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THE IDEA OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE PROCESS OF SOVEREIGNIZATION OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC, 1917–1918

ABSTRACT

This article examines the political, socio-economic, and military foundations of Ukraine's first modern bid for statehood during the years 19a14–1921, focusing particularly on the role of Symon Petliura and the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR). It argues that Ukraine's drive toward independence emerged not from an early separatist consensus but from the radicalization of the Russian Revolution, the collapse of imperial authority, and the Bolshevik coup of October 1917, which constituted a decisive breach of loyalty between Ukraine and the disintegrating Russian Empire. The analysis highlights three key dimensions of the Ukrainian revolutionary project: the evolution of political programs from autonomy to sovereignty; the centrality and unresolved nature of the agrarian question; and the attempted nationalization (Ukrainization) of the armed forces as a substitute for absent state structures. Particular attention is paid to the political thought and actions of Petliura, Vynnychenko, and Hrushevsky, whose differing ideological commitments shaped both the possibilities and limitations of the Ukrainian struggle for self-determination. While external powers viewed an independent Ukraine as incompatible with their strategic interests, and internal divisions undermined the consolidation of state institutions, the revolutionary experience forged a durable idea of Ukrainian statehood. The article concludes that although the UNR ultimately failed, its legacy – especially the political agency embodied by Petliura – created a foundational narrative that resurfaced in 1991 with the successful realization of Ukrainian independence.

KEYWORDS:

Ukrainian People's Republic, Symon Petliura, Ukrainian Revolution 1917–1921, independence, autonomy, agrarian question, Ukrainization

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The military defeat and disintegration of the Russian Empire and the Habsburg Dual Monarchy in the First World War put Ukraine on the path of state and national self-determination. On 25 January 1918, the Ukrainian People's Republic (Ukrajins'ka Narodna Respublika; UNR) made its first historical attempt to proclaim its independence; this initially failed, but at the same time it marked the beginning of a development that culminated in the declaration of independence of 24 August 1991 and the referendum of 1 December 1991.

Loyalty to the Soviet Union had exhausted itself in a prolonged process of erosion, with the catastrophe of Chernobyl in 1986 and its consequences, or their cynical disregard by the Moscow leadership, contributing decisively to the delegitimization of the communist regime. There is a parallel here in that the Declaration of Independence of the Central Rada (Central'na Rada) in 1918 can also be seen as the result of renounced loyalty and changing notions of legitimacy. In addition, the UNR of the Central Rada and the Directory under the leadership of Symon V. Petliura (1879–1926)[1] is one of those chapters of Ukrainian history that are used to legitimize state and nation-building as well as to establish the identity of independent Ukraine. The use of nation-state symbols such as the tryzub (trident) as emblems, coats of arms and flags express this in a very vivid way.[2] They refer to the period of Ukrainian history that was constitutive for the emergence of modern Ukrainian statehood[3] in the field of tension between the postulates of the right to self-determination and the striving for nation-state separation.

In the following, I try to identify the ideas which underpinned the concepts of autonomy and attempts at separation in Ukraine between 1914 and 1921 and the peculiarities they showed, but I also want to look at how the national revolutionary actions of the actors were understood and how the breach of loyalty to the disintegrating Russian Empire was legitimized. Petliura's role in the UNR's war against internal and external opponents of its independence is also critically examined; not only because Petliura as a Social Democrat became the founder of modern Ukraine as a pioneer of national self-determination and as a recognized

1 For a biography, see Rudolf A. Mark, *Symon V. Petljura. Begründer der modernen Ukraine* (Paderborn: Brill/Schöningh, 2023); *Symon Petliura. Przywódca niepodległej Ukrainy*, ed. by Mirosław Szumila, 3 vols (Warszawa: Prace Polsko-Ukraińskiej Komisji dla Badania Relacji Wzajemnych w latach 1917–1921), III (2021).

2 See Wilfried Jilge, 'Exklusion oder Inklusion? Geschichtspolitik und Staatssymbolik in der Ukraine', *Osteuropa*, 53.7 (2003), 984–94.

3 See Andreas Kappeler, *Kleine Geschichte der Ukraine*, 2nd edn (München: C.H. Beck, 2000), pp. 183–86; Rudolf A. Mark, 'Die ukrainischen Gebiete 1914–1922: Krieg, Revolution, gescheiterte Staatsbildung', in *Ukraine: Geographie – Ethnische Struktur – Geschichte – Sprache und Literatur – Kultur – Politik – Bildung – Wirtschaft – Recht*, ed. by Peter Jordan, Andreas Kappeler, Walter Lukan, and Josef Vogl (Wien – Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford: Österreichische Osthefte, Sonderband 15, 2001) pp. 279–92; Jaroslav Hrycak, *Narys istoriji Ukrajiny. Formuvannja modernoji ukrajins'koji naciji XIX–XX stolittja* (Kyjiv: Geneza, 1996), pp. 164–65; interesting aspects and assessments of the struggle for independence, see *Ucraina Magna*, vol. 3: *Do 100-richchja Ukrajins'koji revoljuciji 1917–1923* rr., ed. by Valentyna Piskun (Kyjiv: Ukrajinoznavstvo. Institut Ukrajinskoji archeohrafiji ta dzhereloznavstva im. M. Hrushevskoho, 2020).

revolutionary leader, but also because he was an exceptional phenomenon among the actors and rulers in the Russian Civil War. Without Petliura and his political stamina, there would be no independent Ukraine today as a member of the European family of nations.

The analysis is limited to the following areas of activities and developments:

1. Political Programs and Political Action;
2. Socio-economic contexts;
3. Nationalization: The Ukrainization of the Armed Forces as a substitute for missing state structures.

The reasons why the Ukrainian 'sovereignization process' failed at that time and why the idea of an independent Ukrainian state could not be realized will be discussed only insofar as they are of interest for the course of the events. The developments in the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR), which was formed from the Austrian crown lands of the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, are not a subject of my attention here.[4]

1. POLITICAL PROGRAMS AND POLITICAL ACTION

The modern Ukrainian national movement is hardly conceivable without the petty-bourgeois son from Poltava and a Social Democrat, Symon Petliura, who served as Secretary General for Military Affairs (or Military Secretary) of the Central Rada in 1917 and who later fought as Supreme Otaman for the independence of Ukraine until his assassination in exile in 1926. He is the embodiment of the struggle for the national self-determination of his country; like many historical figures, he attracts both admiration and rejection, even hatred. However, Ukraine's actual independence in 1991 seems to have legitimized his aspirations and struggles in retrospect. This is why critics have become quieter and Petliura has now been admitted to the circle of Ukrainian national heroes. Especially in the 1990s, a time of difficult reorientation, his rehabilitation was pursued by historians who characterized him as an extraordinary "figure of the new Ukrainian history" and as a "symbol of the Ukrainian struggle for freedom

4 For more details see Torsten Wehrhahn, *Die Westukrainische Volksrepublik. Zu den polnisch-ukrainischen Beziehungen und dem Problem der ukrainischen Staatlichkeit in den Jahren 1918 bis 1923* (Berlin: Weißensee, 2004); Borys Tyshchyk and Oleh A. Vivcharenko, *Zachidnoukrajinska Narodna Respublika* (Kolomyja: Svit, 1993); Grzegorz Łukomski, Czesław Partacz and others, *Wojna polska-ukraińska 1918–1919. Działania bojowe – Aspekty polityczne – Kalendarium*, (Koszalin,Warszawa 1994); Maciej Kozłowski, *Między Sanem a Zbruczem. Walki o Lwów i Galicję Wschodnią 1918–1919* (Kraków, 1990); Vasyl Rasevych, 'The Western Ukrainian Peoples Republic of 1918–1919', in *The Emergence of Ukraine. Self-Determination, Occupation and War in Ukraine, 1917–1922*, ed. by Wolfram Dornik, Georgiy Kasianov and others, (Edmonton–Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2015), pp. 132–54.

and independence".[5] Moreover, since he devoted his whole life to fighting for the unity and independence of the Ukrainian people, his followers allot him a prominent place in the history of not only Ukraine but also world history.[6] At the same time, the complex historical figure Petliura is *a bête noir* – if not worse – for many Jewish people all over the world,[7] and his politics are far from being beyond criticism. To be sure, Petliura's aim was the achievement of Ukraine's national self-determination, but whether he was in favour of separation from the Russian Empire from the very beginning of his political activities is an open question.

In Ukraine's political discourse, such ideas were ventilated before the First World War but apparently did not achieve a broad effect. For instance, demands for state independence had already been discussed at the founding congress of the first modern Ukrainian party, the Ruthenian-Ukrainian Radical Party (Rus'ko-Ukrajins'ka Radikal'na Partija), in Lviv in October 1890, but they were soon replaced in the party program by the postulate for autonomy within the framework of Austria.[8] Later Julian Bachyns'kyj (1870–1940) made autonomy and independence ideas the subject of a more detailed discussion. In his work *Ukrajina irredenta*, published in the Galician capital in 1895, he examined the possibilities and development prospects of the "Ukrainian nation" and came to the conclusion that without state independence, the economic and cultural liberation of the Ukrainian people was not possible.[9] However, this also meant that – contrary to what is often portrayed in the literature – national independence was considered and conceptualized by Bachyns'kyj as a phase of transformation and not as the ultimate goal of a national teleology.[10]

A little later, Ivan Franko (1856–1916) similarly placed the aspect of liberation from external foreign economic coercion at the heart of his analysis – not least as a deliberate distancing from the federalist Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841–1895). In his article 'Beyond the Possible's, published in 1900, he states unequivocally: "The struggle for the elimination of economic exploitation must eo ipso become a struggle against the exploiters, one's own and those of others, and – if the choice is given – certainly first

5 'Vstup', in *Symon Petljura ta ukrains'ka nacional'na revoljucia. Zbirnyk prac' druhoho konkursu petljuroznavciv Ukrainy*. ed. by Vasyl' Mychal'chuk and Dmytro Stepovyk (Kyjiv: NAN, 1995), p. 8.

6 Ihor Sribnjak, 'Symon Petljura – na choli derzhavy ta vijska. Do pytannja pro pol's'ko-ukrajins'ki vzajemny 1919–1920 roki', in *Symon Petljura ta ukrains'ka nacional'na revoljucia*, p. 162; see also Volodymyr Serhijchuk, *Symon Petljura ta joho rodyna. Do 70-richchja joho trabichnoji zahybeli. Dokumenty i materialy* (Kyiv, 1996), pp. 16–18.

7 Cf. Vasyl' Ivanys, *Symon Petlyura – Prezident Ukrayiny, druhe vydannja* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1993), pp. 35–39, the first edition was published in Toronto in 1952.

8 'Prohrama Rus'ko-Ukrajins'koji Radikal'noji Partiji', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti. Dokumenty i materijali*, ed. by Taras Hunchak and Roman Sol'chanyk (N'ju-Jork: Sučasnist', 1983), I, pp. 11–12; Kerstin S. Jobst, 'Marxism and Nationalism: Julijan Bachyns'kyj and the Reception of His "Ukrajina irredenta" (1895/96) as a Concept of Ukrainian Independence?', in *Yearbooks for the History of Eastern Europe*, 45.1 (1997), p. 34.

9 Cf. Yulian Bachyns'kyj, '*Ukrajina irredenta*', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, pp. 26–33.

10 Kerstin Jobst was the first to point out the social-democratic concept of the "Ukrajina irredenta", cf. Jobst, 'Marxism and Nationalism', pp. 38–39.

against the foreign, then against one's own [...] i.e., the question of national economics of its own accord impels every nation with iron consistency to gain political independence, and in the opposite case the inevitable prospect of economic unfreedom, dwindling, pauperization, cultural stagnation and decline opens up before it".[11]

The question of national independence was discussed by the Ukrainian national activists both in the Habsburg and the Russian Empires. When the first Ukrainian party in the Tsarist Empire, the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party/RUP (Revoljucijna Ukrajins'ka Partija) was founded in 1900, in the party program Mykola Mikhnovs'kyi (1873–1924) stated the goal of an "indivisible, free and independent Ukraine from the Carpathians to the Caucasus",[12] but his postulate did not endure. With the transformation and renaming of the RUP as the Ukrainian Social Democratic Workers' Party (Ukrajins'ka Social-Demokratychna Robitnychna Partija; USDRP), this program item was abolished just three years later[13] and – as with almost all national movements in the Russian Empire – replaced by demands for autonomy rights. Mutatis mutandis, this also applied to the program of the Ukrainian parties in Galicia until the First World War.

To illustrate the dimension of the national shift of paradigm in 1917, it is helpful to look at the Ukrainian national movement on the eve of the First World War. In Ukraine, which was still dominated by agriculture under tsarist rule, the traditional upper class, the nobility, was not represented in the national movement because it was not prepared to "renounce loyalty to the state and to the Russian or Polish value system in favour of a commitment to the Ukrainian cause".[14] On the other hand, from about 1900, social climbers from Ukrainian villages made up half of the activists within the movement. This meant that the Ukrainian peasants, who identified not yet nationally but regionally in terms of landscape, were the only large social group whose primary interests were in obvious opposition to the (Russian) state and the Russian or Polish ruling class but were now gradually being included in the Ukrainian national movement.[15] However, most Ukrainian elites remained faithful to a double, even triple – namely a Russian, Ukrainian and Polish, i.e., multiple – loyalty. They were united by a loyalty to the empire underpinned by Russia, as was particularly evident

11 Ivan Franko, 'Po za mezhamy mozhlyvoho', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, p. 83.
12 Mykola Michnovs'kyj, *Samostiyna Ukraine. Prohrama Revolcijni Ukraine's party from 1900. Vstupne slovo V. Shajana* (London: Bibliotheka and Museum im. T. Shevchenko, 1967), p. 27.
13 George Y. Boshyk, 'The Rise of Ukrainian Political Parties in Russia, 1900–1907: With Special Reference to Social Democracy' (PhD Dissertation Thesis, University of Oxford, 1981), p. 68.
14 Andreas Kappeler, Der schwierige Weg zur Nation: Beiträge zur neueren Geschichte der Ukraine (Wiener Archiv für die Geschichte des Slawentums und Osteuropas, Bd. XX), (Wien–Köln–Weimar: Böhlau, 2003), p. 112.
15 Ibid. pp. 113–14; Christine D. Worobec, 'Conceptual Observations on the Russian and Ukrainian Peasantries', in *Culture, Nation, and Identity. The Ukrainian-Russian Encounter (1600–1945)*, ed. by Andreas Kappeler and others (Edmonton–Toronto, 2003), p. 267.

among the non-Russian functional elites from Finland to the Baltic provinces to the Caucasus and Central Asia.[16] Names such as Carl Gustav Emil von Mannerheim (1867–1951), Pavlo Petrovych Skoropadsky (1873–1945) or Mufti Muchamediar Sultanov (1886–1915)[17] are examples of numerous others.

The leaders and ideologues of the Ukrainian movement, on the other hand, came from the urban and rural intelligentsia, a narrow layer of graduates of middle or higher educational institutions who found their livelihood mainly in the liberal professions as employees and middle civil servants.[18] Volodymyr Vynnychenko (1880–1951) and Petliura – the most prominent representatives of the Ukrainian national movement – represent this social group in an almost typical way. Before the outbreak of war, they embodied a rudimentary movement, numbering a few thousand supporters or members.[19] Among these, ideas of autonomy and federalism prevailed, i.e., of a transformation of the Russian Empire into a democratic Russian Republic that would guarantee the national right of self-determination of non-Russian peoples.[20]

Symon Petliura was not initially a Ukrainian separatist who pursued secession from the Tsarist Empire at all costs. At the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, he joined the chorus of the Russian intelligentsia, which initially regarded the world war as a "war of hope"[21] that united all subjects around the tsar's throne. After the expected victory over the Central Powers, it was assumed that constitutional reforms and far-reaching modernizations would renew Russia's political and social life and bring about the desired change. The manifesto promulgated on 14 August 1914 by the commander-in-chief of the tsarist troops, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, promised reunification and autonomy to the Poles, but it was also interpreted as a promise for the other peoples and nationalities of the tsarist empire. In other words, the rebirth of Russia and her political modernisation were seen in a close context with the national emancipation of the peoples of the entire empire, who would therefore fight for a common goal.[22]

16 Cf. Andreas Kappeler, *Russia as a MultiEthnic Empire: Origin – History – Decay* (Munich, 1992), pp. 262–64.
17 Cf. Arkadij Tichonov, *Katoliki, musul'mane i iudei Rossijskoj Imperii v poslednye chetverti XVIII – nachala XX v., 2 pererabot i dop.* (S.-Petersburg: Izd. S-Peterburgskogo univ. 2008), pp. 232–33.
18 Kappeler, *Der schwierige Weg*, pp. 110–11.
19 *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v nakanune XX-go veka*, ed. L. Martov and A. Potresov, vol. 3, bk. 5: *Partii – ich sostav, razvitie i projavlenie v massovom dvizhenii, na vyborach i v Dume* (St. Peterburg, 1914), p. 298.
20 See Tetjana Horban', 'Ideja sobornosti v ukrains'kij dumci pershoi chetverti XX st.', in *Ukrains'kyj Istorychnyj Žhurnal*, 6 (465) (2005), 95–102 (p. 98); Oleksandr Rejent and Bohdan Janyšyn, 'Ukrajina v period Peršoji svitovoji vijny: istoriohrafičnyj analiz', *Ukrains'kyj Istorychnyj Žhurnal*, 4 (2004), 3–37 (p. 17); Mark fon Chagen, 'Velikaja vojna i iskusstvennoe usilenie ėtnicheskogo samouznanie v Rossijskoj imperii', in *Rossija i pervaja mirovaja vojna: (materialy mezhdunarodnogo nauchnogo kollokviuma)*, ed. by Nikolaj Smirnov (St. Petersburg: Bulanin, 1999), pp. 385–405 (p. 388); Ivan L. Rudnytsky, 'The Fourth Universal and Its Ideological Antecedants', in *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*, ed. by Taras Hunczak (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 191–92.
21 Vladimir Noskov, '"Vojna, v kotoruju my verim": nachalo pervoj mirovoj vojny v vosprijatii dukhovnoj ėlity Rossii', in *Rossiya i pervaja mirovaja vojna*, pp. 326–39 (p. 335); Józef Chlebowczyk, *Między dyktatem, realiami a prawem do samostanowienia: prawo do samookreślenia i problem granic we wschodniej Europie Środkowej w pierwszej wojnie światowej oraz po jej zakończeniu* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1988), p. 186.
22 See Noskov, '"Vojna, v kotoruju my verim"', p. 336.

Petliura, then editor of the Russian-language journal *Ukrainskaya zhizn'*, the official press organ of the organized Ukrainians of the tsarist empire, published in Moscow since 1912, sounded the same horn. In a special edition of this journal on the outbreak of war, he expressed the opinion that, in view of the prevailing truce and the declarations of loyalty of all peoples subject to the tsar, the Ukrainians remaining silent or standing aside would harm their national interests. He defended them against insinuations that they were inclined towards an 'Austrian orientation' and rejected accusations that they represented an uncertain element. The Ukrainians, he argued, had always oriented their national development within the borders of the Tsarist Empire and in a close alliance with its peoples. They would not deviate from this even in war and would not seek to achieve a solution to their national question by means of adventurous actions. Although the war appeared particularly tragic for the Ukrainians as they lived on both sides of the fronts, Petliura emphasized that "at the moment of the extraordinarily severe test to which our national feeling is now subjected, we must, including in our responsibility towards our national development, show understanding of current events, sound political sense, and an organized will of the nation, which is connected with a thousand ties – blood, kinship, economic and historical – to the country that now stands against Germany and Austria-Hungary [...] The Ukrainians [...] fulfil their civic duty to Russia [...] not only on the battlefield [...] but also as citizens who do everything within the measure of their strength and ability [...]". He did not conceal the longer-term benefit of such an attitude on the part of the Ukrainians because, he continued, it would change the attitude of Russians towards Ukrainian affairs and "in the perspective of solving the national question in Russia, the Ukrainian question will also be put on the agenda". He made similar statements elsewhere, expressing his conviction that the Central Powers would lose the war and that the Ukrainians should therefore focus their hopes and plans on Russia and its Western allies.[23]

Petliura himself played his part in proving the loyalty of the Ukrainians towards the Russian empire. Until 1917, he had a not insignificant career in the front aid organization of the Zemstva Union, for which he finally served as deputy plenipotentiary of this support institution on the Western Front.

Loyal to their state, the Dual Monarchy, the Ukrainians were also loyal to the Austrian crown land of Galicia. Just as their compatriots on the other side of the Zbruch regarded Vienna and Budapest as enemies, so

23 'Vijna i Ukrajinci', in *Symon Petljura. Statti, lysty, dokumenty. Vydano v trydcjatu richnicju z dnja smerty Symona Petljury 1926–1956*, ed. by Ljubov Draževs'ka and others (New York: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the US, 1956), pp. 184–87; see also Rudolf A. Mark, *Symon Petljura,und die UNR. Vom Sturz des Hetmans Skoropads'kyj bis zum Exil in Polen* (Berlin, 1988), pp. 20–23.

the Galicians apostrophized Russia and the Tsars as enemies of the Ukrainians and their national rights. Unlike the Ukrainians of Russia, most of them wanted the separation, which Petliura and others could not publicly demand. In an official declaration of the Supreme Ukrainian Council (Holovna Ukrajins'ka Rada) on 3 August 1914 in Lviv, they invoked history and justified their postulate of independence: "The Russian tsars broke the Treaty of Perejaslav,[24] by which they committed themselves to respect the independence of Ukraine, and enslaved free Ukraine. For three hundred years, the policy of the Tsarist Empire pursued the goal of robbing subjugated Ukraine of its national soul and making the Ukrainian people part of the Russian people. An ukaz of the tsar deprived the Ukrainian people of their most sacred right – the right of the mother tongue. In today's Tsarist Russia, Ukrainians are the most oppressed people... And that is why our path is clear [...] The victory of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy will be our victory. And the greater Russia's defeat, the faster the hour of Ukraine's liberation will strike [...] May the sun of free Ukraine rise over the ruins of the Tsarist Empire".[25] No wonder, then, that the Council enjoyed the support of Vienna and, not least, Berlin – similar to the League for the Liberation of Ukraine (Sojuz vyzvolennja Ukrajiny), which was also founded a little later in the Galician capital by emigrants from Russia.[26] As allies, they wanted to support the Central Powers' plans to decompose the Russian Empire by revolutionizing Ukraine.[27]

The break with Russia, the separation of Ukraine in 1918, was, however, the result of not a systematically pursued policy but of the radically changing internal and external situation of the crumbling empire with the October coup of the Bolsheviki. The Central Rada, which was constituted after the February Revolution of 1917, had no other option. Its most prominent politicians and ideological masterminds, the left-wing social democrat Vynnychenko and, above all, the renowned historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky (1866–1934), did not pursue a policy of independence, despite continuous disputes over the demarcation of powers between the Rada in Kyiv and the Provisional Government in Petrograd. They could and wanted to imagine a self-determined Ukraine only as an autonomous republic in a federally organized democratic Russian republic, or as Hrushevsky put it in September 1917 at the Congress of Peoples in Kyiv: For the Ukrainians, it could be about not independence but about becoming a member

24 An argument already put forward in Michnovs'kyj's 'Samostijna Ukrajina', cf. also Horban', 'Ideja sobornosti', p. 97.
25 'Polityčni zasady Holovnoji Ukrains'koji Rady', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, pp. 211–15 (pp. 212–13); cf. Horban', 'Ideja sobornosti', p. 99.
26 'Our pljatforma', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, pp. 217–18.
27 Cf. Claus Remer, *Die Ukraine im Blickfeld Deutscher Interessen. Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1917/18*, (Frankfurt: European University Publications, 1997), passim; Mark, 'Die ukrainischen Gebiete', pp. 280–81.

of a federation that would lead to a federation of Europe and eventually one of the whole world.[28] In the founding documents of the Central Rada and also in the Third Universal of 7 November 1917, by which the UNR was proclaimed, there are corresponding stipulations: The All-Russian Constituent Assembly, which was yet to be convened, was to determine the final form of the democratic republic.

With the overthrow of the Bolsheviks in Petrograd, the breaking of the promise made at the Congress of Nationalities in November 1917 to grant national self-determination, and the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in January 1918 by the communists, there seemed to be no alternative to separation. Consequently, the independence of the UNR was proclaimed with the Fourth Universal on 12/25 January 1918. At the same time, the Ukrainian revolutionaries turned to the Central Powers, with whom a peace and cooperation treaty was signed in Brest-Litovsk on 9 February 1918, by which the UNR became a subject of international law recognized by the Central Powers.[29]

What reasons, factors, perception and developments determined and legitimized this national paradigm shift?

1. The previous recipient of loyalty, the Empire and the Provisional Government, had been eliminated by a revolution or coup d'état.
2. Even less than the Provisional Government, which, as the Kornilov putsch showed, could always be sure of the loyalty of the Rada,[30] the Bolsheviks were prepared to limit their claim to power in favour of the UNR's autonomy rights. Shortly after the October Revolution, they tried to overthrow the Rada and occupy Ukraine militarily. Since December 1917, a Soviet counter-government had been in office in Kharkiv.
3. Since the states of the Entente, France and Great Britain considered Ukraine's independence to be incompatible with the interests of their Russian partner, they were not prepared to recognize the UNR under international law.[31] Therefore, the UNR turned to the Central Powers, which were also able to offer support against the Bolsheviks.

28 'Promova Mykhajla Khrushevs'koho na z'ijzdi narodiv u Kyjevi', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, pp. 326–30; 'Stattja M. Hrushevs'koho "Proekt ukrains'koji constituciji", 07.11.1917', in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch berezen' – lystopad 1917 roku. Dokumenty i materialy*, ed. by Vladyslav Verstjuk and others, (Kyjiv: 2003), pp. 925–30 (pp. 926–27); 'Stattja P. Fedenko "Od centralizmu do federaciji"', in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 90–96 (p. 95); Rudolf A. Mark, 'Social Questions and National Revolution', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 14 (1990), 113–31 (pp. 125–27); Thomas M. Prymak, *Mykhajlo Hrushevs'ky: The Politics of National Culture* (Toronto–Buffalo–London: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 177.

29 Frank Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer 1914–1939* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010), pp. 240–44; Guido Hausmann, 'Brest-Litovsk 1918. Zwei Friedensschlüsse und zwei Historiographien', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 70 (2019), 271–77.

30 Cf. Documents nos. 395 and 396, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, p. 712.

31 Caroline Milow, *Die ukrainische Frage 1917–1923 im Spannungsfeld der europäischen Diplomatie* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), pp. 74–91; Hrycak, *Narys istoriji*, p. 122; David Saunders, 'Britain and the Ukrainian Question (1912 – 1920)', *English Historical Review*, 103 (1988), 40–68 (pp. 64–65); Wolodymyr Kosyk, *La Politique de la France à l'Ukraine: Mars 1917 – Février, 1918* (Paris: Université Paris-I, 1981), p. 114.

4. The war with its cataclysmic developments, with the political and social mobilization of almost the entire population of the Empire as far as Central Asia and the Far East, the experience of occupation and military regime, the displacement and resettlement of population groups, their classification, enlistment and obligation to perform state services depending on their ethnicity and presumed national reliability, the encounter with compatriots on both sides of the fronts and other things promoted and strengthened a growing ethnic and national sense of special consciousness among peoples and ethnic groups, which called into question the legitimacy of the regime and loyalty to the Reich, or as Mark von Hagen put it: The war not only intensified many sources of tension that were already present in the pre-war society of the Reich but also provoked significant qualitative changes in the relations between the peoples living in it.[32]

The demand for "a new order in our country" or order in "this time of disorder and great chaos", which the Provisional Government has never really been able to master from the Ukrainian point of view, has been a frequently cited argument for legitimizing state structures since the constitution of the Rada. In October 1917, it was increasingly often heard that the Rada should "take all power in Ukraine into its hands".[33] Fears of anarchy and civil war were added to this, and finally even die-hard autonomists and federalists like Hrushevsky sought Ukraine's salvation in independence. The Ukrainization of the armed forces was also justified not least by the demand for better discipline and order.[34]

The February Revolution and the resulting decentralization, federalization, and democratization of power structures politicized the growing Ukrainian movement, which saw itself not only as fighting for Ukrainian language and culture, but also as a democratization agency and guarantor of the irreversibility of the revolution and the civil rights it fought for, as corresponding appeals and demands show.[35] And after the October overthrow of the Bolsheviks in 1917, the UNR leadership also legitimized the declaration of independence by arguing that this was the only way to preserve the achievements of the revolution, the free republic and peace. The human and civil rights already guaranteed in the Third Universal were expressly reaffirmed and the early adoption of a democratic constitution

32 Chagen, 'Velikaja vojna', p. 387; Rejent and Janyšyn, 'Ukrajina v period Peršoji svitovoji vijny', pp. 28–29; cf. Hrycak, *Narys Istoriji*, pp. 105–06.
33 Document no. 464, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, p. 831.
34 Documents nos. 307, 464, 478, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 584, 831, 853; see also Prymak, *Mykhajlo Hrushevs'ky*, pp. 148–57.
35 Cf. Documents nos. 9, 10, 11, 12, 91, 244, 525, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 41–48, 230–33, 478, 925.

was urged. This was then also to determine the nature of the federal connection with the other national republics of the Russian state.[36]

Since the February Revolution, in addition to the numerous advocates of a federal solution to the Ukrainian question, there have also been voices that regard the country's state independence as a prerequisite for the yet to be started cultural and socio-economic revolution. Thus, as early as the beginning of March 1917, one of the first appeals of the Petrograd Provisional Ukrainian Revolutionary Committee, which united mainly students, had emphasized that "the most complete expression of the idea of national liberation is national independence, and that only a sovereign state organism of its own can ensure the widest possible cultural development of the Ukrainian people".[37] A few days later, the Social Democrat Yevhen Neronovych argued that, for him, the idea of Ukraine's independence was strongly linked to the social struggle of its workers, and that, for a space such as that represented by Ukraine, the highest development of its productive forces and the highest form of organization of the working class associated with it, which offers the possibility of transition to the socialist order, is only possible in an independent Ukrainian state.[38] Even if these views may have expressed the opinion of a minority among the representatives of the national movement in the immediate aftermath of the February Revolution, they were present in the discourse and could gain new virulence at any time. The October Revolution provided the necessary occasion.

2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXTS

One does not have to go as far as Yaroslav Hrycak, who accuses the politicians and masterminds of the Ukrainian movement, especially those of the Central Rada, of having been caught up in "great social utopias, by 'projects'" that "had nothing to do with normal life",[39] but his assessment is by no means entirely unjustified, as further developments in Ukraine should show. Accordingly, populist agrarian socialist ideas determined both the program of the Central Rada and that of the Directory.

What moved the peasant population and how they imagined the future agrarian constitution of Ukraine was declared by the resolutions of the First All-Ukrainian Peasant Congress on 2 June 1917. It stated that

36 'Četvertyj Universal Ukrajins'koji Central'noji Rady', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, pp. 371–74.
37 Document no. 1, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, p. 36.
38 Document no. 16, ibid., p. 52.
39 Hrycak, *Narys istorijj*, p. 117.

only the "realization of the socialist ideal [...] the wishes of the toiling peasants and the proletariat" would calm the unrest of those groups. Therefore, private ownership of land should be abolished and all land should be transferred to a Ukrainian land fund without ransom. This would be disposed of by the people themselves by means of a Ukrainian parliament and corresponding democratically elected land committees at the subordinate levels. From this fund, everyone would receive as much land as they could work with their own hands. Large model estates were to be left to peasant collectives as centres and "crystallization points of future socialist economies".[40]

For the legitimization of the national revolution and to mobilize the mass peasant Ukrainian population, a clear program for the solution of the agrarian question in Ukraine was indispensable. In 1917, about 15% of the population engaged in agriculture in Ukraine had no arable land, and 42% of the farmers worked no more than five desjatins of land.[41] However, all political parties, as well as those responsible for the Rada and its institutions, found it difficult to react adequately to this. As a rule, the parties did not have coordinated party programmes. Of the two ruling parties that supported the Rada, USDRP and UPSR (Ukrajins'ka partija socialistiv-revoljucioneriv), only the latter had concrete ideas. All in all, they corresponded to the demands of the Peasants' Congress outlined above, which were determined by the Socialist-Revolutionaries in terms of personnel and content. The Social Democrats basically followed the SR program; however, they rejected their demands for the socialization of land in favour of nationalization, as could be seen from an USDRP resolution passed in early October 1917.[42] The Rada as such did not promulgate guidelines on the agrarian question until its Third Universal, i.e., after the October Revolution of 1917. In doing so, it more or less followed the postulates of the Peasants' Congress and the wishes of the rural population as they were aired in those days. Thus, all private property, including that of churches and monasteries, was abolished and declared "the property of the entire working people". A law regulating the activities of the land committees was to follow before the land allocations could be started.[43]

40 'Rezoljuciji I Vseukrajins'koho seljans'koho z'jizdy', in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, p. 349–50; cf. documents nos. 465, 529, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 831–32, 936.

41 Illja Vytanovych, 'Agrarnaja polityka ukrajins'kych urjadiv rokiv revoljuciji i vyzvol'nych zmahan (1917–20)', *Ukrajins'kyj istoryk*, 4.3–4 (15–16) (1967), 9–15 (p. 9).

42 Dmytro Doroshenko, *Narys istoriji Ukrajiny 1917–1923*, vol. 1 (Uzhhorod, 1932; repr. New York, 1954), p. 86; Pavlo Chrystjuk, *Zamitky i materijaly do historiji ukrajins'koji revoljuciji 1917–1920 r.*, vol. 2 (Vienna, 1922), p. 59; 'Rezoljuciji chetvertoho z'jizdy Ukrajins'koji sotsial-demokratichnoji robitnichnoji partiji', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, p. 333.

43 'Universal Ukrain'skoji Central'noji Rady', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, p. 341.

However, this did not happen because the law that finally passed on 18 January 1918, which was still to be confirmed by the pending Ukrainian Constituent Assembly, came too late. In the meantime, units of the Red Army had invaded Ukraine, established a Soviet controlled government and brought the Central Rada to the brink of its demise, from which it could only be saved by cooperation with the Central Powers. After they had occupied Ukraine and expelled the Bolsheviks, the Rada itself became a victim of the Germans and Austrians standing in the country. This was triggered by the policy of the occupying power to exploit Ukraine economically, which is why the democratic UNR was replaced by the regime of hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, controlled by Berlin and Vienna. At the same time, neither the hetman, who was one of the large landowners, nor his foreign patrons showed the slightest inclination to adopt the agrarian structures planned by the Rada. For them, it was unacceptable for both political and selfish interests.[44] At the same time, however, the uprisings against the landlords and soon also the uprisings against the agrarian policy of the occupying power made it clear how urgently the peasant population's hunger for land had to be remedied. The massive influx of peasant supporters that the Directory under the leadership of Vynnychenko and Petliura received when Skoropadsky was overthrown in November/December 1918 also speaks for itself. [45]

The Central Rada and the Hetmanate were unable to find a satisfactory solution to the agrarian question, and the Directory, which was restored at the end of 1918, was also unable to do so. Laws of 8 and 18 January 1919 limited the ownership of land to a maximum of 15 desiatins. In addition, as announced in the Declaration of the Directory of 26 December 1918, members of the UNR armed forces were to receive two more desiatins and an interest-free loan of 2,000 hryvna. Landless peasants were to be allocated no less than five desiatins of nationalized arable land, which, if they had the appropriate fertility, were considered sufficient to feed a family.[46]

These laws and regulations also came too late. The UNR's board of directors and government institutions no longer had the opportunity to implement their agrarian program in practice because they had to evacuate Kyiv from the advancing divisions of Antonov-Ovseenko at the beginning of February 1919 and retreat to the west of Ukraine. This was, so to speak,

44 For more details, see Frank Grelka, *The Ukrainian National Movement under German Occupation 1918 and 1941/42* (Wiesbaden: Forschungsstelle Ostmitteleuropa Univ. Dortmund, 2005), pp. 328–56.

45 Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine. A History* (Toronto–Buffalo–London: University of Toronto Press, 1988), pp. 357–58; Mark, *Symon Petljura und die UNR*, pp. 33–39; Mark, 'Social Questions and National Revolution', pp. 127–28.

46 'Deklaratsiia Direktoriji Ukrains:koji Narodnoji Respubliky', in *Ukrajins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti*, p. 408; Iliya Vytanovych, *Agrarian Politics of Ukrainian Governments in 1917–1920* (München–Chicago, 1968), p. 50; Mark, 'Social Questions and National Revolution', p. 119.

the beginning of the end of the UNR, because the chaos and cataclysms of the civil war prevented its establishment in Ukraine. It should be noted here that the Bolsheviks also had immense problems in winning over the peasant population for their socialist project. They succeeded in doing so only when all ideological and political competitors had been defeated and parts of the USDRP and the Ukrainian Social Revolutionaries facilitated the communist regime's access to the Ukrainian peasants.[47] Only then did the mass of the rural population turn to the Bolsheviks, who propagated the more attractive land program because it radically changed property relations in favour of the peasants.

3. NATIONALIZATION: THE UKRAINIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE STATE

Neither the Central Rada formed in Ukraine after the February Revolution, nor the state of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, who was at the mercy of the Central Powers, were anything more than ephemeral attempts to create an autonomous Ukraine in the alliance of a democratic Russian Republic or as a vassal state of Germany and Austria.

In accordance with the loyalty to the Empire proclaimed by the spokesmen of the Ukrainian national movement at the outbreak of the war, the mass of Ukrainians had served in the ranks of the Russian armed forces. The end of tsarist rule, the disintegration of the fronts, and the desertion of hundreds of thousands of soldiers were accompanied by an attempt to form national units. However, at no time were attempts successful to create a Ukrainian army that was able to serve as an instrument for enforcing Ukraine's political independence. The troops at the UNR's disposal, their combat strength and equipment, were just as inadequate as their organization and, not infrequently, their loyalty to the political leadership. Despite these shortcomings, however, the more reliable sections of the army were the only national institution that enabled the UNR to survive until the end of the civil war as allies of Poland's Marshall Józef Piłsudski. In other words, only a few units of the Directory were strong enough to continue to display the blue and yellow colours even after the evacuation of Kyiv at the beginning of 1919 and to keep them high in Ukraine until 1920 – and in some cases even beyond.[48]

47 James E. Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation. National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918–1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983).

48 For more detail see Jan Jacek Bruski, *Petliurowcy. Centrum państwowe Ukraińskiej Respubliki Ludowej na wychodźstwie (1919–1924)* (Kraków: Arcana, 2004).

To this day, some Ukrainian historians see the main reasons for the defeat of the Ukrainian revolution in a lack of ideology. In their view it was the "weak leadership, the lack of a clear, strong and bellicose ideology, that would have produced and consolidated a corresponding national character".[49]

But the reality was more complicated. According to relevant accounts, in 1917 hundreds of thousands of soldiers of Ukrainian origin were organized into national units and formations under the flag of Ukrainization – an act of revolutionary spontaneity. To this day, it is not clear how many soldiers were affected by Ukrainization. Corresponding figures range from "105,000 bayonets and sabres" to even four million soldiers.[50] What is clear, however, is that the UNR benefited little from Ukrainization, as Dmytro Doroshenko points out with a certain sarcasm in his account of the Rada period: "The soldiers dispersed, did not want to go to the front, and did nothing in their own barracks except hold 'meetings'; and when they were needed, they did not want to lift a finger to help Ukraine. However, this notwithstanding, even the outward signs of the 'Ukrainization' of the troops made an impression on the broad masses of citizens and increased the authority of the national movement".[51]

There are many reasons for the deficits described here. The following are likely to have played a significant role:

1. The bulk of the soldiers were war-weary after three years of service at the front. The mass desertions gave amble proof. The soldiers wanted to survive and, in view of the hoped-for socio-economic changes on the ground, did not want to miss out on their villages and farms. True, immediately after the February Revolution, hundreds of thousands of soldiers spontaneously demanded the nationalization of units and the creation of a Ukrainian army in numerous councils and congresses,[52] but at the same time most troops were not ready to return to the front, as reports prove.[53]

2. Ukrainization was not least an attempt to secure or increase the discipline and operational readiness of the units and formations at the front. This is evident, for example, from the reports of the Secretary General for Military Affairs, Symon Petliura.[54]

49 Ivan Drobot, 'Transformaciji nacionalistychnoji ideologiji v pershij polovyni XX st.', *Ukrains'kyj Istorychnyj Žhurnal*, 6 (2001), 110–22 (p. 111).

50 Jaroslav Tynčenko, 'Dijal'nist' Symona Petliury za chasiv peršoji ukrains'ko-radjans'koji vijny: hruden' 1917 – ljutij 1918 rokiv', in *Symon Petljura ta ukrainians'ka nacional'na revoljcija*, p. 92; Subtelny, *Ukraine*, p. 347; *Politychna istorija Ukrajiny. XX stolittja u shesti tomach*, vol. 2, ed. by Ivan Kuras and others (Kyjiv, 2003), pp. 94–95.

51 Doroshenko, *Istorija Ukrajiny*, p. 62.

52 Cf. Documents nos. 117, 174, 279, 404, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 280 et seq., 356, 539, 732; Subtelny, *Ukraine*, p. 347.

53 *Politychna istorija Ukrajiny*, p. 77; Pavlo Skoropads'kyj, *Spohady. Kinec' 1917 – Hruden' 1918*, ed. by Jaroslav Pelens'kyj (Kyjiv–Filadel'fija, 1995), pp. 86–87.

54 Documents nos. 307, 403, 478, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 584, 731, 853.

In the eyes of the soldiers, however, Ukrainization was not so much a necessary prerequisite for the formation of national armed forces but rather meant removal from the front and transfer to the homeland, as well as the hope of desertion or dismissal.[55] Thus, for example, in May 1917, the Ukrainian Military Council in Odesa demanded that the Rada "induce the Provisional Government to transfer the Ukrainians, first from the depths of Russia and then also from the fronts, as soon as possible to the southwestern and Romanian fronts, to the military districts of Kyiv and Odesa, and to the Black Sea Fleet" and "that in the military parts, stationed on the territory of Ukraine, only residents of Ukraine remained". Similar demands were made by other units of the armed forces.[56]

Ukrainization as a project to build a disciplined, centrally led national army was in competition with ideas about the restitution of Cossackdom as a free association based on elected hierarchies and voluntariness, which many soldiers had in mind and which was not free of romanticization and arbitrary actions,[57] including anti-Semitism and the pogroms committed by UNR soldiers during the War of Independence in 1919. However, vigorous countermeasures, including summary executions of pogrom perpetrators, has not prevented recriminations from distorting Petliura's image in the international public sphere to this day.[58] This was also fuelled by the Soviet leadership to discredit their most obstinate enemy – and in order to obscure the Red army's deeds of violence in the Civil War.

The demands for Ukrainization had no nationally affirmative anti-Russian impetus. Ukrainization and demands for autonomy were also understood as a contribution to the struggle and service "for our common fatherland, the renewed Russian state", "for the benefit of a free Russia", to the "defence of the common mother, a renewed Russia" and alike.[59]

The fact that the nationalization of military units had little success was also due to the very ambivalent and distanced attitude of leading politicians and ideologues of the Central Rada towards everything military. The chairman of the General Secretariat of the Ukrainian Central Rada, i.e., the Ukrainian government, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, was an outspoken pacifist, a left-wing social democrat with considerable reservations about traditional military structures. He considered the "regular, drilled army" to be "ruined by the spirit of its bloody profession". He argued that it was not

55 Document no. 406, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 733–34; Hrycak, *Narys istoriji*, p. 118.
56 Cf. document no. 174, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, p. 356, see also documents nos. 105, 136, 168, 176, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 263–64, 316, 344, 358.
57 Cf. documents nos. 153, 186, 424, 459 in Ibid., pp. 335–36, 370–71, 765–66, 825–26.
58 D Mark, *Symon V. Petljura*; Volodymyr Serhijchuk, *Symon Petliura i evrejstvo* (Kyjiv: Centrum, 2006).
59 See documents nos. 13, 135, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 49, 315, 296; also 457, 459, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 823, 824.

the army but the people who would bring about the revolution. Moreover, in his mind no military institution but only the people and democracy could bring salvation to Ukraine. Social Democrats, and "all true democrats" in general, did not need any armed forces, still less their glorification, "but the destruction of all standing armies". Ukrainian troops can only be accepted if they act in the interest of the people and do not represent an instrument of the ruling classes.[60] Hrushevsky, the president of the Rada and the UNR, was also anything but a militarist. Not only did he reject war on principle, but he also could not really imagine having to wage war and defend the UNR militarily until the very end.[61] Only Petliura seemed to feel at home in the "sea of grey soldiers' coats"; unlike Hrushevsky and Vynnychenko, he seemed convinced of the need for national forces.

As 'Minister of War' of the Rada, however, he could hardly succeed under the prevailing circumstances. The fact that he was labelled a 'right-winger' and a 'nationalist' and did not always show a lucky hand in his administration certainly played a role. He was also accused by his critics of being more interested in formalities and appearances than in his actual task, i.e., the formation of a sufficient number of reliable UNR forces, in which he failed, thus there was a lack of reliable military in Kyiv at the end of 1917.[62]

Due to such sensitivities, neither a political consensus on the need for a national army nor a coordinated military or security strategy of the UNR could be reached. Nationalization or Ukrainization was more of a stopgap measure to control the dissolution process of the regular army than a concerted demand for a political program. Therefore, coincidences and imponderables played a decisive role from the very beginning. Added to this was the fact that the mass of war-weary soldiers could not yet be mobilized for a national revolution and separation from Russia. There was no real anti-Russian impetus that could have been instrumentalized for this end. Obviously, it was only the October revolution and the experience of the Soviet occupation during the civil war in Ukraine that promoted and strengthened the national awareness among the Ukrainian population and fostered attitudes of change.

60 Stattja V. Vynnychenko, 'Ukrains'kyi militaryzm', 12.4.1917, in *Ukrains'kyj natsional'no-vyzvol'nj ruch*, pp. 190–93 (pp. 191–92); cf. Doroshenko, *Istorija Ukrainy*, pp. 351–52.
61 Prymak, *Mykhailo Hrushevsky*, pp. 177–78.
62 See Volodymyr Vynnychenko, *Vidrodzhennja naciji*, 3 vols (Kyjiv, Viden', 1920) II, pp. 115, 159; Mark, *Symon Petljura und die UNR*, p. 27; Tynčenko, 'Dijal'nist' Symona Petliury', pp. 61–63.

CONCLUSION

Demands that Ukraine should be separated from Russia developed in close interaction with the radicalization of the Russian Revolution in 1917. After the October Revolution, the solution of the Ukrainian question in the form of national-territorial autonomy within the democratic Russian republic became irrelevant for the Ukrainian authorities, so the national paradigm shifted towards the proclamation of independence. Prior to that, separation from Russia had not been an option considered by leaders of the national movement. Against this background, the coup d'état of the Bolsheviks represented a breach of loyalty and at the same time provided the historical legitimacy of the Ukrainian decision to separate.

With the Declaration of Independence and the war against the Bolsheviks, the ideas and objectives of the political protagonists of the UNR, based on internationalism and pacifism, had become obsolete – their political possibilities exhausted. The subsequent dissolution of the UNR and its replacement by the Hetmanate was the logical consequence. Since then, it has been mainly external forces and powers that have determined the fate of Ukraine.

The political actions of the leading politicians of the UNR, above all Petliura, Hrushevsky and Vynnychenko, supported by parts of the population in Ukraine were proof of this. However, opponents in the decaying empire and even more in the international sphere were not likely to accept an independent Ukraine that would restrict their imperialist designs in Eastern Europe.

Nevertheless, the idea of Ukraine's independence persisted and gave the revolutionary events in Ukraine their special character. The last chapter was the attempt of Symon Petliura and the UNR in 1919 and 1920 to restore the UNR with a small force devoted to the Ukrainian idea – and with Polish help. They failed for obvious reasons. However, the newly established Soviet power had to legitimize its rule in Ukraine by establishing and promoting Ukrainian statehood. This was the first step towards the independence that was finally achieved in 1991.

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