the de facto refusal of the Entente to support the newly formed union, as well as the intensification of the Bolshevik bilateral diplomacy with the Baltic states. Pilsudski had the only possible ally at his disposal – the Directory of the Ukrainian People's Republic, whose army was defeated by the Bolsheviks. The Head of the UPR Directory, Simon Petliura, could only count on a Polish ally when he was in a desperate situation in Poland.

From a geopolitical and military-strategic point of view, the Ukrainian People's Republic was objectively interested in establishing allied relations with II Rzeczpospolita. The Entente victory made it impossible for Ukrainian statehood to gain diplomatic recognition in the nearest period by France, Great Britain, the USA and Italy as a result of Ukraine's signing the Brest Treaty and thus getting 'a stigma' of accomplice or even 'creation' of Central Powers. Left alone in the opposition to Bolshevik and 'white' Russia, Ukraine had little chance of survival. Poland could

have become not only a powerful ally in the fight against Russia's revival efforts, another key focus of the Baltic-Black Sea Alliance of Young Independent States, but would have also acted as a diplomatic 'window to Europe' for Ukraine.

The UPR Directory, which logically had a keen interest in allying with its western neighbor, lacked unity towards Polish policy issues. Of the five members of the Directory, only the Chief Ataman of the Republican Army S. Petliura was clearly aware of the need for rapprochement with Poland, even at the expense of the assignment of separate territories to it in the Kholmshchyna, Podlasie, Western Volyn and Eastern Galicia, which by the end of 1918 had already been occupied by Polish troops.

Through Warsaw's mediation, he hoped to reach an agreement with the Entente and thus to get out of international diplomatic isolation and to obtain effective military and political assistance against Bolshevik Russia in order to defend the state independence of the UPR. The Polish armed forces could also, under favorable circumstances, become a source of arms and equipment for the UPR Army, and in the event of an alliance agreement with Warsaw, S. Petliura hoped to use the human resources of Western Ukrainian lands to replenish his troops. It was S. Petliura who initiated the start of negotiations with Poland.

However, the hasty evacuation of the UPR Directory and Government on February 2, 1919, from Kiev to Vinnytsia prevented those intentions, and the declaration of the UPR and WUPR Universal (the Act Zluky) on January 22, 1919, in Kiev, made for a while impossible the possibility of understanding with Warsaw. The fronts in the north-east against Bolshevik Russia and in the south-east – against 'white' Russia were unexpectedly added by the Polish front between the Western Bug and the Pripjat.

At the end of May 1919, the UPR leaders were in a greater mood for understanding with J. Pilsudski, especially since almost all of Eastern Galicia had been already occupied by the Poles. In mid-June, a UPR military delegation signed a temporary truce agreement with the Poles. The established demarcation line, the so-called 'Delwig line', left almost all of Eastern Galicia within Poland. However, the WUPR (WR UPR) Dictator and at the same time the UPR Directory member Ye. Petrushevich did not agree to approve this agreement.

After changing the command, the WUPR (WR UPR)-formed Ukrainian Galician Army (UGA) passed to the offensive against the Poles. The fallacy of these actions is confirmed by the fact that, at the same time, the UPR Army assumed the offensive against the Bolsheviks, which at first was quite successful, but soon the dispersal of Ukrainian forces enabled the Bolsheviks to force the UPR Army to retreat. Meanwhile, the Poles defeated the UGA.

In his policy towards Poland, S. Petliura for a long time had to take into account the position of Ye. Petrushevich and the WR UPR government, since he was interested in helping by a well-organized UGA. The Directory including Ye. Petrushevich, was nominally the highest authority, but practically the WR UPR government had a more efficient army and a more effective administrative system, and therefore did not intend to fulfil decisions which it did not agree with.

Yet the threat of Russia's revival, which would not only put an end to Ukraine's statehood but also call into question Poland's independence, remained a basis for understanding. It was well realized by J. Pilsudski and S. Petliura, having exchanged a number of diplomatic missions.

On September 1, 1919, the Ukrainian military delegation finally signed a truce agreement with the Poles. Despite the fact that Warsaw did not go for the official diplomatic recognition of the UPR, the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of mutually beneficial commodity exchange made it possible to create conditions for full-scale governmental negotiations on the signing of a comprehensive interstate agreement.

At the most responsible, initial moment of Ukrainian-Polish talks, the tragedy with far-reaching consequences took place at the front. On November 5, 1919, the UGA command entered into a separate agreement with 'the whites', went over to their side and put themselves at A. Denikin's full command. Warsaw was well aware of the disastrous military and political situation of the UPR after the UGA's transition to the side of A. Denikin, so the Polish delegation urgently

sought much larger territorial concessions in Eastern Galicia. Yet, a number of Directory members have spoken in favor of signing the Ukrainian-Polish peace treaty.

The Declaration was signed on December 2, 1919. Upon learning of its contents, J. Pilsudski gave his consent to accept the remains of the UPR Army defeated by Denikin troops, the Ukrainian government agencies, and to create the basis for their reorganization on the territory controlled by the Polish troops. In addition, the UPR was enabled to transit goods through Poland.

But official Ukrainian-Polish negotiations due to the government crisis in Warsaw and opposition to Pilsudski's eastern policy in the Sejm, were interrupted until March 11, 1920. Ukrainian-Polish understanding at the diplomatic and top levels practically did not affect the attitude of the local Polish administration and troops to the population of the UPR and the soldiers of its army. However, given the intensification of Bolshevik diplomacy in Warsaw, Ukrainians had to make further concessions to the Polish side. Moreover, the Ukrainian delegation was forced to ask its partners not to engage with representatives of the puppet-like UkrSSR created by the Russian Bolsheviks, or, at least, to announce at probable negotiations with the Bolsheviks the need to enable the Ukrainian people to express their will concerning their future statehood and independence.

After that, the Agreement was signed on the night of April 22, 1920. According to it, Poland recognized the independence of the UPR and the Directory "with Chief Ataman S. Petliura at the head as the supreme authority of the UPR". The border between the UPR and Poland was established, as the Poles wanted, along the Zbruch and the Horyn. Eastern Galicia, much of Volyn, and a few counties ('povits') of Podillya were withdrawn to Poland. Both sides pledged not to conclude any international agreements that are against the interests of the UPR or Poland. The UPR maintained full sovereignty in its foreign policy at the regional and pan-European levels. The cultural and national rights of minorities were mutually ensured and a trade and economic agreement was envisaged [10, p. 263]

Article 3 of the Agreement stated that the Polish Government "recognizes as Ukraine's the territory to the east of the border referred to in Article 2 of this Agreement, to the 1772 borders of Poland, which Poland already possesses, or will acquire from Russia by armed or diplomatic means". That is, in the event of the defeat of the UPR by the Bolsheviks on the Left Bank and in the South or the impossibility of liberating these regions at the time, the delineated territories of the Right Bank would become the center of Ukrainian statehood. The Ukrainian-Polish Political Convention guaranteed, as a last resort, the preservation of the UPR allied with Rzeczpospolita on the Right Bank [10, p.262-263].

Signing of the Political Convention paved the way for the intensification of the Ukrainian-Polish dialogue in financial and economic sphere. On the instructions of S. Petliura, the Ukrainian Trade Mission to Rzeczpospolita Polska was established, headed by First Vice-Premier and Minister of National Economy Ivan Feshchenko-Chopivsky, who was to develop and conclude a bilateral trade and economic agreement. At negotiations held in Warsaw on May 8 – August 4, 1920, the Polish side was led by Vice-Minister of the Polish Government Henryk Strasburger.

The sides agreed that the UPR had to grant Warsaw concessions in the Kryvyi Rih iron ore basin with the permission to transport raw materials to the Black Sea ports under Polish protection, as well as the primacy in exploitation of Podolian phosphorites, followed by their transportation by the Polish. Postal and telegraph and rail conventions and agreements concerning the distribution of state property and debts of the former Russian Empire were envisaged [16, p.23].

To meet the needs of the Ukrainian Army, governmental and cooperative institutions in Polish goods, the 'Krajowa Spółka Handlowa' gave credit of 200 million Polish marks for the UPR [10, p.264].

Thus, the projected trade and economic agreement had a somewhat unequal character for the UPR, given the complete disruption of economic life in the latter. Similarly, the Polish side also gained significant advantages in the Military Convention signed on April 24, 1920, which was an integral part of the political agreement. In particular, combat operations on the Right Bank were supposed to take place "by mutual understanding of the Polish Armed Forces' initial command and the Ukrainian Armed Forces' main command" but "under the general command of the Polish

Armed Forces' command." Polish military control over the Ukrainian railways was envisaged during the military campaign, as well as the participation of Polish officers in the organization and formation of power structures, etc. The UPR government had to provide the Polish troops with food and cartage.

But, to tell the truth, it could not be otherwise. According to estimates of contemporary experts, in general, the army of the UPR, which successfully advanced on the right wing of the anti-Bolshevik front, numbered about 20 thousand soldiers, while the Polish one – 44 thousand infantrymen and over 6 thousand cavalry [5, p. 28].

For all that, as A. Nikovsky mentioned in his final report of March 11, 1921, due to the Treaty of Warsaw UPR received “moral assistance in the form of de jure recognition of state sovereignty and real support in political, military and financial fields. After long and persistent struggle against the enemies of Ukrainian statehood – the Bolsheviks and Denikin, Ukraine for the first time found an ally, whose troops, together with our reorganized and well-equipped army, were to clear the Ukrainian territory from hostile occupation and assist in establishment peace and public tranquility ... The Ukrainian People's Republic, up to recently closed by hostile neighboring states, with this Treaty broke the barrier which obstructed its way to Western Europe” [16, p.6].

When allied Ukrainian-Polish troops liberated Kyiv on May 7, 1920, the UPR Foreign Ministry informed in “Foreign Policy and the Ukrainian Issue Abroad” monthly review that “now the press of England and France is discussing a new political situation in Eastern Europe, as well as economic prospects that would open up in connection with the future liberation of the whole territory of Ukraine from the Bolsheviks ... English capitalists and industrialists express their desire to participate in the economic reconstruction of Ukraine” [17, p. 27].

In late March 1920, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly, Louis Barthou and MP Gailard, submitted an issue concerning the recognition of independence of the UPR, to the Parliament. It was to be considered on May 25, and, as the Ukrainian government was assured by Warsaw's political circles, “the matter would be certainly resolved positively” [17, p. 27 st.].

But from the beginning of formation and implementation of Ukrainian-Polish military-political union, its vulnerable domestic and international aspects were both subjective and objective ones. First, it actually remained the ‘personal union’ of the two Heads of state – S. Petliura and J. Pilsudski – and was based on their trusting personal relations and private arrangements. After all, the two leaders had a lot in common, first of all, regarding their socialist past and their rejection of an idea of the ‘Great Russia’ revival. S. Petliura and J. Pilsudski managed to reject the dramatic stratification of the complicated historical past of the two Slavic peoples and, despite national mentality and negative social stereotypes, found the courage and wisdom to embark on the path of strategic partnership.

But neither S. Petliura nor J. Pilsudski could convince their countrymen of the expediency of such a partnership, the Ukrainian-Polish military-political union did not become a consolidating factor in either the UPR or Poland. Moreover, both leaders faced strong opposition to their plans within their own countries; a century of disagreeable misunderstandings, intense confrontation and conflicts between the two nations came to the fore. Polish National Democrats and centrist parties, which had a majority in the Sejm, were concerned that the pro-Ukrainian policy of the ‘Head of the state’ was merely antagonizing Moscow. Besides, they did not trust the Dnieper Ukrainians, considering the latter as potential allies of Germany and competitors in the struggle for Eastern Galicia, and therefore strongly opposed the support of Ukrainian statehood in any form. Polish Socialists, though were keen on the UPR independence, did not, in principle, approve of the commencement of hostilities against Bolshevik Russia and insisted on peace talks [8, p. 190–196].

S. Petliura, in his turn, got under fire of shattering criticism by almost all figures of the Ukrainian movement well known from the pre-revolutionary times (V. Vinnichenko, M. Hrushevsky, M. Shapoval, etc.), who considered Warsaw Agreements to be a betrayal of the interests of Greater Ukraine (‘Soborna Ukraina’). Hostile or, at best, neutral attitude to the arrival of the Polish Army was also demonstrated by the majority of the Ukrainian Right Bank peasantry,

who strongly held in memory the recent times of Polish landowners' domination. The mass anti-Bolshevik uprising that S. Petliura and J. Pilsudski hoped for, had not taken place.

Last but not least, the lack of expected support from the Entente countries and the United States (except for the brief period of the greatest success of the Allied troops in May 1920) played a significant role in the defeat of the Ukrainian-Polish Union. Following the Entente's cessation of economic blockade of the RSFSR, the Supreme Council of the Paris Peace Conference on February 24, 1920 adopted a special resolution, supported by France and Britain, which did not advise the neighboring with Bolshevik Russia countries to proceed with the war, to say nothing of passing to the offensive. [8, p. 166].

At the same time, US Secretary of State Robert Lansing informed US Ambassador to Warsaw Hugh S. Gibson that in the event of war with Bolshevik Russia, Poland could not rely on military and economic assistance of the United States [11, p. 149]. In the midst of the Bolshevik counter-offensive on Warsaw on July 10, 1920, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, on behalf of the Allies, promised Poland assistance only if it concludes a truce with the Kremlin.

Such an 'appeasing' position of the great powers in Eastern Europe can be explained by their outspoken skepticism in assessing the chances of asserting Ukrainian statehood, a wary attitude towards the personality of J. Pilsudsky (his participation at young age in the socialist movement and pro-German orientation during the World War) and considering interests of the 'ally' – 'white' Russia. On June 21, 1920, the Embassy of 'White Emigration' in Paris spread a memorandum stating that the creation of the Ukrainian state 'would be contrary to the natural state of affairs' and that "economic, historical, ethnic, political and cultural grounds deny such artificial formation" while Ukraine's union with Russia is 'necessary and inevitable.' [4, p. 267]

It was on the advice and pressure of the Entente on October 12, 1920, in Riga, between Poland, on the one hand, and Soviet Russia and Ukraine, on the other, a treaty of armistice and preliminary peace conditions was signed. It happened at a time when, after the 'miracle over the Vistula,' Bolshevik troops were constantly moving eastward from Warsaw and Lviv, and there were conditions to finally demoralize and completely break down those Red Army units still operating in Right-Bank Ukraine, and release the Left Bank.

S. Petliura then believed that "the joint advance of Polish and Ukrainian troops into the depths of Right-Bank Ukraine considering the state of the Russian-Communist hostile forces, after the capture of the Zbruch line, could have ended with the complete defeat of the enemy, and in connection with this, the prospects for restoring our statehood could be brighter and have signs of a real affair" [10, p. 391]. And J. Pilsudski later recollected: "The Bolshevik Army was so broken that I had no military obstacles to step where I wanted to go at the whole front. But at that time I was detained at the campaign because of the lack of moral power in the society." [5, p. 32].

In fact, in Poland, everybody was against the continuation of war against Bolshevik Russia – the government, the Sejm, political parties, media – with the exception of the 'Head of the state'. Warsaw politicians, as before, were interested not so much in the defeat of Russia as the retention of Western Ukrainian lands, about which there were no objections on the part of the Kremlin. After experiencing critical moments in the middle of August 1920, when the Red Army stood at the walls of Warsaw, the Poles did not want again to risk their independence gained through much suffering.

Therefore, in a favorable military situation, the Polish side in Art. 1 of the Truce Agreement actually recognized the UkrSSR, and in Art. 2 undertook to refrain from any interference into the internal affairs of the RSFSR and the UkrSSR, and also agreed to include in a future peace treaty the obligation not to create or support organizations aimed at overthrowing the state or social order of the other party, as well as organizations that assume role of the government of the other party.

It should be mentioned that the leading role in developing the behavior of the Polish delegation at Riga peace negotiations was no longer played by J. Pilsudski, but by his opponents – members of the Sejm delegation led by Stanislaw Grabski (National Democracy political camp). He recalled later that in Riga he had succeeded in "fully implementing the program developed by the National Committee back in Paris", that is, an incorporation concept that provided for the division of Ukrainian lands between Poland and Russia. And National Democratic leader R. Dmowski

assured that his party was fully responsible for the Treaty of Riga (Peace of Riga) of March 18, 1921, because it “dictated its preconditions” [11, p. 277].

Riga Peace Treaty of March 18, 1921, on which Ukrainian diplomacy had no influence at all, virtually cancelled the 1920 Treaty of Warsaw (Polish-Ukrainian Agreement), although Poland officially declared about it only in 1923. On July 20 of the same year, S. Petliura in his letter to M. Kumytsky also noted that “today there is no agreement. Our stay here (in Poland. – Authors) is a matter of technical fact, not principle and policy” [4, p.133]. In fact, on March 18, 1921, Poland recognized the UkrSSR, while the Soviet side renounced Eastern Galicia and most of Volyn. The Treaty of Riga also meant the failure of J. Pilsudski's federalist conception.

Thus, the Ukrainian-Polish military-political alliance appeared to be fragile and being under pressure of insurmountable foreign and domestic political factors during October 1920–1921 first formally, and then actually disintegrated. It appeared, at least a year too late, and could not alone resist the stronger Bolshevik Russia.

But at the same time, the Warsaw Treaty of 1920 was of great importance not only to the Ukrainian people, who, due to the help of Poland, continued the armed struggle for the independent UPR till the end of 1921. It can be certainly assumed that if it were not for common Ukrainian-Polish resistance in the summer of 1920, the planned by the Kremlin campaign under the slogan of ‘world revolution’ against Poland, Romania and Germany would have proved to be quite successful and would inevitably have turned into a tragedy for all these countries, and Europe as a whole.

Undoubtedly, independence of the Baltic states: Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania appeared to certain extent the result of tense struggle of the Ukrainian-Polish military-political alliance against the Bolshevik Russia. Precisely because Moscow was evidently weakened by the war with the UNR and peasant uprisings along the Dnieper, Poland then also gained an opportunity to strengthen its national statehood.

A new impetus in the establishment of Ukrainian-Polish partnership gained its shape after the Second World War. And decisive in this context was the activity of the Polish intellectual elite, who after the Second World War found themselves in exile and united around the “Culture” Polish emigration magazine (Paris). It was at this time when its founder Jerzy Giedroyc put forward the concept of national reconciliation for the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe and the hypothesis that there would be no free Poland without free Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania [19]. This concept was given support among Ukrainian emigrants, in particular by Bohdan Osadchuk and in the “Suchasnist” magazine [20].

Later two key events – the resumption of the independent foreign policy of the Republic of Poland in late 1980s and the Act of Independence of Ukraine declared on August 24, 1991, provided a good basis for the development of Ukrainian-Polish strategic partnership in international relations at the present stage. After the breakup of the Warsaw Bloc and the USSR disintegration, the relations between Ukraine and Poland have generally developed progressively. The only exceptions may be considered 2001–02 and 2016–18 periods, when some decline in strategic partnership relations could be observed due to unresolved historical issues. First and foremost, there are negative stereotypes in the minds of both peoples that impede the establishment of partnerships at all levels. In this sense, activities aimed at better understanding and overcoming these stereotypes are of great importance. It is favoured by positive publications in mass media, editions about Ukraine and Poland and Ukrainian-Polish relations, including translations of fiction, concerts and exhibitions of Ukrainian artists in Poland and Polish ones in Ukraine, preservation of common cultural heritage. However, all this has not yet gained wide popularity among the Ukrainian and Polish population. The issue of the return of cultural and material values as well as the custody of national memory places remains a problem.

An important part of the policy of understanding and reconciliation between the two peoples should be the composing of joint Ukrainian-Polish history textbooks. For better understanding between Ukrainian and Polish peoples, a dialogue between those who influence the formation of public opinion in both societies should also be encouraged. The opportunities of Polish citizens of Ukrainian origin and Ukrainian citizens of Polish one, are also to be widely used. They should be

active promoters of the idea of closer cooperation between Ukraine and Poland. For their part, both states should take care and support the development of national minorities in every possible way. The protection of national minorities, as an integral part of the conflict-avoidance policy, is now a part of the set of conditions for joining the European Union. Taking care of formation of European peoples' common memory, the Ukrainian and Polish peoples should remember that hostilities, including wars in the historical memory, should retreat into the past, giving way to a dialogue of cultures and peoples.

Conclusions

In general, the need to deepen partnerships between sovereign Ukraine and Poland is explained today by pragmatic reasons as well. After all, even after structural changes in recent years, Poland has retained considerable interests in the East. To a large extent, they are concentrated in Ukraine, which, being now in a difficult situation of Russian hybrid aggression, needs the support of such a strong partner as Poland – a full member of the Euro-Atlantic community. That is why Ukrainian-Polish relations are to develop their strategic partnership.

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