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Ukraine (Kyiv, Ukraine)lilichka.pylypenko@gmail.com**ORCID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6408-048X>**«NATIONAL CAUSE» IN UKRAINIAN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT
AFTER WORLD WAR I**

The primary objective of this article is to comprehensively explore the evolution of the Ukrainian political thought throughout the transformative years after World War I.

The methodology is based on the basic principles of historicism, objectivity, multifactoriality and a comprehensive approach. Scientific novelty: On the basis of a wide range of sources, the Ukrainian Cause that was centered around the idea of establishing an independent Ukrainian state and protecting the rights and interests of the Ukrainian people is studied.

During the 1917-1918, the UPR along with the Ukrainian Central Council and Petrograd had a complex and evolving relationship. The Ukrainian Central Council emerged as a representative body for the Ukrainian people, striving for autonomy and later independence and initially sought to cooperate with the Russian Provisional Government in Petrograd. They aimed to secure recognition of Ukrainian autonomy within a federalized Russian state. The UPR's leaders, including M. Hrushevsky, engaged in negotiations with Petrograd officials to advance the Ukrainian Cause. However, tensions soon arose between the Ukrainian Central Council and Petrograd. The Russian Provisional Government had reservations about granting significant autonomy to Ukraine. This divergence of interests strained the relationship between the Ukrainian Central Council and Petrograd. Amidst these developments, the Ukrainian Central Council issued the I Universal in June 1917, which declared the autonomy of Ukraine within the Russian state. This move aimed to lay the groundwork for Ukrainian self-governance and protect the interests of the Ukrainian people. Nevertheless, as the

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Russian Revolution progressed and the Bolsheviks gained power, the Ukrainian Central Council grew disillusioned with Petrograd's stance. The council sought greater independence from Russia and issued the II Universal in November 1917, proclaiming the establishment of the Ukrainian People's Republic as a sovereign state. This declaration signaled a definitive break from Petrograd and a determined pursuit of Ukrainian independence. Petrograd's Bolshevik government saw the Ukrainian People's Republic as a threat to their authority and engaged in military interventions against it. By early 1918, the relationship between the Ukrainian Central Council, UPR, and Petrograd had completely broken down. The Ukrainian Central Council, representing the aspirations of the Ukrainian people, declared full independence from Russia. This marked the beginning of a protracted struggle for Ukrainian independence, as the Ukrainian People's Republic faced military interventions from both the Bolsheviks and foreign powers.

Keywords: diplomacy, interwar period, UPR, WUPR.

«НАЦІОНАЛЬНЕ ПИТАННЯ» В УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ СУСПІЛЬНО-ПОЛІТИЧНІЙ ДУМЦІ ПІСЛЯ ПЕРШОЇ СВІТОВОЇ ВІЙНИ

Метою дослідження є аналіз розвитку української політичної думки впродовж трансформаційних років після Першої світової війни.

Методологія дослідження ґрунтується на принципах історизму, об'єктивності, багатофакторності та комплексного підходу. Наукова новизна: на основі широкого кола джерел проаналізовано «Українське питання», в центрі якого стояла ідея створення незалежної Української держави та захисту прав та інтересів українського народу.

Протягом 1917-1918 рр. між Українською Центральною Радою та Петроградом склалися складні стосунки. Українська Центральна Рада постала як представницький орган українського народу, який прагнув самостійності, а згодом незалежності, і спочатку волів співпрацювати з російським Тимчасовим урядом у Петрограді. Вони мали на меті домогтися визнання української автономії у складі федералізованої Російської держави. Лідери УНР, у тому числі М. Грушевський, вели переговори з петроградськими урядовцями щодо просування української справи. Проте невдовзі між Українською Центральною Радою та Петроградом виникла напруга. Російський Тимчасовий уряд мав застереження щодо надання Україні значної автономії. Ця розбіжність інтересів загострила стосунки між УЦР і Петроградом. Серед цих подій Українська Центральна Рада у червні 1917 р. видала I Універсал, який проголосив автономію України у складі Російської держави. Цей крок мав на меті закласти підвалини для українського самоврядування та захистити інтереси українського народу. Тим не менш, у міру

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розгортання російської революції та приходу до влади більшовиків Українська Центральна Рада розчарувалася в позиції Петрограда. Рада прагнула більшої незалежності від Росії й у листопаді 1917 р. видала II Універсал, яким проголосила створення Української Народної Республіки як суверенної держави. Ця декларація означала остаточний розрив з Петроградом і рішуче прагнення до незалежності України. Більшовицький уряд Петрограда вбачав в Українській Народній Республіці загрозу своїй владі і вдавався до військових інтервенцій проти неї. На початку 1918 р. стосунки між Українською Центральною Радою і Петроградом повністю розірвалися. Українська Центральна Рада, репрезентуючи прагнення українського народу, проголосила повну незалежність від Росії. Це стало початком тривалої боротьби за незалежність України, оскільки Українська Народна Республіка зіткнулася з військовою інтервенцією як більшовиків, так і іноземних держав.

Ключові слова: *дипломатія, міжвоєнний період, УНР, ЗУНР.*

Introduction. Consideration of complex and always multi-level ethno-national relations in the state or its separate region is impossible without clarifying the influence of other external and internal factors – geopolitical, socio-economic, worldview, religious, etc. The consequences of wars and the violent redistribution of Ukrainian ethnic territories reflect this in a particularly striking way. And it is important to study the arguments not only of national communities, but also of their opponents and adversaries - imperial authorities, pro-government political party groups. As we know, after the abolition of the autonomous status of the Hetmanship by the Russian Empress Catherine II (1764), the Ukrainian lands turned from a subject of international relations into an object of self-interested foreign policy intentions of the Russian Empire, Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. At the beginning of the 20th century, Ukrainian lands were part of the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which was the result of three divisions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The statelessness of the people and the disunity of ethnic territories, the aggravation of military-political contradictions between the Romanov Empire and the

Habsburg Monarchy on the eve of the First World War made Ukraine a new object of diplomatic play and aggression by the leading countries of the region. Therefore, during the First World War, the Ukrainian ethnic lands turned into a theater of combat operations of the Russian, Austrian, German, Turkish and other armies, and the Ukrainians and Poles who inhabited them found themselves on different sides of the fronts [9].

At the same time, the war of 1914–1918 created favorable domestic and foreign political conditions under which the dream plans of the Ukrainian and Polish elites on both sides of the Russian-Austrian border about the revival of national states became the reality of practical politics [5]. Therefore, during this war and the first years after, Ukrainian political and public figures on both sides of Zbruch proposed and partially implemented most of the types of state and political systems known at that time, which differed in form – from monarchy to anarchism and in content – from liberal to authoritarians.

The Ukrainian party-political system of the era of the Liberation Struggles of the first quarter of the 20th century reflected the entire spectrum and multi-vector nature of the political and legal foundations of its existence, the directions of implementation of both domestic and foreign policy, the orientations of its specific leaders in the complex geopolitical combinations of the post-war Versailles-Washington system of international relations. In this regard, the aim of the article is to analyze the main issues related to the contemporary formation of the national, cultural, political, and confessional self-identification of the Ukrainian people and the desire of its representatives to propose models of social and political organization that would adequately and expediently provide conditions for the development of all citizens of Ukraine [16].

It should also be noted that the political position of Poles and Ukrainians within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was significantly different – the Poles sought to win

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the independence or at least the autonomy of Galicia, which they considered to be Polish, and it lead to a conflict with the Austrian authorities [2, p. 92]. The views of the Polish political elite were divided into pro-Austrian and pro-Russian, which represented the directions of Poland's independence in different ways. Representatives of the first concept advocated an active restoration of statehood on the side of the Central Powers, and the second – placed their hopes on post-imperial Russia, and viewed the Western allies as a "backup option" in liberation plans.

The attitude of Ukrainian politicians towards the aspirations of the Poles was also not unambiguous: Galician Ukrainians hoped that during the new post-war redistribution of Eastern Europe, Galicia should become Ukrainian territory [3, p. 64]. During the First World War, two main directions of the Ukrainian national movement stood out:

1. "Pragmatic", that was widespread in the Habsburg monarchy and considered the struggle for the formation of an autonomous Ukrainian region to be decisive. This direction was represented by ambassadors to the Galician Regional Diet, deputies of the Vienna Parliament.

2. "Pan-Ukrainian", whose supporters considered Eastern Galicia to be the basis of the Ukrainian national movement, and saw the Central Powers as a force that could be used to liberate the Transnistrian region from Russian influence and unite it into a single state. This direction was mainly represented by Western Ukrainian youth and intelligentsia, most of whom were members of the Ruthenian-Ukrainian Radical Party (RURP) and Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (USDP). They were also supported by the majority of the trans-Dnieper political emigration in Eastern Galicia.

Ukrainian ideologues, like Polish ones, tried to involve Eastern Galicia in the process of their own state formation, which indicates the transition of Polish-Ukrainian relations at the end of the World War to the stage of open ethno-political conflict. Instead, the enslaved peoples were divided by the Austrian factor, which was a

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guarantee of preserving the territorial and political unity of Galicia for the Poles. If compared with Ukrainian political views, the pro-Austrian orientation of Polish politicians, members of the Vienna Parliament and ambassadors of the Galician Diet lasted less and had many opponents. Even before the war, the Ukrainian national movement of Galicia and the activities of its leaders regarding the revival of an independent Ukrainian state became the cause of tension in relations between Russia and Austria-Hungary [1, p. 183]. As a result, the relations between the two neighboring peoples developed in the direction of conflict, which was based on the problem of ethnic borders and future state borders. The intentions of Ukrainian politicians and public figures to revive an independent state in the western ethnic territories of the monarchy caused concern among the Poles of Galicia because it could turn them into a national minority, cut off from the rest of their own people.

The reaction of Polish politicians at the end of the Great War was different: on the one hand, they were aware that the processes of reviving the national state in Trans-Dnieper Ukraine would find a response in the people of Galicia, which in turn could become a threat to Poland, on the other hand, the danger of the restoration of Russian domination on both sides of Zbruch was more frightening [7, p. 150]. The activities of Muscophile structures in pre-war Galicia during the First World War, supported by the authorities and socio-political structures of Russia, were especially provocative [11, pp. 143–145; 12].

The Russian February Revolution of 1917 created certain conditions for the independence of two enslaved peoples, which affected the course and nature of Ukrainian-Polish relations. Shortly before the overthrow of the autocracy, on February 14, 1917, a secret agreement was signed between Russia and France: in exchange for Russian help in establishing the post-war eastern border with Germany, Paris undertook to support Petrograd in everything related to the marking the western borders of the

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Russian Empire after the victorious end of the war. Preservation of the territorial unity of Russia corresponded to the geopolitics of the Entente countries, and the Ukrainian and Polish issues were considered an internal matter of Petrograd for some time. In addition, Russia was an ally of France and Great Britain in the First World War, and therefore, after its resolution, was to become the main counterweight to the revival of German imperialism. Let's not forget that the February Revolution of 1917 turned Russia into an ideologically more attractive subject of international relations in the eyes of the Entente countries. On the other hand, the declaration of the Central Council went unnoticed by the Western countries, since the Ukrainian national movement was considered a German-Austrian tool to weaken the Entente [8].

Sources overview. With the restoration of Ukrainian statehood in 1991, the study of the historical experience of the struggle for independence of our people, in particular the period 1917–1921, became relevant. Quite a number of Ukrainian historians have addressed this problem, analyzing this or that period or aspect of the national liberation struggle in their research. During the Soviet era, the heroes of the national liberation struggles of 1917–1921 were subjected to sharp criticism, labeled as "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalist" and demonized in every possible way, presented exclusively in a dark and scary tone. Therefore, an objective study of this period was impossible. Such studies were conducted by Ukrainian scientists of the diaspora or foreign researchers. Only at the end of the 1980s, works appeared that began to reveal the true history of the national liberation struggle of the Ukrainian people. These studies were generally still somewhat cautious, given the still existing party-ideological control. With the restoration of Ukraine's independence and the establishment of the true principles of scientific knowledge, deep and systematic studies of the events of 1917–1921 appear. A review of numerous publications covering the events in Ukraine after the First World War shows that today certain issues related to these events remain understudied, even

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debatable. Characterizing the contribution of previous generations of scientists to the study of the problem, it is necessary to emphasize the insufficient study of many issues.

Purpose of the article. The primary objective of this article is to comprehensively explore the dynamic interrelationships among the Ukrainian People's Republic, the Ukrainian Central Council, and Petrograd throughout the transformative years of 1917–1918. The article aims to unveil the evolution from initial cooperation to escalating tensions and eventual conflict, showcasing the Ukrainian Central Council's pursuit of autonomy and self-determination. Furthermore, the article seeks to analyze the intricate geopolitical landscape that emerged during this period, elucidating the impact of these interplays on Ukraine's struggle for independence and its enduring influence on the nation's historical trajectory.

Main part. The consequence of the revolutionary events in Russia was a change in the direction of the foreign policy of the Entente in Eastern Europe during 1917 – the beginning of 1918 to maintain the Eastern Front (against Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire), which was under threat. For some time, the Entente countries rejected the possibility of fighting against Soviet power in Russia, helping the national liberation movements of the peoples of its European part, underestimating the ability of the Bolsheviks to seize and hold power [6, p. 37].

With the fall of the empire, the leaders of the new regime faced problems of a fundamentally different nature. In order to realize claims for the role of a representative of revolutionary Ukraine, the national movement had to solve three fundamental issues:

- renounce their "narrow-national" character;
- go beyond the narrow circle of the Kyiv intelligentsia, which required, in turn, the "legalization" of the fundamental principles of the Ukrainian movement;
- reach a socio-political consensus regarding the programmatic foundations of the Ukrainian liberation movement, in particular in the national issue.

This meant the need to not only settle complex relations between different political circles of Ukraine, but first of all to come to an agreement with the various national groups that lived in the Transnistrian region regarding the solution of fundamental issues. From the first days of the revolution, leading Ukrainian figures, members of the UPR began to look for solutions to these issues.

Management of the political situation, the deepening of the revolutionary process needed to legitimately spread the influence of the Ukrainian Central Council over the entire territory of the Dnipro region [10, p. 371]. M. Hrushevsky sought to transform the Ukrainian Central Council from a political institution into a permanent authority, select its permanent members, and determine what its relations with various non-Ukrainian organizations and communities should be. On April 6-8, 1917, the All-Ukrainian National Congress resolved two fundamental issues: formulated the ideological slogan of the movement – the demand for broad national-territorial autonomy of Ukraine within the Russian Republic and laid the organizational foundations for its implementation. The Congress proclaimed the right to self-determination of the Ukrainian people, authorizing the Ukrainian Central Council to implement it, as well as the right to recognize the international status of Ukraine, which was later supported by the 1st All-Ukrainian Military Congress, whose delegates recognized the Ukrainian Central Council as "the only competent body capable of solving all matters concerning the whole of Ukraine and its relations with the Provisional Government" [7, p. 138; 18, pp. 5–8].

The process of realizing the real place of Ukraine in the new geopolitical context forced the leaders of the Ukrainian Central Council to agree and harmonize relations between Kyiv and Petrograd, to start negotiations with the Provisional Government in order to achieve the issuance of a special declaration that would recognize the right of the Ukrainian people to territorial and national autonomy, but these failed [17, p. 9]. The discussion of these issues at the June 1 session of the Ukrainian Central Council showed

that its leadership chose the direction of further radicalization of its actions and demands, rather than a compromise. The Ukrainian political community split into three parts: moderate-conservative, radical and radical-liberation. The central government refused to officially recognize the Council as a representative of the will of the Ukrainian people, since it was not elected by the results of a national vote. The instability of the legitimate and political positions of the Provisional Government itself, the reluctance to involve other peoples in state-political self-determination, the desire to prevent further complications with the Council of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, the circumstances of wartime and geopolitical considerations, became the factors that prevented the implementation of the demands of the Ukrainian side.

Petrograd's tactics during negotiations with representatives of the Ukrainian national movement amounted to postponing the resolution of problematic issues by the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, which led to the radicalization of the latter's demands, whose intentions acquired an ultra-socialist character. In particular, it was about implementing the main principles of the autonomous system of Ukraine as soon as possible. In fact, at the II All-Ukrainian Military Congress on June 10, and not at a meeting of the Central Rada, the text of the First Universal of the Ukrainian Central Council was adopted, which proclaimed the autonomy of 9 provinces within Russia. Despite its loud propaganda and agitational significance, I Universal did not speed up the consolidation of a divided society [15, pp. 99–100; 17, p. 12]. Political expediency prevailed over the law and the interests of a multinational society because the socio-political situation of that time showed the impossibility of uniting "Ukrainian democracy" only on the basis of national-political efforts. The Ukrainian Central Council considered itself a "body of revolutionary democracy", which should consist mainly of councils of workers', soldiers' and military deputies. The 5th session of the Central Council finally gave preference to the purely Soviet principle of the formation of

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this representative body of Ukrainian socialist parties and public organizations [15, pp. 163–212].

The adoption of the II Universal played an important role in the ethno-political history of Ukraine [19, p. 10; 21, p. 40]. It should be noted that the Council itself did not consider or adopt this document – its last meeting was held two days before. This document was approved by agreement with the Russian government, namely with its "socialist" part: the General Secretariat was granted the status of a local executive body, while it was declared that Ukraine refuses to exercise autonomy until the All-Russian Constituent Assembly is held. Another feature of Universal was that its authors spoke for the first time as representatives of "citizens of Ukraine" and not only "Ukrainian people" [4].

In the summer of 1917, most of the leaders of the Ukrainian movement began to calculate the possibility of a political combination, as a result of which "Ukrainian lands" could become the subject and object of an independent state-political existence in the near future. Such a change became possible solely thanks to the position of the representatives of the Constitutional Democratic Party, on the one hand, and the extreme radicalism of left-socialist parties and groups, primarily the Bolsheviks, on the other [14, p. 16].

After the July events in Petrograd, the leadership of the Ukrainian Central Council was given the opportunity to act without worrying about the reaction of the central government. Already on August 4, a message was received from Petrograd about the adoption of the compromise "Temporary Instructions for the General Secretariat of the Provisional Government in Ukraine", which was based on the realization by the liberal-socialist government of the impossibility of developing a rational and acceptable for both sides way of solving the Ukrainian issue. Adoption of the "Fundamentals of the Provisional Administration of Ukraine" or the "statute" of the General Secretariat took

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place in conditions where revolutionary enthusiasm prevailed over law and order. All subsequent orders of the Ukrainian Central Council were adopted by a minority of its members, which gave rise to discord between its numerous factions and groups. This meant that the Ukrainian Central Council for a certain time went beyond the legal space of the state.

After the Bolshevik coup on October 25 in Petrograd, at a closed meeting of the Small Council, it was decided to refuse political support to the legitimate central government and the Revolutionary Committee was chosen to protect the revolution in Ukraine, to which local authorities were to "submit" [15, pp. 359–360]. Thus, the Small and Central Rada once again found themselves outside the existing legal field. The 3rd All-Ukrainian Military Congress decided to join the "revolutionary expediency", which meant supporting the Bolshevik armed rebellion and the immediate declaration of Ukraine's statehood. On November 9, the General Secretariat recognized the Bolshevik government as a representative of "Great Russian democracy", that not only accelerated the destruction of the democratic political and legal space of Ukraine, which was just beginning to form. It also meant the rejection of the existing system of international contractual and legal relations, which defined the country's place in the world. The Ukrainian Central Council began to change its direction towards the formation of a political regime of Soviet revolutionary democracy, which could only lead to a break in allied relations with the countries of the West. During November, the leaders of the National Socialist movement of Ukraine decided to sever relations with the only legitimate source of power in the country at the time, which made it impossible to come to an understanding with it or its successors in the future, and renounced the existing international legal relations, which created at least three fronts for Ukraine: foreign policy – with Entente countries; domestic political - with the Ukrainian Bolsheviks and

their accomplices, on the one hand, and anti-socialist forces, on the other; armed - with Bolshevik Russia.

The leaders of the Ukrainian Central Council chose the direction of creating an independent Ukrainian state by "revolutionary" means and methods – a subject of international law in the form of a national socialist republic, the full range of rights in which should belong only to representatives of the so-called "working classes of the population". The foreign policy of the newly born state actually ignored the processes taking place in neighboring countries [20, p. 230].

We believe that within the Ukrainian political community there was no consensus regarding the very concept of "state independence of Ukraine". During the destruction of the front, the strengthening of Bolshevik propaganda, the loss of control over the territories, the absence of their own regular armed forces, the leaders of the Ukrainian Central Council actually played the card of "independence" as the only way, that, in their opinion, would allow to solve fundamental military, ethno-political, socio-economic and legal issues that arose before that.

The Ukrainian Central Council was concerned with the issues of national minorities, actively discussing the prospects of Polish-Ukrainian relations. However, in the period 1917-1918 Polish-Ukrainian relations did not yet have the status of interstate because Ukraine was part of Russia [13, p. 142], and nominal Poland was also not a full-fledged state, as it was dependent on Austria and Germany. The problem of Polish-Ukrainian relations from the Ukrainian side was of an internal nature, because Poles were the third largest national minority (after Russians and Jews). Many Polish political figures, especially left-wing ones, supported the aspirations of Ukrainians for self-determination, because they believed that in the Ukrainian state they would be able to influence social and political life, unlike Russia, which was a multinational, but not a federal state.

One of the urgent issues that needed to be resolved by the UPR as soon as possible was the determination of the status of Polish military formations in Ukraine, which were part of the former Russian Imperial Army, because they were not subordinate to the Supreme Commander of the Russian Army [7, p. 140]. For Ukraine, this issue could be decisive in the event of any armed conflict, and also lead to Polish-Ukrainian cooperation in the military sphere. Fortunately, this process did not lead to significant Polish-Ukrainian conflicts. Moreover, when at the end of 1917 the Bolsheviks began an armed campaign against the Ukrainian People's Republic, part of the Polish military units helped the troops of the Central Council to defend Kyiv.

Conclusions. In summary, the intricate interplay between the Ukrainian People's Republic, the Ukrainian Central Council, and Petrograd during the pivotal years of 1917–1918 vividly illustrates the multifaceted nature of the Ukrainian quest for self-determination. Initially marked by hopes of cooperative coexistence, this relationship gradually transitioned into a crucible of competing ideologies and aspirations. The emergence of the Ukrainian Central Council as a representative body signified a historic turning point. Its efforts to collaborate with Petrograd in securing Ukrainian autonomy underscored the nuanced diplomatic dance that characterized the era. Yet, even in this atmosphere of nascent unity, underlying tensions emerged as Petrograd's reluctance to grant substantial autonomy clashed with the Ukrainian Central Council's growing determination to safeguard Ukrainian interests. The issuance of the I Universal was a watershed moment, symbolizing the Ukrainian Central Council's resolve to carve out a space for Ukrainian self-governance. A testament to the aspirations of a people long yearning for recognition and control over their destiny, it laid a foundation for the subsequent II Universal. This second proclamation, boldly declaring the Ukrainian People's Republic as a sovereign entity, heralded the definitive break from Petrograd and the resolute assertion of Ukrainian independence. As the Russian Revolution raged on

and the Bolsheviks ascended to power, the once-hopeful cooperation deteriorated into a struggle for survival and autonomy. The complex web of interactions among these entities reflects the intricate geopolitical landscape of the time, where the Ukrainian Central Council's bold declarations collided with Petrograd's determination to centralize authority. The breakdown of relations with Petrograd inevitably set the Ukrainian People's Republic on a tumultuous path, replete with armed conflicts and foreign interventions. This turbulent period marked an unyielding commitment to realizing a long-cherished dream of an independent Ukrainian state. The Ukrainian struggle for independence, forged in the crucible of these intricate relationships, would continue to shape the nation's identity and trajectory for years to come.

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