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THE POLISH-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT IN THE CARPATHIAN AREA OF OUN (1943-1945)¹

Abstract. In the article one of the most difficult periods in the common history of the Ukrainian and Polish peoples has been considered, namely – the years of the Second World War, which time manifested the peak of the Polish-Ukrainian opposition. The Polish-Ukrainian opposition with its peak in 1943-1944 took place at the military-organizational level (between the Ukrainian nationalists and Polish underground) and everyday life level (between the Ukrainian and Polish population, first of all, rural). The causes and effects of the Polish-Ukrainian opposition are singled out. It is established that the culmination of the Polish-Ukrainian opposition in Karpatskyi krai fell on the first half, and some of its separate actions fell on the second half of 1944. So, in the end of 1944 – beginning of 1945 the Polish underground on the West Ukrainian lands practically ceased to exist, and the Polish-Ukrainian opposition, in particular, its military part, went into recession.

Key words: the Polish-Ukrainian opposition, Karpatskyi krai of OUN, the Ukrainian Liberation Movement, Polish Armija Krajowa.

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ПОЛЬСЬКО-УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ КОНФЛІКТ У КАРПАТСЬКОМУ КРАЇ ОУН (1943-1945)

Анотація. У статті розглядається один із найбільш складних періодів у спільній історії українського і польського народів – роки Другої світової війни, оскільки саме це був період найбільшого польсько-українського протистояння. Польсько-українське протистояння, яке досягло свого піку у 1943-1944 рр. відбувалося як на військово-організаційному (між українським націоналістичним і польським підпіллям), так і побутовому рівнях (між українським і польським населенням, передовсім сільським). Виокремлені причини та наслідки польсько-українського протистояння. Встановлено, що його кульмінація у Карпатському краї припадала на першу половину 1944 р., окремі ж акції припадали на другу половину 1944 р. Відтак уже наприкінці 1944 р. на початку 1945 р. польське підпілля на західноукраїнських землях практично перестало існувати, а польсько-українське протистояння, особливо його військова сторона пішло на спад.

Ключові слова: польсько-українське протистояння, Карпатський край ОУН, український визвольний рух, Армія Крайова.

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ПОЛЬСКО-УКРАИНСКИЙ КОНФЛИКТ В КАРПАТСКОМ КРАЕ ОУН (1943-1945)

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается один из наиболее сложных периодов в общей истории украинского и польского народов – годы Второй мировой войны, поскольку именно это был период наибольшего польско-украинского противостояния. Польско-украинское протистояние, которое достигло своего пика в 1943-1944

гг. происходило как на военно-организационном (между украинским националистическим и польским подпольем), так и бытовом уровнях (между украинским и польским населением, в первую очередь сельским). Выделены причины и последствия польско-украинского противостояния. Установлено, что его кульминация в Карпатском крае пришлось на первую половину 1944 г., отдельные же акции пришлось на вторую половину 1944 г. Уже в конце 1944 – в начале 1945 гг. польское подполье на западноукраинских землях практически перестало существовать, а польско-украинское противостояние, особенно его военная сторона, пошло на спад.

Ключевые слова: польско-украинское противостояние, Карпатский край ОУН, украинское освободительное движение, Армия Крайова.

The most difficult period in the common history of the Ukrainian and Polish peoples took place in the years of the Second World War, when the Ukrainian and Polish opposition reached its peak. However, it would be wrong to assert that the Polish-Ukrainian conflict began in 1940s – 1950s. It has roots yet in the XVII-XVIII centuries. History knows of many small and large conflicts which arose between Poles and Ukrainians during centuries, however, in the first half of the XX c. they reached an apogee.

The analysis of the sources and recent researches. Separate aspects of a problem have been considered, first of all, in the generalising works of Ivan Bilas, Anatoliy Kentiy, Yuriy Kyrychuk, Anatoliy Rusnachenko, Ivan Patryliak (Bilas, 1994; Kentiy, 1999; Kyrychuk, 2003; Rusnachenko, 2002; Patryliak, 2012). The collective summarizing monograph of a working group of researchers on the activity OUN and UPA (OUN and УПА, 2005) is also important. On the basis of rich source base a well grounded monographic research on the Polish-Ukrainian opposition in 1943-1944 has been written by V. Vyatrovych (Vyatrovych, 2016; Vyatrovych, 2003; Vyatrovych, 2011). Most fully the question of functioning of the Polish underground, its relation with the Ukrainian liberation movement, opposition with the repressive organs have been studied by Ihor Iliushyn (Iliushyn, 2003; Iliushyn, 2001; Iliushyn, 2009). Separate publications on this problem belong to the author of this sketch (Ilnytskyi, Haliv, 2008; Ilnytskyi, Haliv, 2015: 486-499; Ilnytskyi, 2016).

The articles purpose has been to elucidate the principal causes, the course and consequences of the conflict between Poles and Ukrainians in the Carpathian area of OUN (alias Karpatskyi kraj, the territory of the former Drohobych, Transcarpathian, Stanislaviv, and Chernivtsi regions (oblasts) of UkrSSR (1943-1945).

In the year of the Second World War the freedom-loving forces of both Ukraine and Poland faced the problems of restoration of statehood. The problems were identical, but their realisation conditions had certain specificities. The reasons for the beginning of bloodshed were such: 1) the aspiration of the Polish side to restore Rzeczpospolita Polska within the borders by September, 1939 (“status quo ante bellum”), and so, to include the West Ukrainian territories; 2) a natural aspiration of Ukrainians to revive their statehood in the ethnic borders; 3) the positions of two imperialistic states, Germany and the USSR, which played the “Ukrainian” and “Polish” cards, having created conditions to start the international conflict. The aggravation of the Polish-Ukrainian relations in Galicia was also caused by the raiding departments of Soviet guerrillas. A subjective cause was the arrival to the management of both parties of persons indifferent or sceptical towards the cooperation Polish of Ukrainian peoples (Vyatrovych, 2011: 135). It is possible to agree with P. Mirchuk’s opinion, who stated the following in concern of Berlin’s actions: “[...] (Galicia [Eastern. – V. I.] [...] was attached to the Polish General Governorship for the purpose of so to fasten the Polish-Ukrainian enmity, and by both saturation and balancing of Polish-Ukrainian conflicts to neutralize anti-German struggle of the both enslaved peoples” (Mirchuk, 1991: 15).

In the time of German occupation, when the struggle of the Ukrainians became more and more fierce, the occupational power started to use the Polish-Ukrainian conflict for strengthening of mutual enmity of the two peoples. To official posts for the struggle against Ukrainians the Poles were

appointed who aspired to become stronger in their authority either for the struggle against Ukrainians, or – after the defeat of Germany – for the matter of creation of the great Polish state. The cooperation of Poles with the German occupational power and the Soviet guerrillas, and also a threat of creation of the Polish army (it is interesting, that the Poles not unreasonably accused the Ukrainians of the similar “sins”) was one of the major reasons of the conflict. The formation by the German power of the Polish police instead of the Ukrainian one, which joined UPA, became the last drop which pushed Ukrainians to the armed struggle against Poles.

At the same time, it should be specified, that in the years of the German-Soviet war the Polish-Ukrainian opposition which reached its peak in 1943-1944, took place at the military-organizational level (between the Ukrainian nationalists and Polish underground activists) and everyday life level (between the Ukrainian and Polish population, primarily, rural). Both Ukrainians and Poles, who for various reasons came into the service for the German power (the Ukrainian and Polish police), participated in the affair. Certainly, Nazis were trying to play on the Polish-Ukrainian disagreements, and they applied Polish Schutzmanns against the Ukrainians, and against the Poles used the Ukrainian “black” police. The underground gave such characteristic to the Poles: “[...] Germans found for themselves a faithful ally and an assistant in the criminal work in Ukraine in the face of the Polish imperialistic elite; the Poles, by playing on two chairs, from 1942 cooperated with Bolshevik gangs, informing them of who, what, where, when and how, thus, giving the public active into the Bolsheviks’s hands” (BSA SSU. F. 2-H. Opus 110 (1954). Case 2. V. 6. P. 160-161). The underground workers submitted particularly many examples of cooperation of Poles with German and Soviet administrations which, basically, consisted in deliveries up of conscious Ukrainians (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 24. P. 186-188; V. 35. P. 159; V. 56. P. 81). In 1943 the UNS reports underlined the exclusive diligence of the Polish servicemen before Germans and their help in arresting of Ukrainians (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 79. P. 19). In some areas, such as near Dolyna, the village of Lukavers in Zhuravno land, Stryi, the woods near Maidan on Drohobych land etc. the Poles had common concealment places which started to combat against UNS. The first operations between UNS and the Poles began in the autumn of 1943. The Germans actively used Poles (foresters and wood workers) for collecting intelligence against UNS. That forced UNS departments to carry out operations in liquidating of the Poles around the basing of UNS units. “A rejoicing phenomenon comes with the beginning of 1945. The Poles who at first had joined the cooperation with Bolsheviks against Ukrainians, start to be bit reoriented. Little by little, their reason takes the place above their feelings. Poles start to understand that Bolsheviks are their enemy as well as of Ukrainians. Already with the beginning of 1945 the former AK starts searching contacts with UPA in the nearby territories” (Chyzhevskiy, 1948: 103).

The illustration of events in 1943, when UNS began to struggle against Poles. Near the village of Maidan the UNS planned to create a training base, but the Poles informed the Gestapo and on 8 July 1943 the Germans killed 10 OUN members in the fight (Zbroina borot’ba, 31). In particular, on 10 April 1944 the “Haidamaky” group and a district concealment of the strength of 110 fighters destroyed a Polish colony of Tomashivtsi, killing 40 Poles and burning down 300 estates. It was the answer to the murder of 2 members of OUN by a Polish concealment members in the village of Holyn’ in Kalush district (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 34. P. 260). On 13 April 1944, 17 Poles and 15 Germans arrived in the village of Mshanets. The Polish police cruelly scoffed at the population, killing two and heavily beating others (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 24. P. 108). On 18 May 1944 to the village of Vilshanyk in Sambir land eight Gestapo members and 15 Poles arrived, who had a task to catch as many Ukrainians as possible. They captivated all without exception, whoever came into their view (mostly, young men). However, the inhabitants of the village recognized Mikhal Pikhovych, the Pole from Cherkhava, who was dressed in the German uniform. During the operation the Poles shouted: “We must destroy all Ukrainian bandits and guerrilla warriors” (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 35. P. 192). In May, 1944, in Zhydachiv land, a pacification action was carried out by the Poles (UPA documents confirm it to be provocative) with the attraction of a 3-

thousand strong department of Kalmyks. During the action in the village of Boyanivka 140 villagers were arrested and 2 persons were killed, 40 women were raped; in the village of Dubravrsi of the same district 85 people got arrested, 2 were killed, 2 persons were wounded, and 60 women were raped; in the village of Melnychi 110 were arrested, 4 were killed, 40 women were raped. During the operation it appeared that a part of the Poles had been dressed as Kalmyks (their conversations in the Polish language revealed them) (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 35. P. 195). On the other hand, the conspiracy flat of the Polish underground in Boryslavska street in Drohobych (the Garchynsky family's house) by an order of the Germans was captured by the Ukrainian police (on 8 July 1944) (Budzycski, 2005: 261). The majority of the anti-Polish actions were conducted in reply to the anti-Ukrainian ones carried out by the Poles. An interesting document has survived on the anti-Polish actions on the territory of Stanislaviv region of OUN in March – April, 1944, in which 19 OUN and UPA are described. For example, on 11 April 1944 the group of L. Hrynyshak-”Dovbush” destroyed 31 Poles in the village of Rafailiv, who had informed on “Dzvin”, the regional leader of OUN, who was shot by Germans (Patryliak, 2012: 421). In general, in these 19 anti-Polish actions 367 Poles were killed (Patryliak, 2012: 421).

The underground workers submit particularly many examples about the cooperation of Poles with German and Soviet administrations, which basically consisted in deliveries up of conscious Ukrainians (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 24. P. 186-188; V. 35. P. 159; V. 56. P. 81). In 1943 reports of UNS emphasized the evident craving of the Poles to serve as well as possible before Germans and their help in arresting Ukrainians. So, on 28 November 1943, in the result of the Polish help, the Gestapo arrested five Ukrainians Komarno district (the informer's name was Slonovsky)” (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 79. P. 19). Another document, “The protocol of the case of beating of the chief of militia in the village of Korchyn in Skolie district testifies that on 2 August 1943 the village militia arrested two Poles. On the next day the Hungarian units arrived and several civil Poles with them. They arrested the militia chieftain Bohdan Saika and beat him and “all the present” with rifle butts. During the like operations, the punitive groups rushed into houses and beat all whom they found there, plundering all. As it appeared later, in the Hungarian uniforms the local Poles were dressed. Similar cases took place in Tukhlia, Korostov, Slavsk (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 34. P. 204). Such actions only strengthened the mutual enmity of Ukrainians and Poles. OUN's state security conducted an investigation and, as a consequence, the Poles involved in the case were destroyed. On 29 August 1943 in the village of maidan in Drohobych district an OUN concealment destroyed 14 Poles. Among the destroyed was forester Jan Pittner who informed Gestapo (Kresova knyha, 2013: 170). On 15 September 1943 in the village of Limna in Turka district a UNS group attacked a tutorial establishment under the patronage of Franciscan sisters from Warsaw (UNS but took away clothes and foodstuffs). After that, the nuns with their children left for Warsaw (Kresova knyha, 2013: 178).

The Polish underground in the struggle with OUN and UPA often resorted to provocations, which caused the anti-Ukrainian repressions by the German occupational power. An example of it can be the attack of a Polish concealment of a weapon and ammunition stock that was at the railway station in Ryhtychi. This operation on 25 May 1944 was carried out by the “tsikhotsiemny” (such was the name of the emissaries of the Polish emigratory government sent for the realisation of secret missions), called Jatsek Przetozhky-”Otset”, who since February, 18 lived in Drohobyche under the name of Edward Lipinsky. Before carrying out of this operation a distracting maneuver had been done, that is, an attack on the bank in Drohobych. Wishing to turn the attention away from themselves and to direct all actions of nazis against the Ukrainian nationalists, the participants of the attack in Rykhtychi talked only in the Ukrainian language. However, Przetozhky was killed in the operation, and in his pocket the Ukrainian documents were found. Thus, Germans cruelly revenged Ukrainians, when on 27 May in Drohobych they executed 20 Ukrainian hostages. By the way, the OUN underground, considering, what the operation in Rykhtychi was conducted by an unknown

Ukrainian concealment, stole J. Przetozhky's body and with honour buried him behind the "Bryhidky" area in Drohobych as the Ukrainian insurgent (Budzycki, 2005: 256-260).

The AK command organised also individual retaliatory actions against the Ukrainian nationalists (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 34. P. 192). In Bytkiv (Nadvirna district), before the arrival of Bolsheviks, the Poles organized an armed 400 strong department which conducted armed attacks on Ukrainian villages. After the arrival and restoration of the Soviet power, the department did not stop its of activity. The basic work consisted in carrying out of arrests of conscious Ukrainians, interrogations and even executions. In the reply to it, on 14 April 1944 a 85 strong department of UPA made a retaliatory operation against the Poles in Bytkiv. As a result of the fight, 100 Poles and 40 Bolsheviks were killed (BSA SSU were lost. F. 13. Case 376. V. 34. P. 87).

For the protection of Polish villages against the attacks of OUN, the Poles created concealments, which made armed resistance to attacks on villages and themselves made attacks on Ukrainian villages, which caused the creation in the Ukrainian villages of the so-called commands of self-defence (BSA SSU. F. 5. Case 50970. P. 31). In an underground document this is remarked: "The Poles on the territory directly close to the front (Stanislaviv land) even before the arrival of Bolsheviks had started to organise armed departments which were used to terrorize the Ukrainian population. Poles have not got rid yet of bravery and on the West Ukrainian lands (ZUZ) go on cooperating with each invader, only to destroy Ukrainians" (BSA SSU. F. 13. Case 376. V. 34. P. 61).

The Ukrainian insurgents, certainly, did not sit quietly, but conducted anti-Polish "retaliatory actions". According to R. Ofitsynskyi, the Ukrainian anti-Polish struggle of 1943 in Galicia did not have a mass character of a large-scale organised action, and occurred in the form of sudden attacks (Ofitsynskyi, 2002: 39-40). So, on 13 April 1944 a 100 strong Polish department attacked the village of Kopanky at Kalush district. The Poles started to heap the stolen property upon carts, at the same time burning down the houses of the Ukrainian peasants. At this time, a 28 strong unit approached the village which, having divided into two parts, made an ambush. During the departure of the Poles from the village, the two parties started to fire, and as a result of it, 80 Poles perished (some part drowned in a small river nearby. (BSA SSU were lost. F. 13. Case 376. V. 24. P. 233). On 2 April 1944 combat unit of Stanislaviv regional leadership and 50 strong department "Haidamaky" carried out the action on the Polish colony of Zemianok during which time 40 Poles were liquidated and 52 estates were burnt down. The action was carried out for an attack of a Polish combat subunit on 2 couriers whom passed across the wood near this colony. In 1945 in the village of Rivne in Perehinsk district 10 persons of Polish nationality were burnt in their houses (BSA SSU. F. 2-H. Opus 19 (1959). Case 4. P. 285). On 30 September 1944 the village of Liatske-Shlkhethni in Tysmenets district the some 50 strong group of "Rizun" an attack was carried out in which result 6 Polish families (10 persons) were killed (BSA SSU. F. 2-H. Opus 54 (1953). Case 3. V. 1. P. 23). In 19 October 1943 near the village of Broshniv Osada the siege of the combat unit of UNS destroyed 18 Poles-wood workers who went from the instructing courses in Dolyna (Kresova knyha, 2013: 181). That is to demonstrate, that UNS actively purged the territory from the Polish enemy element which informed Germans and prevented to develop UNS forces. Steep rates of the new actions against Poles began in Stanislaviv and Drohobych lands in spring of 1944. On 23 October 1944 the companies of "Skuba" and "Nedobytyi" destroyed 62 Poles, 1 Russian, 14 Ukrainians in the village of Triytsia in Stanislaviv region as an answer to the fact of many Poles being in the rows of "hawklets" and at war against Ukrainians (BSA SSU. F. 5. Case 67579. V. 8. P. 14-15).

OUN combat units actively destroyed Poles who co-operated with the Soviet power. The Ukrainian underground also carried out separate operations against representatives of the Soviet administration and those who co-operated with it. As L. Shankovskyi underlines, the Ukrainian insurgents warned Poles before each action of terrorism with appeals to them to leave the Ukrainian lands and to move to Poland (Shankovskyi, 1996: 561).

Unfortunately, for today there is no exact data about the quantity of the perished Poles and Ukrainians in general and in Karpatskyi krai in particular. However, L. Shankovskyi, when talking about Galicia on the whole, has counted up the next: in the first half of 1944 by the UPA and Ukrainian underground initiatives 201 “retaliatory” action were conducted against Polish population, in which 5 100 Poles were killed, a number of the Polish villages and colonies were destroyed (Shankovskyi, 1996: 562). The Polish historians (in particular, H. Hrutsiuk) assert that by the middle of 1944 owing to the operations of the Ukrainian armed formations in East Galicia 9 490 persons perished (the surnames of 2 902 persons are known), of them 3 280 perished in Lviv region, 3 825 in Ternopil region, 2 385 in Stanislaviv region (OUN and UPA, 2005: 289). On the losses of the Polish side in Volhynia in the result of the Polish-Ukrainian opposition also are presented with ambiguity: V. Semashko’s and E. Semashko’s resultive figure is 36 650; H. Motyka’s is 40 000 – 60 000; Shch. Siekierka’s, G. Komansky’s and T. Bulchatsky’s is 60 000; G. Hrytsiuk’s is 35 000 – 60 000; A. Shchesnjak’s is 15 000; S. Makarchuk’s is 50 000; O. Laver’s is 20 000 (Zil, 2013: 142). The quantity of Ukrainians lost in Galicia from the hands Polish combat units by July, 1944, L. Shankovskyi counts as 521 person (Shankovskyi, 1996: 556). According to I. Pushchuk, in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict of the Ukrainians killed by Poles (Schutzmans, etc., amount to 18 000, with Kholm and Pidliashia lands the figure grows to 21 000; the number of the Poles fallen from the hands of Ukrainians (UPA members, criminals with no relation to the liberation movement, by unknown persons, who might have been not Ukrainians at all, etc.) totals 13 000 (Pushchuk, 2013: 216). According to H. Motyka, in 1943 – 1948, that is for all period of the armed Polish-Ukrainian conflict 15 000 – 20 000 Ukrainians lost lives. The majority of them were civilians, women and children among them. Of them 10 000 – 12 000 Ukrainians met their death in the present Poland’s lands. So, on Volhynia and in East Galicia some 3 000 to 8 000 Ukrainians were lost (H. Motyka, 2003: 54). According to modern researcher I. Patryliak in Galicia during the Polish-Ukrainian conflict some 15 000 Poles were lost. At the same time, the Ukrainian population of Galicia lost 3000-4000 persons. To sum up: in the territories of Kholm land, Hrubeshiv lands, Berestia lands, Polisia, Volyn and Galicia during 1942-1944 13 – 16 000 Ukrainians were killed (Patryliak, 2012: 425). Certainly, the aforementioned figure is incomplete and needs further researches.

The period of 1940s – 1950s came to be particularly tragica for the two peoples. Mutual Polish-Ukrainian opposition in the end led to the establishment of the communistic regime in Poland and, and Ukraine for a decade lost a possibility of a wide-scale struggle for its statehood. The culmination of the Polish-Ukrainian opposition in Karpatskyi krai fell on the first half, and certain separate action fell on the other half of 1944. So, the Polish-Ukrainian opposition, in particular its military side, after the arrival of Bolsheviks went into recession. AK and UPA appeared in the face of much more serious enemy. For this reason, the article provides no data about cases of mutual overcoming, just the known information on the cooperation between these structures in the Carpathian area in 1945 is presented. Already in the end this year the Polish underground on the West Ukrainian lands, practically, ceased to exist (Iliushyn, 2001: 256).

¹Публікація містить результати досліджень, проведених у рамках виконання наукового проекту “Українсько-польсько-єврейські взаємини у Східній Галичині (перша половина ХХ ст.): історичний досвід, уроки для сучасності”, що фінансується за рахунок коштів загального фонду державного бюджету. ID:95861 29.08.2017 (176-1).

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