

The issue of eastern Galicia in international politics (1919–1923): a comparative analysis of the contributions of Ukrainian and Polish historians

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Abstract.

The aim of the study is to conduct a historiographical analysis of the works of Ukrainian and Polish historians dedicated to the international aspects of the Eastern Galicia issue in 1919–1923, and to outline the directions for further study of the topic. **The methodology of the research** is based on the principles of historicism, systematics, objectivity, as well as methods of historiographical analysis and synthesis. **The scientific novelty** lies in the fact that a comparative analysis of the achievements of Ukrainian and Polish historians in studying the issue of the state affiliation of Eastern Galicia in international politics has been conducted for the first time. **Conclusions.** In the 1920s and 1930s, a process of accumulating primary knowledge on the specified issue took place. The development of the topic in the post-war decades was marked by a distinct multivariant character. The few works of the Ukrainian diaspora were written within the framework of the statehood-oriented direction of national historiography, while Soviet historical science was characterized by a class-party approach to the problem. On the other hand, the works of scholars from People's Poland were distinguished by a high level of analysis and impartiality. The contemporary stage of research on the topic (1990s – 2000s) is marked by a significant increase in scientific knowledge, especially in the Ukrainian historical narrative. Although the works of Polish historians contain balanced assessments of the Ukrainian national movement, they still exhibit a clear bias towards "Polonocentrism". Excessive nationalism is evident in the defense of the thesis of the "cultural superiority" of Poles over Ukrainians. At the same time, the scientific problem requires further study. In particular, more attention should be paid to the internal factors of the weakness of the foreign policy of the West Ukrainian National Republic (ZUNR). The history of Western Ukrainian diplomacy through the lens of biography has development potential. Issues related to the activities of the Entente missions in Eastern Galicia remain relevant. There is a need for a synthetic work that would recreate all aspects of the activity of the ZUNR government on the international stage, especially during the period of its operation in Vienna.

Keywords: historiographical analysis, historiographical source, ZUNR, Eastern Galicia, the Ukrainian question, foreign policy.

Проблема Східної Галичини в міжнародній політиці (1919–1923): порівняльний аналіз доробку українських і польських істориків

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Анотація.

Мета дослідження – здійснити історіографічний аналіз праць українських і польських істориків, присвячених міжнародним аспектам східногалицького питання у 1919–1923 рр., накреслити шляхи подальшого вивчення теми. **Методологія дослідження** спирається на принципи історизму, системності, об'єктивності, а також на методи історіографічного аналізу та синтезу. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що вперше зроблено порівняльний аналіз здобутків українських і польських істориків у вивченні проблеми державної приналежності Східної Галичини у міжнародній політиці. **Висновки.** У 20–30-х рр. ХХ ст. відбувався процес накопичення первинних знань з означеної проблематики. Виразною поліваріантністю позначений розвиток теми у повоєнні десятиліття. Нечисленні праці представників української діаспори написані в річищі державницького напрямку національної історіографії, а для радянської історичної науки був притаманний класово-партійний підхід до проблеми. Натомість роботи учених народної Польщі відзначалися значним рівнем аналітики та неупередженості. Сучасний етап дослідження теми (1990-ті – 2000-і рр.) позначений суттєвим приростом наукових знань. Особливо це властиво українському історичному наративу. Хоч праці польських істориків і містять зважені оцінки українського національного руху, все ж написані з виразним ухилом у бік «полоноцентризму». Надмірний націоцентризм проявився в обстоюванні тези про «культурну вищість» поляків над українцями. Водночас наукова проблема потребує подальшого вивчення. Зокрема, вартувало би звернути більшу увагу на внутрішні чинники слабкості зовнішньої політики ЗУНР. Має перспективу розвитку історія західноукраїнської дипломатії крізь призму біографіки. Актуальними залишаються питання, пов'язані з діяльністю місій Антанти в Східній Галичині. Потребою дня є написання синтетичної праці, яка відтворила би всі аспекти діяльності уряду ЗУНР на міжнародній арені, особливо у віденський період його функціонування.

Ключові слова: історіографічний аналіз, історіографічне джерело, ЗУНР, Східна Галичина, українське питання, зовнішня політика.

The problem statement. The history of the West Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR) is at the center of contemporary Ukrainian scholars' research, particularly the issue of its government's diplomatic struggle for the recognition by Western states of the right of the Galician Ukrainians to self-determination and the creation of an independent state. Understanding the experience of Ukrainian liberation struggles of the modern era is not only a scientific but also a socially and politically relevant problem. Evidence of this is the growing flow of scientific publications, numerous public and government events dedicated to commemorating significant dates, and the popularization of prominent historical figures, among other things. Furthermore, the perception of the events from a century ago in Polish historiography is of great importance for the development of Polish-Ukrainian political interaction today and for establishing a Ukrainian-Polish dialogue among historians.

Analysis of recent research. Specific aspects of the historiography of the scientific problem have been addressed by both Ukrainian scholars – A. Panchuk (Panchuk, 2000), Yu. Slyvka (Slyvka, 2000), I. Datskiv (Datskiv, 2014), Yu. Dovhan (Dovhan, 2006), V. Velykochyi (Velykochyi, 2014) – and Polish scholars – Ya. Pisulinski (Pisuliński, 2019), E. Koko (Koko, 1994; Koko, 2000), Ya. Bruski (Bruski, 2000), V. Borymskyi (Borymskyi, 2021), V. Futala (Futala, 2023). However, a comprehensive study has not yet been created.

The aim of the article is to conduct a specialized comprehensive study of Ukrainian and Polish historiographies of the diplomatic struggle on the international stage for Eastern Galicia in 1919–1923, to determine the extent of the problem's study, and to justify the prospects for further scientific research.

The results of the research. The intensity of Ukrainian-Polish relations in the 1920s–1930s did not contribute to the development of Ukrainian historical thought. However, even in these conditions, taking into account the presence of democratic elements in the structure of the revived Polish state, research work was carried out, and scientific and polemical literature was created. The first researchers of the stated problem were participants in the national liberation struggle. Thus, as early as the beginning of the 1920s, the renowned lawyer and statesman M. Lozynskyi evaluated the legal status of Eastern Galicia from the perspective of international law. In his work “Galicia in 1918–1920”, he interpreted the decision of the Council of Ten at the Paris Peace Conference of June 25, 1919, as one aimed at the liquidation of Western Ukrainian statehood (Lozynskyi, 1922, p. 150). The politician's reflections on alternative forms of statehood for the Galician Ukrainians led him to the conclusion that, in the contemporary geopolitical situation, the demand from the Entente countries for guarantees of a separate Galician republic was the only correct decision of the exiled government of the ZUNR. A positive resolution of this issue gave a chance to eventually achieve the “all-Ukrainian state ideal” (Lozynskyi, 1922, p. 227–228).

Political concepts of the renowned Ukrainian historian, statesman, and political figure S.

Tomashivskyi deserve special attention. In the 368th fund of the Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, there are several of his unpublished articles written in 1919–1921. In the works “A Few Critical Remarks on the Statute of Eastern Galicia” and “Critique of the Statute for Eastern Galicia”, the author proposed a concept of autonomy for Ukrainian lands within Poland. In May 1920, the scholar returned to the idea of Galician-Volhynian statehood (the work “The Peace Treaty in Eastern Galicia. Its Terms and Deficiencies”). However, the change in the situation on the Polish-Soviet front influenced the historian's views: he abandoned his concept of the Galician-Volhynian state. In the articles “Before Spring in Eastern Europe” and “The Riga Peace Treaty. Notes in the Margins”, S. Tomashivskyi proposed striving for national-territorial autonomy for Ukrainians in Poland (CSHAUL, f. 368, d. 1, pp. 3, 5, 28, 30, 48).

The issue of diplomatic struggle on the international stage for Eastern Galicia between 1919 and 1923 was also partially addressed by O. Maritchak, O. Nazaruk, and K. Levytskyi (Maritchak, 1923; Nazaruk, 1930; Levytskyi, 1938).

Polish politicians and publicists in the interwar period presented the Eastern Galicia issue purely from the perspective of Polish national interests. Representatives of the national-democratic environment, such as S. Grabski, R. Dmowski, E. Gertych, and others, when outlining the vision of a national state, proposed – and as political figures sought to implement – policies of incorporation, open Polonization, and colonization of the captured Ukrainian lands (Grabski, 1923; Grabski, 1925; Dmowski, 1925; Gertych, 1932). In contrast, leaders of the Piłsudski camp – T. Hołówko, L. Wasilewski, and others – saw the possibility of assimilating Ukrainians and involving them in cooperation with the Polish state by granting them certain rights within the framework of autonomy in Eastern Galicia and self-governance in Volhynia (Hołówko, 1922; Hołówko, 1924; Hołówko, 1926; Wasilewski, 1934).

In the few works by historians of the Ukrainian diaspora, the diplomatic activity of the exiled government of the ZUNR is briefly reflected, and attempts are made to provide legal and political assessments of the stance of Western powers on the Ukrainian question. For example, Dr. of Law S. Rypetskyi concluded that the decision of the Council of Ambassadors of the Entente countries from March 14, 1923, “was a violation of President Wilson's principle of self-determination of peoples and contradicted the explicit commitments of the Supreme Council towards Galicia” (Ripetskyi, 1963, p. 25).

Soviet historical science was characterized by certain features determined by changes in the socio-political situation in the country. Thus, in the post-Stalin period, access to archival documents and interwar press became broader for scholars. In the works of historians (Yu. Slyvka, I. Vasutia, S. Makarchuk), despite ideological clichés, the policies of Poland regarding Eastern Galicia, the attitudes of Western European countries towards Ukraine, and the resolution of the Eastern Galicia issue in 1919–1923 were generally reasonably characterized. An important point is that, while considering Eastern Galicia as an international issue, researchers were forced to abandon the stereotypical term “so-called ZUNR” and present its leaders as participants in international treaty processes. However, there was no fundamental re-evaluation of the activities of the national-state forces.

Unlike Soviet Ukraine, in People's Poland during the 1960s–1980s, the analyzed issue began to be studied at a scientific level. Notably, in Polish historiography, there was a re-evaluation of the national policy of the Second Polish Republic. A. Chojnowski, followed by R. Torzecki, put forward the thesis that the majority of Ukrainians found themselves within the Polish state against their will (Chojnowski, 1979, p. 5; Torzecki, 1989, p. 27). The researchers demonstrated that the issue of the state-legal status of Eastern Galicia became an international problem immediately after the declaration of the West Ukrainian People's Republic. However, at the Paris Peace Conference, as well as at other international forums, it was viewed as part of the Polish question. M. Drozdowski and T. Dąbkowski presented the arguments of the main contenders for the right to possess this territory. In particular, the Polish side's arguments were based on historical, ethnic, and cultural factors, as well as the challenge to the ZUNR's collaboration with Germany. In contrast, the diplomacy of the ZUNR tried to prove to the world that its political demands were part of the international order program outlined in U.S. President W. Wilson's 14 points. Thus, the foreign policy of the Ukrainian government relied on a strong international legal foundation. Additionally, the Ukrainians appealed to historical tradition and accused the Poles of violence and cruelty (Drozdowski, 1981, p. 141–143; Dąbkowski, 1985, p. 125). Other historians also pointed out this nuance: while the ZUNR government increased its efforts on the diplomatic front, Poland, in addition to diplomacy, increasingly resorted to a policy of “fait accompli” and pressure on Western powers (Zaks, 1971, p. 12–13; Zaks, 1972, p. 80; Papierzyńska-Turek, 1979, p. 45). The motives behind the favorable stance of Western states toward the revived Poland were also examined. The authors agreed that the priority interests of the allies were geostrategic – specifically, the need to unite all anti-Bolshevik forces of the former Russian Empire and to create a reliable barrier between Soviet Russia and the West (Partyka, 1976, p. 563; Zaks, 1971, p. 11–12;

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Torzecki, 1989, p. 29; Lewandowski, 1974, p. 88).

The formation of a new socio-political and intellectual atmosphere in Ukraine after 1991 significantly contributed to the emergence of a series of original works characterized by methodological approaches, research techniques, and assessments that addressed the struggle of Western Ukrainians for freedom and independence in 1919–1923, particularly their diplomatic fight for a just resolution of the Eastern Galicia issue (Vasiuta, 2006; Karpenko, 2001; Kuhutiak, 1993; Kuhutiak, 2006; Kuhutiak, 2002; Krasivskyi, 2008; Lytvyn & Naumenko, 1995; Makarchuk, 1997; Pavliuk, 1996; Kuras, 2003; Rublov & Reient, 1999; Tyshchuk, 2005; Datskiv, 2009b). The analyzed topic is also represented by a large number of specific historical studies dedicated to individual aspects of it.

Now let's clarify the following issues: the research problem, scientific interpretations, and the personal contribution of scholars to the study of the declared topic.

First of all, it should be noted that the reasons for the interest of Western powers in the issue of Eastern Galicia have become a subject of research. According to O. Karpenko, M. Lytvyn, M. Kuhutiak, I. Datskiv, R. Symonenko, and others, among the most important factors was the geopolitical situation of the ZUNR: implementing the plan to build a barrier against the spread of Bolshevism in Europe, the Entente countries, especially France, placed their bet on the stronger – a nationally consolidated Poland. Another important reason for the attention of Western powers to the Western Ukrainian issue was the desire to end the Polish-Ukrainian war, under favorable conditions for Warsaw and the Entente countries, leaving Lviv and the Boryslav oil basin under Polish control. Furthermore, the victorious countries held a unanimous opinion about the restoration of Russia and were negatively inclined toward the emergence of independent national states on its territory (Karpenko, 1998, p. 79; Karpenko, 2001, p. 448–449; Lytvyn, 2008, p. 114; Kuhutiak, 2002, p. 180; Datskiv, 2008, p. 123; Kuras, 2003, p. 284). According to O. Pavliuk's observation, U.S. policy regarding the Galician issue was determined depending on the developments in Russia. Washington viewed the right of nations to self-determination in Eastern Europe as something that should be realized within the framework of a federation (Pavliuk, 1996, p. 46).

Another issue discussed in the academic literature is the inconsistency of the positions of the great powers regarding Galicia. Authors agree that the causes of misunderstandings stemmed from both the political behavior of pro-government or opposition forces in Western countries and the economic interests of big capital. In particular, O. Krasivskyi emphasized that the political leaders of the Entente countries and the United States were unanimous in supporting Poland, which was meant to serve as a counterbalance to Germany and a bastion against the spread of Bolshevism in Europe. At the same time, the question of Galicia was viewed by the great powers not as an internal Polish issue but as an international one, tied to many geopolitical factors and a complex of interethnic and border issues in Eastern Europe (Krasivskyi, 2008, p. 260).

Historians provide varying assessments of the foreign policy course of the ZUNR. M. Lytvyn argues that the National Council and the governments of the ZUNR did not formulate a clear concept of their foreign policy: in October–November 1918, the Galician leaders sought international recognition of the independence of the ZUNR, in late May to June 1919, they began discussing plans for a possible alliance with Czechoslovakia on confederative or federative terms, and in October–December 1919, when the confederative links with the leadership of the Ukrainian People's Republic weakened sharply, they sought understanding with anti-Bolshevik Russia. By the second half of 1920, after the alliance between S. Petliura and J. Piłsudski was formed, the course shifted towards the restoration of the independent Galician Republic (Lytvyn, 2008, p. 113–114). To support M. Lytvyn's thesis, I. Datskiv also presented several arguments (Datskiv, 2009a, p. 347–349).

The Eastern Galician issue at the Paris Peace Conference is analyzed against the backdrop of changing military-political situations in Eastern Europe and the diplomatic maneuvering of the ZUNR government. Researchers focus on aspects such as the discussion of the situation in Eastern Galicia at the meetings of the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference and the “Polish Commission”, the participation of representatives of the officially unrecognized ZUNR in debates at the meetings of the “Inter-Allied Commission for the Conclusion of the Armistice between Poland and Ukraine”, and at the meeting of the Council of Four on May 21, 1919. Other areas of focus include the military-diplomatic missions of the victorious countries to Poland and Galicia, the decision of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs on June 25, 1919, regarding the occupation of Eastern Galicia by Polish troops, the development of a draft Statute for Eastern Galicia, the differences in the policies of the governments of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the ZUNR, the Warsaw Declaration of December 2, 1919, and the contradictions between the delegations of the great powers regarding the fate of the Western Ukrainian lands (Adadurov, 1995; Vasiuta, 1996; Horodnia, 1995; Makarchuk, 1995; Pavliuk, 1999; Karpenko, 2001, p. 401–437; Kuras, 2003, p. 350–395; Krasivskyi, 2008, p. 260–295).

The subject of intense focus by the authors was the attempts of Yevhen Petrushevych and his foreign ministry to use the Riga Peace Conference for their own purposes. This issue was most fully

explored by T. Halytska-Didukh, who, in her articles and candidate dissertation (Halytska-Didukh, 2001), demonstrated the efforts of the ZUNR government to prevent the Polish delegation from legitimizing the incorporation of Ukrainian lands into Poland and, in general, to prevent the Eastern Galician issue from being discussed at the Riga Conference. To achieve these goals, Galician diplomats conducted unofficial negotiations with the Soviet delegation, issued notes and memoranda. However, the Russian Federation government viewed Eastern Galicia through the lens of the world revolution concept, and thus, the tactics of the Soviet delegation regarding the Eastern Galician issue during the Soviet-Polish negotiations were constantly changing.

An important component of the ZUNR government's activity on the international stage was American policy. This issue was thoroughly researched by O. Pavliuk and P. Hutsal. In the monograph by the former author (Pavliuk, 1996), the U.S. policy in Eastern Europe, the activities of Ukrainian diplomatic missions in the United States led by Y. Bachynskyi, L. Tsehelskyi, and L. Myshuga, as well as their connections with the diaspora, are highlighted. In the work of the latter (Hutsal, 2005), the forms, methods, and directions of activity of the Ukrainian diaspora in North America and the practical results of its support for the struggle for Ukrainian statehood and unity are analyzed.

Researchers demonstrated unanimity in their assessments of the final decision made by the victorious powers regarding the fate of Eastern Galicia. According to M. Kuhutiak, the creation of a Western Ukrainian state did not align with the selfish plans of the major European powers (Kuhutiak, 2002, p. 198). O. Karpenko interpreted the decision of the Council of Ambassadors on March 14, 1923, as yet another criminal act against the Ukrainian people (Karpenko, 2001, p. 571). R. Symonenko holds the same opinion (Kuras, 2003, p. 466). S. Makarchuk, discussing the achievements of the national-democratic revolution, noted that the ZUNR became a factor in international relations. "One of the positive consequences of this", he stated, "was the well-known Curzon Line. From 1919 to 1945, it kept the Ukrainian question on the agenda of the policies of Poland, the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain, France, and the United Nations" (Makarchuk, 1997, p. 183).

After 1989, significant changes occurred in the study of the topic in Poland. This is evidenced, at the very least, by the appearance of specialized monographic works. Most importantly, the authors supplemented the achievements of their predecessors with a greater amount of illustrative material and new generalizations. At the same time, a very pronounced Polonocentric bias in the research is noticeably more evident compared to the previous historiographic period.

For example, P. Żurawski vel Grajewski provided a general assessment of the Ukrainian question in its Galician and Dnipro-region aspects. In particular, he pointed out that at the Paris Peace Conference, it was considered secondary by the major powers and was addressed in the context of other issues. Evidence of this is the fact that the future of Eastern Galicia was discussed in the sessions of the Commission on Polish Affairs (Żurawski vel Grajewski, 2017, p. 72). One can partly agree with the author's interpretation of the reasons behind the diplomatic defeat of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic: the Polish advantage on the war fronts and the differing hierarchy of primary goals among Ukrainian politicians (Żurawski vel Grajewski, 2017, p. 74). L. Mrocza expressed himself more specifically on this matter: for the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan, Eastern Galicia held little significance, but it turned out to be a useful tool for exerting pressure on Poland. This was the main reason they were in no hurry to make a final decision on the fate of the region (Mrocza, 1998, p. 180). However, one cannot agree with Mrocza's opinion on the motives behind incorporating Eastern Galicia into Poland. Without sufficient argumentation, he writes about the supposedly flawed social and professional structure of the Ukrainian population in the region, the large percentage of Polish and Jewish minorities, and the Ukrainian politicians' underestimation of international agreements that were supposed to ensure the existence of states with developed economies, governance institutions, and social structures. Contrary to historical truth, the author labels this territory as "disputed" and emphasizes the superiority of Polish science and culture (Mrocza, 1998, p. 211–213). Żurawski vel Grajewski also praised Polish "cultural superiority." "The final result of the Ukrainian efforts," he wrote, "was such that Ukrainians found themselves among the nations dissatisfied with and hostile to the Versailles order, and therefore, given the comparatively low level of political culture among broad circles of Ukrainian society, this created conditions for the development of a radical nationalist movement oriented toward revisionist states" (Żurawski vel Grajewski, 2017, p. 140).

The well-known Ukrainian studies scholar Ya. Pisulinski devoted considerable attention to Józef Piłsudski's eastern policy. In his view, the Ukrainian side gained a number of benefits from the Warsaw Agreement of 1920. Above all, this treaty gave Ukrainians another chance to establish their own state. Even assuming its actual weakness and dependence on Poland, it nevertheless "created better opportunities for national development than under Bolshevik rule." In addition, the author suggests that under such circumstances, Poland's policy toward the population of Western Ukraine would have been more lenient (Pisuliński, 2004b, p. 246).

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Taras Hrynevych devoted his research to studying the problem of the development of the political movement of national democracy in Poland in the interwar period (Hrynevych, 2017). Important aspects of the functioning of the Ukrainian Civic Committee in providing assistance (social care, legal protection, medical support) to Ukrainian prisoners of war, interned soldiers, and war invalids, as reflected in the pages of the newspaper *Dilo*, were studied by V. Vyzdryk and K. Kurylyshyn (Vyzdryk & Kurylyshyn, 2022). V. Ilnytskyi and M. Haliv published and analyzed documents of the Polish police (1925) containing descriptions of the political and civic views of Ukrainian and Jewish teachers in the Drohobych district (Ilnytskyi & Haliv, 2017). The study of the 1925 Polish police documents was continued by M. Haliv and A. Ohar, who, based on these materials, examined the political and civic views of the Greek Catholic clergy of the Drohobych district in the Lviv Voivodeship of the Polish Republic (Haliv & Ohar, 2018).

Conclusions. Summing up the analysis of historiographical sources, it can be stated that during the 1920s–1930s, a process of accumulating primary knowledge on the subject took place. The works of active participants in the Ukrainian liberation struggles were mainly polemical in nature; nonetheless, their value lies in posing the key issues. Polish authors' writings were strongly influenced by political factors. The development of the topic in the postwar decades was marked by notable variability. The few works by representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora followed the state-centered direction of national historiography, while Soviet historical science was characterized by a class-based and party-oriented approach to the issue. In contrast, the works of scholars from People's Poland were distinguished by a high level of analysis and impartiality, showing relatively little dependence on Marxist doctrines. The modern stage of research (1990s–2000s) has seen a significant increase in scholarly knowledge, particularly within the Ukrainian historical narrative. However, the dominant trend in the publications of Polish historians remains a pronounced “Polonocentrism”.

At the same time, the scholarly problem requires further investigation. In particular, greater attention should be paid to the internal factors contributing to the weakness of the foreign policy of the ZUNR. The history of Western Ukrainian diplomacy through the lens of biographical studies has promising prospects. Issues related to the activities of the Entente missions in Eastern Galicia remain relevant. There is a pressing need to write a synthetic work that would reflect all the nuances of ZUNR's activity on the international stage, especially during its Viennese period. It would be beneficial if, in Polish historiography, the diplomacy of the ZUNR eventually became a separate subject of research.

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