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Ethnopolitics of the Ukrainian State in Historical and Political Science Discourses

Abstract

Ethnopolitics of the Ukrainian State (April–December 1918) has for a long period of time remained beyond the scope of historical-political research. The purpose of this article is to draw attention to the policy of the Ukrainian authorities towards national minorities in Ukraine. By relying on little-known historical sources and summarizing the elaborations of various scientists, the author tried to show how the ethno-national policy was really being implemented in the Ukrainian State and why the Ukrainian-Russian relations had become a decisive factor in interethnic processes. Furthermore, at the beginning of the XXI century the interethnic and interstate relations of Ukraine continue to remain relevant.

Key words: Ethnopolitics, Ukrainian State, National Minorities

Right after coming to power on April 29, 1918, Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky started to curtail the state's ethno-national policy which was pursued by the leaders of the Ukrainian People's Republic. Even in May–June 1918, he and his officials stressed the alleged inappropriateness of the existence of national ministries, established by the Central Rada (Central Council) as well as called for reviewing the state policy on national minorities. They explained it, first and foremost, by the equality of all citizens of Ukraine.¹ Yet, the Laws on the Provisional Government

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¹ Yu. Kotlyar, *Povstanskyi ruh etnichnyh menshyn Pivdnya Ukrainy 1917–1931 (Insurgent Movement of Ethnic Minorities of the South of Ukraine 1917–1931)*, Kyiv–Mykolaiv 2008, Book 1, pp. 21–23; M. Lazarovych, *Etnopolityka ukrainskoi vlady doby natsionalno-vyzvolnyh zmaganiy 1917–1921 rokiv: komparatyvnyi analiz (Ethnopolitics of the Ukrainian authorities during the period of national liberation struggles of 1917–1921: comparative analysis)*, Ternopil 2013, pp. 189, 281.

of Ukraine defined the rights and obligations of Ukrainian Cossacks and citizens, and emphasized the force of law that was applied to all, without exception, Ukrainian subjects and foreigners who were in the Ukrainian State.² P. Skoropadsky, in the Letter to All Ukrainian People, appealed to the citizens and Cossacks of Ukraine with a call to help in statehood construction “without a distinction of nationality and religion”.³

Already on July 8, 1918 F. Lizogub, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian State, declared that the Law on Personal-National Autonomy, adopted by the Central Rada, ceased to exist, and the National Ministries were liquidated, since “national privileges could only contribute to the flowering of the national struggle”. However, he assured the government’s assistance for the “cultural contest of nationalities”.⁴

On July 9, 1918, Hetman abolished the relevant law, and at the same time eliminated three National Ministries established by the Central Rada: the Ministry of Polish Affairs, the Ministry of Jewish Affairs, and the Ministry of the Great Russian Affairs.⁵

Many organizations of national minorities and Ukrainian, Russian, Jewish political parties, mainly socialist oriented, opposed the elimination of National Ministries. Particularly Jewish organizations, both Zionists and socialists, showed dissatisfaction with the actions of the new Government. For them the legislation of the Central Rada on national minorities was equal to the achievements of the Great French Revolution. Of all national minorities, it was Jews who benefited the most from the functioning of their own National Ministry.

Polish (Polish Executive Committee) and Russian organizations (Labor People’s Socialist Party), which had some influence in relevant National Ministries, also disagreed with decisions of Hetman’s authorities. However, unlike Jews, for the Polish and Russian populations in Ukraine the Law on Personal-National Autonomy did not create new value under new historical conditions. After all, the Poles and the Russians did not consider themselves as national minorities, but rather as representatives of state nation.

² *Istoriya ukrainskoi Konstyuttsii (History of the Ukrainian Constitution)*, eds. A. Slyusarenko and M. Tomenko, Kyiv 1997, pp. 118–119.

³ *Gramota do vsyogo ukrainskogo narodu (Letter to All Ukrainian People)*, “State Newswire”, no. 1, 16 May 1918, p. 1.

⁴ V. Gusev, *Zakon Tsentralnoi Rady ‘Pro personalnu avtonomiyu’: peredumovy pryinyattya, istorii, uroky (The Law of the Central Rada ‘On Personal Autonomy’: preconditions for adoption, history, lessons)*, “Scientific notes of the Institute of Political and Ethnic Studies”, issue 34/2007, p. 364.

⁵ “State Newswire”, no. 23, 18 July 1918, p. 2.

The views of the Polish elite were directed to the West, where the statehood-building forces of the Second Rzeczpospolita had been forming. They were mostly concerned with the protection of their own landholdings from the socialization of land, as well as the Hetman's position regarding Eastern Galicia and the territorial affiliation of the Kholmshchyna (Chełm Land) and Pidljasije (Podlasie). With this in mind, they began to conform to the neutrality of most decisions of the new Government. Russians, regardless of political preferences, opposed the idea that from a dominant nation they turned to be a minority. Moreover, they were worried about the collapse of a single Russian state, in one of whose parts Ukrainian "samostiinyky" (pro-independent activists) started to dominate.

As for the various socialist parties that condemned the ethnic policy of the new Government, they, in the first days of Hetmanate's existence, began to label P. Skoropadsky and his associates as members of counterrevolution movement aimed at restoring the order of the Russian Empire.

Thus, on May 15, 1918, R. Abramovych, one of the leaders of the Jewish party "Bund" in the newspaper "Jewish Worker" stated that the national autonomy of Jews was lost along with the Central Rada, since the Jewish financial bourgeoisie did not need it. He summed up: "The campaign against democracy will also drown Jewish democratic accomplishments".⁶ S. Yefremov and A. Nikovsky, leaders of the Ukrainian Socialist-Federalists, back in the first half of May, on the pages of the "New Council" daily newspaper described the Hetman's Government as a non-Ukrainian, paradoxical, "woven from surprises and political careerism" and "formed from reaction and for reaction".⁷ Already on July 12, the Ukrainian Socialist-Federalists noted the destruction, in their opinion, of one of the best achievements of the revolution in Ukraine – the national-personal autonomy. They also assumed that such a decision of the authorities would bring complete chaos to national relations in Ukraine and "throw straw on that national struggle and enmity, which the national-personal autonomy hammered and squeezed".⁸

Even more acutely P. Skoropadsky and his ethno-national policies were criticized by the leaders of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Labour Party and the Ukrainian Socialist-Revolutionary Party – parties that were out of

⁶ R. Abramovych, *Edinstvo (Unity)*, "Hebrew Worker", no. 1, 15 May 1918, p. 1.

⁷ S. Yefremov, *Paradoksalne ministerstvo (Paradoxical Ministry)*, "The New Council", no. 72, 10 May 1918, p. 1; A. Nikovsky, *Kadetska tragikomediya (Cadet Tragedy Comedy)*, "The New Council", no. 74, 12 May 1918, p. 1.

⁸ *Do pervisnogo stanu (Before the initial state of nature)*, "The New Council", no. 112, 12 July 1918, p. 1.

control of the state as a result of Hetman's coup. They drew attention to the fact that the power of Ukraine belonged to non-Ukrainian elements, aimed at destroying the Ukrainian national movement and statehood.

Volodymyr Vynnychenko, leader of the Ukrainian Social Democrats, regarded the governmental officials of the new Government as "Ukrainozher" (Ukrainophobes), "Russian little Russians" and remained convinced that after the coup on April 29, 1918, there was no Ukrainian statehood, as well as the Ukrainian bourgeoisie.⁹ P. Khrystyuk, Social Democrat and former Minister of the Interior of the Ukrainian People's Republic, used the following words to describe the Hetmanate: "The Polish-Jewish-little Russian bourgeoisie", "only the veil of Ukrainian statehood".¹⁰ Also a prominent Socialist-Revolutionary, M. Shapoval, regarded the Hetman's regime as the enemy of the Ukrainian people, the dictatorship of the Russian bourgeoisie and tsarist officers, the Russian monarchy under the false slogan of Hetmanate.¹¹

Mykhailo Hrushevsky, head of the Central Rada, described P. Skoropadsky as "incapable to do anything", "a completely denationalized and unpopular man", and cited facts that were to prove his anti-Ukrainian policy: the administration and the board went into the hands of Russian-reactionaries and the organization "Protosis", advocating for united Russia, the Ukrainian language was substituted by the Russian language, the official name of the state was changed – the words "People's Republic" were replaced by "State", etc.¹²

In time quite a lot of Ukrainian activists, who sincerely believed at the very beginning in intentions of the Hetman, started to feel disappointment with the policy of the head of the Ukrainian State, as well as with him personally. The proclamation by Pavlo Skoropadsky on November 14, 1918 regarding the federation of Ukraine and Russia for many of them meant the ultimate end of cooperation with him.

V. Andrievsky, Poltava Regional Commissar for public education, farmer-democrat, recalled that on July 14, 1918 he had an audience as a delegate with Hetman, and an opportunity to tell him not only about

⁹ V. Vynnychenko, *Vidrodzhennya natsii. Istoriya ukrainskoi revoliutsii 1917 – grudan 1919 (Revival of the nation. History of the Ukrainian Revolution 1917 – December 1919)*, Part. III, Kyiv–Vienna 1920, pp. 39, 100.

¹⁰ P. Khrystyuk, *Zamitky i materialy do istorii ukrainskoi revoliutsii. 1917–1920 (Notes and materials to the history of the Ukrainian revolution. 1917–1920)*, The Ukrainian Sociological Institute, 1921, pp. 12, 30.

¹¹ M. Shapoval, *Velyka revoliutsiia i ukrainska vyzvolna programa (The Great Revolution and the Ukrainian Liberation Program)*, Prague 1927, p. 115.

¹² M. Hrushevsky, *Svitova vijna i revoliutsiia. Ukrainska Narodna Respublika (World War and Revolution. Ukrainian People's Republic)*, Part 113, 1919, p. 3.

the educational issues, but also about the oppression and persecution of Ukrainians in the Ukrainian State. Hetman answered all the questions of the delegate, with the exception of the problem of “oppression of Ukrainians”, which, of course, unpleasantly surprised V. Andrievsky. Regarding education, Skoropadsky confirmed his support of the policy of the ministry, namely: “To do everything slowly, but professionally so that no one is annoyed”, since the state needed representatives of different-nationalities. Skoropadsky assured that one should not believe in any rumors and defamation, which were spread by the enemies, regarding i.e. the federation with Russia. The Hetman’s final words were engraved in the memory of V. Andrievsky: “Tell the people that they will rather see my dead body than I will abandon the state independence of Ukraine”.¹³

The news of Hetman’s “Letter of the Federation with Russia” shocked V. Andrievsky. He could have excused P. Skoropadsky for many things: his mistakes and faint-heartedness, but not lies and treason that did not correspond to the title of the “Hetman of the whole Ukraine”. In emigration, hearing the assertion that the Ukrainians ruined their state with their own hands, V. Andrievsky used to express his indignation at these words. He believed that the Hetmanate of the Ukrainian State did not exist in recent months, but there was only “Piedmont of the united and indivisible Russia”, where Ukrainians were shot to death for their native language, and the investigation was carried out worse than during the times of Nicholas II and the Provisional Government.¹⁴

Hetman’s federative course disappointed also Dmytro Dontsov, another national movement activist who, during the Hetmanate, occupied the post of Chief of the Ukrainian Telegraphic Agency. Being known for his negative attitude to Russian culture and to “old or new Russia”, Dmytro Dontsov tried to persuade the Hetman to pursue a more independent, pro-Ukrainian policy. However, after November 14, 1918, D. Dontsov summoned with regret that the democratic socialist circles hated Hetman for becoming the Hetman of independent Ukraine. Dontsov also departed from him “with regret for he ceased to be in this capacity (according to that Letter)”.¹⁵

The Ukrainian Bolsheviks, namely, S. Mazlach and V. Shakh-Rai, the founders of national-communism, asserted that Skoropadsky’s views had transformed in the following way: at first he had been under the influ-

¹³ V. Andrievsky, *Z mynulogo. Tom II. Vid Hetmana do Dyrektorii. Chastyna I. Hetman (From the past. Volume II. From Hetman to the Directory. Part One. Hetman)*, Part 41, Berlin 1923, p. 112.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 190.

¹⁵ D. Dontsov, *Rik 1918 (Year 1918)*, Kyiv–Toronto–Ontario 1954, p. 9.

ence of the Romanov Empire, further under the occupation of Germany and Austro-Hungary, he unintentionally started to adhere to the pro-independent course, and finally after the German Revolution he showed his true intentions regarding the rebirth of a united Russia.¹⁶

Even P. Rohrbach and A. Schmidt, the well-known German publicists and the Ukrainophiles, who in May 1918 carried out a two-week trip to Ukraine, came to the conclusion that Hetman was an autocrat who was distant from the democratic feelings of the Ukrainian people. And given the pro-Russian Cadet (constitutional-democrats) structure of Hetman's Government, the Ukrainophiles expressed their concern about the revival of the Russophile tendencies in Ukraine. Therefore, they urged the German side to pressure P. Skoropadsky in order to promptly implement a broad-based agrarian reform – crucial at that time for the support of independent Ukraine.¹⁷ However, P. Rohrbach and his associates soon realized with sadness that the German ruling circles did not understand the idea of the Ukrainian statehood and supported the non-liberal, hidden pro-Moscow course of Hetman.

Indeed, it must be admitted that for the leading positions in power structures of the Ukrainian State, both in the government and at the level of the counties, provinces, there were nominated persons who were not only strangers to the Ukrainian national movement, but on the contrary – they hated it fiercely. For them, the Ukrainian language was artificial, and the existence of the Ukrainian State was only a temporary constrained occurrence before the restoration of a united Russia.

There are hundreds of different facts proving the disdainful attitude of senior officials of the Ukrainian State to the Ukrainian nation and language. This was despite the fact that P. Skoropadsky and Hetman's Government had repeatedly declared their fidelity to the ideas of Ukrainian statehood and announced a course on Ukrainization of the state life before.

For example, P. Zaleskiy, Kharkiv provincial headman, recalled that it was very funny when he heard the Ukrainian language in the office of the assistant Military Minister O. Lignau. A young Russian general that was standing in front of him replied in Ukrainian to the appeal in the Russian language. The headman was indignant: “Until now, I cannot reconcile with such an obscene act. I do not comment on this obscenity”. By the way, General P. Zaleskiy noted that he had been living for forty years in

¹⁶ S. Mazlach, *Do hvyli: Sho dietsya na Ukraini ta z Ukrainoyu? (To the wave: What is going on in Ukraine and with Ukraine?)*, Saratov 1919, pp. 11–12.

¹⁷ *Dr. Pavlo Rohrbach i Axel Shmidt pro perevorot na Ukraini (Dr. Paul Rohrbach and Axel Schmidt about the coup in Ukraine)*, “Novel Of Politics, Literature and Life”, Part 25/1918, pp. 380–382.

the Kharkiv province, but did not know what such independence was, and he had heard little-Russian language, but did not understand why it should be implemented in public life.¹⁸

V. Romanov, comrade of the State Secretary, abandoned his plans to enroll to the State Senate when he found out that for this purpose it was necessary to give a promise to learn the Ukrainian language after the appointment. As a straightforward man, he wrote a letter to M. Chubinsky, Minister of Justice, with the request to withdraw his candidacy, since he did not intend to learn this language. Yet the Council of Ministers decided to approve his candidacy.¹⁹ However, it is strange enough as V. Romanov was the son of the famous Ukrainian writer Odarka Romanova (pen-name Odarka, O. Romanenko), who maintained close relations with Maria Zankovetska and the families of Kosach, Lysenko, Starytsky.

In view of this, S. Yefremov spoke ironically: what one can expect from these pro-independent coercive persons and the Ukrainians, who, “are writhing with the sounds of the Ukrainian language like Mephistopheles with the cross”.²⁰ The answer to this was given by M. Voronovych, a comrade of the Interior Minister of the Ukrainian State. While convincing V. Mustafin to become a provincial headman of Odesa, he pointed out that the refusal of the “Russian” servicemen to cooperate with Hetman he considered as sabotage, harmful to the very idea of reconstruction of the united Russia. The comrade of Interior Minister emphasized that everyone was shouting about the necessity to establish order in the country, but at the same time they refused to take part in restoring this order. After all, “Russian people”, joining central and local institutions of Ukraine, would have provided the Russian “physiognomy” to these institutions and it would not have been necessary to keep there “lagging pro-independence persons, who gathered under Golubovych, all of whose merits were to know the “state language”, and who stupidly hated everything non-Ukrainian”. In addition, M. Voronovych noted that he was as Russian as V. Mustafin, and that he did not betray his motherland at all, because no matter what the internal autonomy of Ukraine would be – a province or Hetmanate, it would still be a part of the great Russia.²¹

¹⁸ O. Ivantsova (ed.), *Hetman P. P. Skoropadsky. Ukraina na perelome. 1918 god (Hetman P. P. Skoropadsky. Ukraine in a fracture. Year 1918)* Collection of documents, Moscow 2014, p. 498.

¹⁹ A. Tatishchev, *Zemli i lyudi. V gusche pereselencheskogo dvizheniya 1906–1921. (Territories and people. In the thick of the resettlement movement 1906–1921)*, Moscow 2001, p. 307.

²⁰ S. Yefremov, *Paradoksalne...*, op. cit., p. 1.

²¹ *Hetman P. P. Skoropadsky. Ukraina...*, op. cit., pp. 484–485.

Noteworthy is that local members of Cadet Party which formed the basis of the Hetman's Government were also led by similar guidelines. For example, on May 4, 1918 during the meeting of the Kharkiv City Committee of the People's Freedom Party, Cadets' attitude towards the new government was rather vividly debated. If F. Ivanitsky considered that joining the government would assist to the partitioning of Russia and demonstrate the betrayal of the allies, M. Paliyenko, B. Pushkarev and V. Levitsky held the opposite position.

B. Pushkarev said that joining would serve as a reunion of Ukraine and Russia, and in the future, if Cadets succeed to create cultural and legal conditions there, then it would be a center of the movement in Ukraine that could overthrow Bolsheviks in the other Russia. M. Paliyenko stressed that Cadets were obliged by patriotism to help the current Government, although it was formed with the help of alien bayonets. And V. Levitsky drew attention to the fact that the coup could not be considered only as actions of the Germans, since broad democratic groups of the population participated in it. And therefore, Cadets should join the ministry, giving a "progressive character" to it.²²

Personally, P. Skoropadsky agreed with the allegations of using the Russian forces to create Ukraine. But only because of the fact, in his opinion, that it was impossible to create anything serious with only Ukrainian forces, since small-scale cultural class of Ukrainians was a misfortune of the Ukrainian people. He opposed "narrow-Ukrainian ideas" and noted that there were many people who loved Ukraine and wished cultural development of the country, but these people were of Russian culture, and they would not betray their own culture for the sake of the Ukrainian one. He remained convinced that only with the existence and free development of Russian and Ukrainian culture Ukraine could flourish, and if "we now abandon the first culture, we will be only a litter for other nations and we will never be able to create anything great".²³

One can agree with P. Skoropadsky that the representatives of Ukrainian political parties and organizations not only did not have the necessary experience of state building, but also generally showed little awareness of the state administrative work in the financial, economic, military, diplomatic and other spheres. Especially the shortage of qualified personnel was experienced among the higher echelons of power, and therefore Hetman often had to appoint to responsible posi-

²² Central State Archive of Public Associations of Ukraine, Fond 268, description 1, case 6, pp. 108–109.

²³ P. Skoropadsky, *Spogady. Kinets 1917 – gruden 1918 r. (Memories. End of 1917 – December 1918)*, Kyiv–Philadelphia 1995, pp. 233–234.

tions ex-officials or representatives of the Russian establishment recommended by his staff. Even if they knew how to work, they did not seek to change their negative attitude towards the Ukrainian national movement. D. Dontsov recalled that somehow the head of the Ukrainian State nervously addressed him: “Well, where are those Ukrainians? Well, give them to me! Such as I need, with whom I could talk and work! Where are they?!”²⁴

Thus P. Skoropadsky did not consider national traits in the selection of professional personnel, but proceeded from the principle of professionalism. The leaders of the Ukrainian People’s Republic, on the contrary, did not accept ex-Tsar officials in view of their belonging to autocracy and counterrevolution. They preferred to have their own Ukrainian representatives of revolutionary democracy, who were often members of socialist parties, but were not good specialists. No wonder the German Lieutenant General V. Grener characterized the situation in Ukraine under the times of Central Rada as “chaos” and “madhouse”, and as for the leaders of the Ukrainian People’s Republic he used such words as “talking-shop” or “sectarian prayer for immature students and other young dreamers and bad elements”.²⁵

At the same time, many Hetman officials, despite their love for Russia, started to behave in such way as, in their opinion, Ukrainian statesmen and ‘samostiinyky’ were supposed to act. O. Tatischev, native Russian, who worked in the State Secretariat, pointed out, that the “psychology” of the new state began to penetrate the minds of Hetman’s ministers, who gradually attempted to create a new state, forgetting or trying to forget the habits and traditions of their previous life and activities. To his mind, this was partly justified. But regarding the desire to conduct Ukrainization and remove all that which resembled the former imperial unity, Hetman himself and his ministers often crossed the limits of the permitted and worthy.²⁶ As a result, it made a painful impression on the people of Russian culture.

Of course, the Ukrainization of education, state institutions and other state-building activities, carried out by Hetman’s authorities, oppressed many Russians and people abroad. M. Alekseev, A. Denikin, V. Shulgin and many other well-known leaders of the White Movement could not forgive P. Skoropadsky for this, as well as for his pro-German orientation.

²⁴ D. Dontsov, *Rik 1918...*, op. cit., p. 99.

²⁵ W. Baumgart, *General Groener und die deutsche Besatzungspolitik in der 1919 (General Groener and the German Occupation Policy in 1919)*, “Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht” (“History in Science and Teaching”), no. 21/1970, p. 331.

²⁶ A. Tatischev, *Zemli i...*, op. cit., p. 301.

The head of the Volunteer Army Anton Denikin even noted the anti-Russian Hetman's chauvinistic policy.²⁷

Thus, the Hetman's policy, on the one hand, was condemned by the Ukrainian parties for gratifying the Russians and, on the other hand, by the Russians for displaying the Ukrainian national traits.

Although for the sake of objectivity it should be noted that among the figures of the White Movement there were those who tried to defend P. Skoropadsky's policy.

P. Krasnov, Ataman of the Almighty Don Host, explained why Hetman, who was called the Russian aristocrat and "not a sincere" Ukrainian, could stand for an independent Ukraine. P. Krasnov stressed that if P. Skoropadsky and even himself, as Russian people, the same as A. Denikin, could give themselves up to destroy the independence of Ukraine and the autonomy of the Don, then in the capacity of Hetman and Ataman, they could not do this without betraying the people who chose them.²⁸

A famous Ukrainophobe and Hetman's comrade Duke G. Lechtenberg underlined that P. Skoropadsky was a man of purely Russian culture and also remarked that he did not know whether P. Skoropadsky believed sincerely or not in any particular Ukrainian culture. At the same time, to his mind, Hetman could have played the role of the second Bohdan Khmelnytsky, who led the Ukrainian Cossacks to the Tsar's scepter in 1654.²⁹

Despite the anti-Ukrainian propaganda by supporters of the "single and indivisible" Russia, P. Skoropadsky made a lot of positive steps in ethnopolitical policy for the Russian ethnos. He hosted thousands of refugees from Bolshevik Russia that caused great concern among both the Russian leaders and the Ukrainian socialist parties. The latter were very much indignant that Hetman recognized various "reactionary" state formations and blamed him for not wishing to conclude a peace treaty with the RSFSR. In fact, it was not Ukrainian, but the Russian side that during the peace talks did not seek a timely conclusion of the formal peace treaty. S. Shelukhin, the head of the Ukrainian delegation at the peace negotiations with the RSFSR, pointed out in the report to

²⁷ A. Denikin, *Ocherki russkoi smuty (Essays of Russian discords)* in *Revolutsiya na Ukraine po memuarom belyh (Revolution in Ukraine on memoirs of the Whites)*, Moscow–Leningrad 1930, pp. 142–143.

²⁸ P. Krasnov, *Vsevelikoe Voisko Donskoe (Almighty Don Host)*, http://militera.lib.ru/memo/russian/krasnov_pn2/index.html (21.11.2018).

²⁹ G. Lechtenberg, *Vospominaniya ob 'Ukraine' 1917–1918 (Reminiscences on 'Ukraine' 1917–1918)*, Berlin 1921, pp. 29, 32.

the chairman of the Council of Ministers that the Bolsheviks, for the reason that Ukraine was not fighting against them and was not threatening them by anything, “were not at all interested in the conclusion of peace and establishment of state borders, and because of this they deliberately delayed the peace talks, in order to completely get everything for themselves without any loss...”³⁰

As for the refugees, throughout the Bolshevik Russia, people who had at least some savings, tried by hook or by crook to obtain passports of the Ukrainian State. Many of them did not have any connection with Ukraine. Due to this, the diplomatic missions of the Ukrainian State in the RSFSR were overwhelmed with work. Instead, the Bolsheviks, realizing that a large part of the population associated with wealth and autocracy, escapes abroad, tried to stop it in every possible way. Members of ‘CheKa’ (All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage, secret police) arrested and often shot to death people who obtained the Ukrainian citizenship or desired to do that. Prior to departure of passenger trains to Ukraine, soldiers conducted massive searches of passengers at train stations, often accompanied by robberies of such passengers and verification of documents for authenticity. In response to numerous protests by Ukrainian diplomats, the People’s Commissariat for Foreign Affairs stated that there were no repressions. And arrested people were either permanent residents of Russia who participated in the counterrevolutionary movement, or reactionary figures of the Tsaristera, speculators who declared themselves as Ukrainians before arrest or imprisonment.³¹

On the night of September 22, 1918, the Red Army soldiers even detained the “Ukrainian Sanitary Train of State Secretary, No. 155” at Kuntsevo station. Then the Bolsheviks arrested many passengers, examined and confiscated property, including those of the Ukrainian State. All this was accompanied by violence and rudeness towards the Ukrainian citizens. All the things that soldiers could not take with them were destroyed. They propelled luggage with bayonets, various clothing was trampled down in dirt, and they ate passengers’ meals straight in front of them.³²

Prince G. Trubetskoy, a member of the Anti-Bolshevik Right Center, succeeded to leave Russia together with his wife in the summer of 1918 on the Ukrainian sanitary train with a false identity and under the guise

³⁰ M. Svechin, *Zapiski starogo generala o bylom* (Notes of the old general about the past), Nice 1964, p. 29.

³¹ Central State Archive of the Highest Authorities and Administration of Ukraine, Fond 1236, description 1, case 21, p. 4.

³² *Ibidem*, pp. 13–14.

of a clerk. Having crossed the border of Ukraine, they were shocked that white bread was sold at each station in abundance. All of them, like refugees, bought twice as much as they could eat.³³

After arrival to Kyiv, G. Trubetskoy, like many other refugees, was impressed by a large number of financiers, industrialists, officials, landowners from ‘Moscow and St. Petersburg’, walking around the city and having fun. D. Manuisky, deputy head of the RSFSR’s delegation to the peace talks with the Ukrainian state, who in May 1918 saw Kyiv, called it the reactionary ‘Babylon’ and ‘Vendée’ for all supporters of the White Movement, and considered the independent Ukraine as a comedy headed by Hetman from operetta.³⁴ A vast majority of Russian refugees as well as local supporters of the unity with the Russian state adhered to the same opinion. Despite the fact that these people used the benefits of Ukraine, they repeatedly mocked at the pro-independence statements of Hetman, at the Ukrainian language, culture, etc.

During the conversation with Lieutenant-General M. Sevichin, who arrived in Kyiv in May 1918 at the head of the embassy of the Almighty Don Host, P. Skoropadsky shared his worries about the fact that the Russians who emigrated from Bolshevik Russia and found refuge in Ukraine and who were using local benefits under the protection of German soldiers, at the same time dared to accuse Hetman of betrayal and also despised him. He reproached whether anything had deteriorated from the fact that he had become a Hetman. He gave the opportunity to escape to many people, issued an order not to impede those who move to Ukraine, but would it be done by his predecessors? P. Skoropadsky pointed out: “Detractors came – they eat, drink, speculate, arrange their affairs, under the protection of the same German boot for which they throw thunder and lightning on me... But their staying here – does it mean they also sold to Germans?”³⁵

In addition to the refugees, P. Skoropadsky attached great importance to the fate of Russian soldiers who returned from German and Austro-Hungarian captivity and were often in a miserable condition. According to the resolution approved by the Council of Ministers regarding assistance to the captives and the allocation of 500,000 rubles to the military minister, the funds were intended to be divided among the captives –

³³ G. Trubetskoy, *Gody smut i nadezhd. 1917–1919 (Years of troubles and hopes. 1917–1919)*, Montreal 1981, p. 93.

³⁴ *Nezabutni roky. Spogady uchasnykiv Velykoi Zhohtnevoi sotsialistychnoi revoliutsii ta gromadyanskoj vijny na Ukraini (Unforgettable years. Memoirs of the participants of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the Civil War in Ukraine)*, Kyiv 1967, pp. 223–225.

³⁵ M. Svechin, op. cit., p. 165.

Ukrainians and Russians. Thus, Russian soldiers received help in the form of ‘pay in kind’ at food points on their way to the Russian border, and officers, military officials, priests, nurses received one-time cash assistance ranging from 100 to 200 rubles, depending on the rank. Medical care for the wounded and sick Russian prisoners was also provided.³⁶

Some Jewish researchers among eyewitnesses of the events of 1918, such as S. Goldelman and I. Cherykover, wrote about the reactionary, pro-Russian ethno-national policy of P. Skoropadsky and pointed out the persecution by Hetman’s authorities of the Jewish national movement.³⁷

However, most of modern Ukrainian scholars do not agree with this and indicate Hetman’s efforts to ensure the national equality of all citizens of Ukraine. They cite the facts that, in their opinion prove this: the set-up of the Jewish Cultural League, the Union of Polish Landowners in Ukraine, the Polish People’s Houses, the holding of the Jewish Sanitary Congress, the All-Ukrainian Polish Congress, the renewal of activity of the Czechoslovak Committee, the creation of Department of Jewish Language and Writing within the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. The researchers also point out that the head of the Ukrainian State did not prevent the elections to the Jewish National Constituent Assembly, stipulated by the legislation of the Ukrainian People’s Republic on national minority.³⁸

Natalia Chebotok, a scholar of Skoropadsky’s historical period, makes an appropriate scientific conclusion: “Analyses of the Ukrainian State’s documents show that the official Kyiv kept up the course at that time for promoting among Ukrainians love for their nation, and stood aside from attempts of some extremist-tuned circles to propagandize hatred of other nations”.³⁹

At the same time, domestic experts in the field of ethnopolitics point out also certain sympathies and preferences, provided by Hetman’s authorities towards Russian and German minorities. Regarding the latter, this was manifested in the functioning of a special Government Commis-

³⁶ “State Newswire”, no. 22, 14 July 1918, p. 1.

³⁷ S. Goldelman, *Zhydivska natsionalna avtonomiya v Ukraini 1917–1920 (Jewish National Autonomy in Ukraine 1917–1920)*, Munich–Paris–Jerusalem 1967, pp. 80–85, 100–101; I. Cherykover, *Antisemitizm i pogromy na Ukraini 1917–1918 gg. K istorii ukrainsko-evreiskih otnoshenii. (Antisemitism and pogroms in Ukraine in 1917–1918. With regard to the history of Ukrainian–Jewish relations)*, Berlin 1923, pp. 156–157.

³⁸ Yu. Kotlyar, op. cit., pp. 24–28; M. Lazarovych, *Etnopolityka ukrainskoi vlady doby natsionalno-vyzvolnyh zmagan 1917–1921 roku: komparatyvnyi analiz (Ethnopolitics of the Ukrainian authorities during the period of national liberation struggles of 1917–1921: comparative analysis)*, Ternopil 2013, pp. 87–95.

³⁹ N. Chebotok, *Derzhavna natsionalna polityka v Ukraini 1917–1921 rr. (State ethnic and national politics in Ukraine 1917–1921)*, dissertation for obtaining a scientific degree of a candidate of legal sciences, Kyiv 2005, p. 116.

sion on German colonists, the founding of the Ukrainian-German Society for Cultural and Economic Rapprochement, etc. However, it did not violate the national equality of all citizens of Ukraine.

Yuri Kotlyar, researcher, points out that P. Skoropadsky's national policy can be reasonably defined as well-balanced, although it affected, to a certain extent, the interests of citizens on a national basis. But in most cases Hetman and his associates, "without crying out, as their predecessors, about the great love to Jews, Poles, Russians and representatives of other nations, in general did not persecute anyone for belonging to other nations".⁴⁰

Scientist M. Lazarovych characterized P. Skoropadsky's ethno-national politics as moderate. Moreover, he noted that, despite some differences in the policy of the Central Rada and the Hetmanate regarding national minorities, both authorities were united by a tolerant attitude towards all ethnic groups living in Ukraine.⁴¹

Historian V. Ustymenko also defined Hetman's policy towards national minorities as moderate. Hence, he warned against its idealization, since the uncertainty of interethnic relations and flirtation with Russian pro-great-powers eventually led to an anti-Hetman uprising and the overthrow of Hetman's power.⁴²

Many scholars consider the abolition by the Hetman authorities of the Law of the Ukrainian People's Republic on National-Personal Autonomy as incorrect.⁴³ However, in a detailed analysis of this normative legal act, it is necessary to recognize its incompleteness. The law placed three national minorities in a privileged position: Russian, Polish, and Jewish. As for the Belarussian, Bulgarian, Greek, Moldavian, German, Czech, Tatar ethnic groups – the legislative act granted the right to national-personal autonomy in case of receipt by the General Court of statements from 10,000 citizens of the Ukrainian People's Republic belonging to this community. Statements from ethnic groups not mentioned in the law, had to be submitted to the Parliament of the Ukrainian People's Republic for

⁴⁰ Yu. Kotlyar, op. cit., p. 30.

⁴¹ M. Lazarovych, *Etnopolityka Ukrainiskoi Tsentralnoi Rady ta Drugogo Hetmanatu shchodo natsionalnyh menshyn: komparatyvnyi analiz (Ethnopolitics of the Ukrainian Central Rada and the Second Hetmanate in relation to national minorities: comparative analysis)*, "Bulletin of the Kyiv National Linguistic University, Series History, Economics, Philosophy", no. 17/2012, pp. 98–99.

⁴² V. Ustymenko, *Etnonatsionalna polityka yak faktor derzhavotvorennia v Ukraini 1917–1920 (Ethnonational Policy as a factor of state building in Ukraine 1917–1920)*, Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv 2010, p. 97.

⁴³ Yu. Gryshchenko, *Natsionalne pytannya v Ukraini u 1917–1921 rokakh (National Issue in Ukraine in 1917–1921 years)*, "Ukrainian Historical Collection", no. 18/2015, p. 207; Yu. Kotlyar, op. cit., p. 24.

consideration. In order to exercise the right to self-determination of their national life, the citizens of the Ukrainian People's Republic of a certain nation formed the National Union – a state body that owned the state cadaster of its own members and had the right to impose taxes on them.⁴⁴

Historian Dmytro Doroshenko, who served for several months as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian State, noted that this law created “some kind of state within the state”. In his opinion, particular difficulties with the application of this legislative act arose with respect to the Russian ethnos, since Russified Ukrainians and Russians formed the majority in large cities, sharing all-Russian patriotism, aspirations, and they assessed the limitations of Russian cultural influences as a general decline in culture. In addition, it was difficult to separate these people into some certain nationality, since today's “Little Russian” or “Russian” could become a nationally conscious Ukrainian in the future.⁴⁵

In general, one must admit that the Law on National-Personal Autonomy could create many problems for the state-building of Ukraine in the future. In particular, it could contribute to the national confrontation and separatism of individual territories. Yet P. Skoropadsky built the Ukrainian State not according to the national but to the state-territorial principle. And not only ethnic Ukrainian lands could be joined to Ukraine, but also territories that had an important strategic geopolitical and economic significance: the Crimea, Kuban, Bessarabia, some lands of the Belarusian People's Republic and the almighty Don Host, etc. While building up Ukraine on a state-territorial principle, he also aspired to unite Ukraine's multinational people with common local history, traditions, aspirations, peculiarities of life, etc. And still Hetman inclined to use the great potential of officials, officers, bankers, industrialists, landowners, scientific, cultural and educational public figures who were not conscious Ukrainians, but could bring great benefits to the state reconstruction of Ukraine in the new reality. No wonder that the Law on the Citizenship of the Ukrainian State contained much wider provisions than the similar law of the Ukrainian People's Republic. Namely it proclaimed that all Russian subjects who were located in Ukraine at the time of publication of this Law, were recognized as citizens of the Ukrainian State.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ *Natsionalni vidnosyny v Ukraini u XX st. Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv (National relations in Ukraine in the twentieth century. Collection of documents and materials)*, ed. I. Kuras, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Institute of National Relations and Political Science, Kyiv 1994, pp. 71–73.

⁴⁵ D. Doroshenko, *Istoriya Ukrainy 1917–1923 rr. Tom 1, Doba Tsentralnoi Rady (History of Ukraine 1917–1923. Vol. 1, Period of the Central Rada)*, Uzhhorod 1932, pp. 270–271.

⁴⁶ “State Newswire”, 12 July 1918, no. 21, p. 1.

Hetman's social and economic politics as well as his endeavors of consensus with White movement supporters which was reflected in the Letter of the Federation with the non-Bolshevik Russia appeared to be tragic for the Ukrainian State. According to Ukrainian researcher S. Ekelchuk, the idea of federation pushed Ukrainian patriots away from Skoropadsky, but at the same time it did not attract to him Russian monarchists, who formed the "Ukrainian army" in Kyiv.⁴⁷ Thus, Hetman provided the leaders of the Ukrainian National Union and Dyrektoriya with new reasons to declare him a traitor and to launch an anti-Hetman uprising.

Pavlo Skoropadsky failed to resolve the Ukrainian-Polish conflict in the Kholmshchyna during the entire time of the existence of the Ukrainian State. In November 1918, the troops of the Second Rzeczpospolita took control over Kholmshchyna without any problems. For this reason one can understand the reflections of the Ukrainian historian Ivan Lysiak-Rudnitski to the fact that official Kiev had not managed to predict the consequences of the Ukrainian-Polish confrontation in the West, which the opponents of the Ukrainian State in the East rushed to take advantage of.

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⁴⁷ S. Ekelchuk, *Pavlo Skoropadskyi*, in: *Istoriya Ukrainy v osobah XIX–XX st. (Pavlo Skoropadsky, in: History of Ukraine in personalities XIX–XX cent.)*, Kyiv 1995, pp. 221–222.

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