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**HISTORIOGRAPHY OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN POLISH  
AND UKRAINIAN UNDERGROUND FORCES DURING THE YEARS  
OF THE GERMAN-SOVIET WAR: MAIN TENDENCIES  
OF INTERPRETATION OF THE EVENTS IN POLAND**

**Abstract.** *The purpose of the research is to depict how different interpretations of current questions of the theme are presented in the historiography of the subject under study in Poland. The research methodology is based on the methods of comparative and critical analysis as well as on the principle of scientific objectivity by the characteristics of the main works that were published in Poland on the theme under analysis. The scientific novelty of the article is a critical analysis of interpretation of the reasons, course, and results of conflicts between the Polish and Ukrainian underground forces in Polish historiography during the last decades. The Conclusions:* By the analyzing the works on the history of inter-ethnic wars an obvious tendency can be observed: the inclination of some authors to impose a reception of these conflicts exclusively from the point of view of their participants aiming at obtaining empathy for “our own” victims with silence about the “alien victims” of these confrontations. The study of the Polish-Ukrainian relations during the years of the German-Soviet War by many authors in Poland can be a typical example of the wide spread of such tendencies. Despite many works on the subject that were published in this country, it is still topical: there is a need of critical scholarly studies of the reasons, forms, and results of the animosity between the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa, AK) on one side, and the Organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists headed by Stepan Bandera (OUN-B) as well as the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (Ukrainska Povstancha Armiya, the

UPA) on other side in 1943 – 1944. More research is needed to develop new space for a much deeper reception of this difficult to resolve historical problem, which will help historians to understand the real roots, forms and consequences of these hostilities. The chief focus of studies of these problems is depicting the losses of the Polish civilian population during this confrontation, while many other important questions for understanding the reasons, character and development of this conflict still need further study (clarifying the number of the Ukrainian victims of confrontation between AK and the UPA armed formations, the comparative analysis of forms and scales of crimes committed by their soldiers against the civil population, attempts to stop the confrontations by negotiations between representatives of the Ukrainian and Polish underground forces, the influence of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union on the worsening of the Ukrainian-Polish relations, etc.). The clarification of the reasons for conflict, political responsibility for its consequences, and the number of deaths have a special significance for understanding the complex of confrontations between the AK and the UPA in future scholarly works, which must be freed from one-sided national prejudices.

**Key words:** Polish underground, Ukrainian underground, confrontation, German-Soviet War, historiography in Poland, reception.

## ІСТОРИОГРАФІЯ ПРОТИСТОЯННЯ СИЛ ПОЛЬСЬКОГО ТА УКРАЇНСЬКОГО ПІДПІЛЛЯ У РОКИ НІМЕЦЬКО-РАДЯНСЬКОЇ ВІЙНИ: ГОЛОВНІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ ТРАКТУВАННЯ ПОДІЙ У ПОЛЬЩІ

**Анотація. Мета дослідження** – висвітлити, як різні інтерпретації найактуальніших питань теми репрезентовані в історіографії предмета дослідження у Польщі. **Методологія дослідження** базується на застосуванні методів порівняльного і критичного аналізу, а також принципу наукової об'єктивності у процесі вивчення головних праць, опублікованих із вказаної теми. **Наукова новизна статті** – критичний аналіз причин, ходу і наслідків конфліктів між польськими і українськими підпіллями силами в історіографії у Польщі в останні десятиліття. **Висновки.** У процесі аналізу праць з історії міжетнічних конфліктів можна прослідкувати виразну тенденцію: схильність нав'язати сприймання цих конфліктів виключно зі сприймання його учасниками з очевидною метою отримати емпатію до “своїх” жертв із замовчуванням “чужих жертв” цих конфронтацій. Типовим прикладом поширення таких тенденцій може бути стан вивчення дослідниками у Польщі проблеми протистояння між польською Армією Крайовою (АК) з одного боку і Організацією Українських Націоналістів під проводом Степана Бандери (ОУН-Б) й Українською Повстанчою Армією (УПА) з другого у 1943 – 1944 роках. У цій країні актуальною залишається потреба критично-наукового дослідження причин, форм і наслідків цього протистояння. Головну увагу у дослідженні цієї проблематики у Польщі присвячено висвітленню втрат польського цивільного населення в ході протистояння. Водночас багато інших важливих питань для розуміння передумов, характеру й розвитку цього протистояння потребують подальшого вивчення (з'ясування кількості українських жертв протистояння збройних формувань АК і УПА, порівняльний аналіз форм та методів злочинів, скоєних їх вояками проти цивільного населення, спроби зупинити протистояння шляхом ведення переговорів між представниками українського та польського підпілля, вплив нацистської Німеччини та Радянського Союзу на погіршення українсько-польських відносин тощо). З'ясування причин конфліктів, політичної відповідальності за їх наслідки, втручання “третьох сил” та кількості загиблих має особливе значення для розуміння комплексу проблем конфронтації між АК і УПА у майбутніх наукових дослідженнях, що повинні бути вільними від односторонніх національних упередженостей.

**Ключові слова:** польсько-українське протистояння, німецько-радянська війна, історіографія у Польщі, сприймання.

**The Problem Statement.** The rise of nationalist tendencies in the policies of the formation of historical memory in Poland, Hungary, Romania and other European countries as well as the Baltic states, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, and other former Soviet republics, in particular, have reinforced the central importance of nationalism in the history of political processes in Europe.

Special attention of historians in this context is devoted to studying the roots, development and consequences of international conflicts and impact of the dramatic changes that have taken place in the past on the contemporary development of international relations in Central Eastern Europe. Much of the effort went into the task of attempting to understand, compare, and interpret relations between the OUN-B and the AK during the years of the German-Soviet war. Advocates of the national perspective on this conflict hold that its different forms have deep historical, social, economic, and religious foundations. Even the scholarly literature on the subject is sharply polarized (Kasianov, 2006, pp. 247–259; Copsey, 2008, pp. 531–560).

**The Purpose of the Article.** The purpose of this article is to characterize the main tendencies of publications in Poland which are important for understanding the reception of the Polish-Ukrainian relations during the German-Soviet War. The article deals with the conceptual propositions of the writing of history of this subject in Poland (from 1991 to the most recent years) in order to reveal the essence of this historiography in studying the problem. Both Polish and Ukrainian authors, as usual, have much in common in their reception of the study of the subject, making to some degree common hypotheses, statements, and conclusions. It seems necessary to use some generalized terms for designations of some tendencies in “national versions of history”. In particular, by generalization the author uses general terms like the adjectives and designations “Polish” or “Ukrainian” toward the reception, versions, interpretations, and historiographies in Poland and Ukraine.

**The Statement on the Basic Material.** During the first decade after the end of World War II the topic of confrontation between the OUN-B and AK forces during the period of the German-Soviet War was taboo both in Ukraine (at that time – the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) and Poland (at that time – the Polish People’s Republic or Polska Republika Ludowa, PRL) under the power and influence of the Soviet Union. The generation of the Poles born after World War II was educated about the Polish-Ukrainian conflicts on the example of the Carpathian drama, mainly as based on one book of Jan Gerhard, “*Łuny w Bieszczadach* [Glows in the Carpathians]” (Gerhard, 1959). From the beginning of the 1960s in the Polish People’s Republic some anti-nationalist articles were also published with the aim at discrediting the idea of a political alliance of the Ukrainian and Polish anti-Communist dissidents in the Polish society. The articles condemning the OUN-B and UPA anti-Polish activities were published too (see, e.g., Szota, 1963, pp. 163–218). Later Antoni Szcześniak and Wiesław Szota’s book as another “sanctioned work” was published. It devoted one section of a chapter to the OUN-B campaign of ethnic cleansing of Volhynia and Galicia from the Polish minority there (Szcześniak, Szota, 1973). However, the publication of this work had apparently been permitted; it was immediately withdrawn from bookstores all over Poland and forbidden for distribution. From a critical point of view the anti-Polish activity of the Ukrainian nationalists during World War II was only mentioned briefly in publications on the history of this country in some articles, monographs, etc. (see, e.g., Markiewicz, 1980). Any facts on the crimes of the Polish armed formations against the Ukrainian population at the same time were silenced.

Simultaneously from this time there existed many myths on the topic of the Polish-Ukrainian relations in the historiography of the PRL. There were a lot of legends, that allegedly the Ukrainians killed the Polish intellectuals in Lviv in July of 1941, that allegedly the Ukrainian soldiers of 14th Waffen-SS Division “Galicia” participated in the Nazi suppression of the Warsaw uprising, about a hyperbolized number of the Polish victims in Volhynia in 1943, etc. By the second part of the 1980s such legends were concentrated in the works of Edward Prus (Prus, 1985; 1988).

The topic of research was extremely politicized in Poland after the fall of the Communist system in Eastern Europe. In part, from the beginning of the 1990s the latent function of some Polish authors was to bind together with a band of a collective guilt the wavering adherents among the Ukrainians (Motyka, 2000, pp. 166–178).

The tendencies from the mid-1990th had been continued in the works of political publicists Edward Prus (see, e.g., Prus, 1994) and the author of Ukrainian origin, Viktor Polishchuk, that were widely popularized in Poland. It is interesting to note that the book of Polishchuk “Bitter Truth” was published once in Ukrainian and in English. All the rest of his books were published in Polish, which gives us reason to characterize his narratives as part of the Polish historiography (Poliszczuk, 1995; 1999; 2000).

The study of historical writing on the above-mentioned topic puts things in such a way that the Polish underground and its adherents might not be to blame by provoking conflict between the Ukrainian and Polish underground forces. After the elimination of censorship in Poland during the 1990s, previously “repressed memories” flooded the myth market as stories of “400,000 victims of the Ukrainian terror” and “genocide of the Poles” began to circulate (Terles, 1993, p. 22).

The leading role in perpetuating the negative stereotype of the Ukrainians had been played by organizations of the Poles who had been resettled from the Eastern borderlands, called they called the *kresy*, in 1944 – 1946. One of the best known of them was the Society for Memorialization of the Victims of the Ukrainian Nationalists in Poland (*Stowarzyszenie Upamiętnienia Ofiar Zbrodni Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów*). Under their influence, the Polish authors, as a rule, do not consider the political aims of the Polish Government-in-exile toward re-incorporation of Western Ukraine to Poland as the main cause of AK-UPA conflict but concentrate their attention on the civil Polish victims of this confrontation in 1943 – 1944 (Motyka, 1995, pp. 219–226; Motyka, 2000, pp. 166–178; Karłowicz, Popek, 1998).

Books that tend to accuse the OUN-B members and the UPA soldiers as criminals have been published over the last two decades in Poland (Gross, 1999; Kuźmicz, 2006). They give us total exaggerations of the number of Polish victims as a result of confrontations between the Polish and Ukrainian underground forces during the years of the German-Soviet War, leaving silence about not only the crimes of the Polish armed formations but even the crimes committed by the Soviet Union against both the Poles and the Ukrainians (see, e.g., Karłowicz, Popek, 1998).

An implacable stand was taken by the Polish historians Władysław and Ewa Siemaszko in their book “Genocide of the Polish Population of Volhynia by the Ukrainian Nationalists in 1939 – 1945”, which was published in Warsaw in 2000. They included key ideas on the adoption of a one-sided mythological narrative by writers who criticized the OUN-B and UPA activity. Firstly, allegedly the Ukrainians and other national minorities lived in amity, peace and prosperity in the Second Polish Republic. Secondly, all the Poles of Volhynia were presented exclusively as “peaceful inhabitants” living in peace and harmony in the above-mentioned region. There was no mention of any essential discrimination or mass persecution of the Ukrainians. Thirdly, the Poles were treated in a hospitable fashion because they symbolized peace and never aspired to the aim of expelling the indigenous Ukrainian population. Conversely, this implies that if the Ukrainian nationalists had been ready to stop at the beginning their anti-Polish action, relations between the two groups could have returned to normal. However, the most important thing is that Siemaszkos’ book provides an example of transformation technology to turn the local individual, family, and regional group

memory of many thousands of victims of the OUN-B and AK confrontation into a collective national memory of many millions of citizens of contemporary Poland. It was made by using exaggerations of the number of Polish victims of inter-ethnic confrontation on the basis of secondary sources (Siemaszko, Siemaszko, 2000, vol. 1–2).

In a few years, the same simplified picture of the events in Galicia was represented in three books by Henryk Komański and Szczepan Siekierka (including one book in cooperation with Edward Róžański) (Komański, Siekierka, 2004; Siekierka, Komański, Róžański, 2008; Siekierka, Komański, Róžański, 2008)). At the same time, similar martyrologies on the Polish victims of the Polish-Ukrainian confrontation on the eastern borderland of contemporary Poland were published by Zdzisław Konieczny (Konieczny, 2006), Stanisław Jastrzębski (Jastrzębski, 2007), and Sławomir Żurek (Żurek, 2007).

All the above-mentioned books included some lists and registers of murdered Poles. Their authors, like the Siemaszkos, focused their attention primarily upon individual memory of the Poles from Volhynia and Galicia, totally ignoring the testimonies of their Ukrainian neighbours. However, their critical attitude toward the Ukrainians only – which they present as an essential part of their overall argument – is almost certainly misguided, and their efforts to maintain it, despite non-conforming evidence, involve serious methodological lapses. Their statements are in fact erroneous by reason for ignoring the problem of the Ukrainian losses. Objective results can be obtained by taking into account the data on the Ukrainian victims of confrontation on the basis of the Ukrainian archival sources by the simultaneous critical analysis of memoirs of the Polish witnesses and other Polish sources. Such one-sidedness and such an approach to the problem of collective memory prevails in Poland.

Many Polish authors conceived of the Ukrainian nationalist movement mostly in purely negative terms and use the rhetoric of self-defence of a helpless Polish population against the Ukrainian nationalists (see, e.g., Jastrzębski, 2001; Filar, 2007). Most Polish historians divide conflicts between the Ukrainian and the Polish underground forces in 1943 – 1944 into two phases: the Ukrainian terror and the Polish defence. Prof. Władysław Filar is one of them. He relatively neglected and misunderstood the inter-war period, namely the years 1921 – 1939. Filar stated that mass killing of the Poles began long before there were any signs of intentions of the Nazis and the Bolsheviks in Polish-Ukrainian relations. The ethnic cleansing, says Filar, was implemented mainly by the OUN-B, not by the Ukrainian peasantry, and the shift toward mass persecutions was experienced by these individuals as anything but radical, the final step being another increment at the end of a series of policies leading “logically” to that conclusion. Filar was interested ostensibly in the Ukrainians’ responsibility for ethnic conflict and its impact in many chapters dealing with the war between the Ukrainian and the Polish underground forces, treated by him as extermination of the Polish population in Volhynia (Filar, 2003).

Filar’s interpretation very much reflects Czesław Partacz’s and Krzysztof Lada’s own vision. Their book examines the attitude and policy of the Polish Government-in-exile in regard to the Ukrainian question of 1939 – 1945. Partacz and Lada in their common work devote special attention to both the Polish and Ukrainian attempts at understanding during World War II. Making use of previously unavailable archival material, it seeks to present a much fuller picture of the Polish policy than has until now been possible. On the other hand, although this book accuses the Ukrainians of crimes against the Poles, this does not explain the real reasons for the Volhynian conflict. Both Partacz and Lada make a substantial contribution to their field, but neither pays much attention to the real roots of the above-mentioned conflict. Lada – as well as Partacz – sees the impact of integral nationalist ideas

even among non-OUN-B members, who often rejected them. Both of these authors stated that allegedly the OUN-B and the UPA were motivated by an ideology of human hatred and that this was the main reason for their anti-Polish activities. According to their thesis, the Ukrainian integral nationalist ideology included the idea of ethnic cleansing already by the end of the 1930s; obviously, the Volhynian tragedy was an example of the implementation of these ideas (Partacz, Łada, 2004).

The above-mentioned books influenced the portrayal of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict of 1939 – 1945 in the Polish history textbooks. In one of them, which was specially issued for the Ukrainians, it was even stated that allegedly “during one-and-a-half years, from time to time with great cruelty, over 100,000 children, women and men were murdered [by the UPA]” (*Pol'shcha. Narys istorii*, 2015, p. 281).

The main tendencies of the historiography of the AK-OUN-B conflict by the Polish diaspora during the second half of the twentieth century were represented by politically motivated narratives of Volhynian or Galician natives (Dziemiańczuk, 1999; Korman, 1989; Terles, 1993), partially by adherents of the right-wing nationalist ideology, the so-called “national-democrats” (see, e.g., Giertych, 1980).

The majority of such works were written by these Poles, who had personally survived, or whose families had survived, after the OUN-B and UPA anti-Polish action; this determined the sharply biased tendencies of these authors toward the Ukrainians. Tadeusz Piotrowski, a former professor of sociology at the University of New Hampshire at Manchester, was one of them. In his monograph Piotrowski demonstrated a one-sided approach, expounding the complexities of the political and military situation in 1943 – 1944 only in the manner in which it was conceived by Polish right-wing politicians during World War II or treated by the right-radical Polish underground press of that time. Of a slanderous nature are Piotrowski's assertions that the operations undertaken by the UPA during the summer of 1943 to the spring of 1944 in Western Ukraine were nothing but the genocide of the Polish population. Piotrowski's monograph is based completely on the contrived thesis that the Polish-Ukrainian conflict was almost exclusively a result of Ukrainian animosity toward the Poles. Piotrowski considers everything that was done by the UPA for cleansing its territory of the Polish military bases to be “measures of genocide”. While particular aspects of many events are explained, some (e.g., the anti-Ukrainian terror of the Polish armed formations) are not mentioned at all. Piotrowski's book shows a biased and distorted view of the Polish-Ukrainian relations. Piotrowski treats the Volhynian tragedy as an act committed by those terrible Ukrainian nationalists against valiant and innocent Polish people defending their homeland. Piotrowski prefers to talk about Volhynia without stress on the unacceptable Polish policy of ruthless exploitation and discrimination against the Ukrainians of Western Ukraine (Piotrowski, 1995; Piotrowski, 2000).

The statement about one-sided “Ukrainian barbarity” in Volhynia is retold not only in Piotrowski's books but also in many books by other authors published in 1999 – 2005 (see, e.g., Pelensky, 2005, pp. 49–62). These Polish historians are not striving to propose a balanced, historically true, and complete picture of Polish-Ukrainian relations. Guided to a large extent by purely utilitarian considerations of the negative attitude against the OUN-B and the UPA from the German-Soviet War times, they almost completely ignore such notable and tragic reasons for Ukrainian nationalist animosity toward the Poles as the murders of the Ukrainians by the Polish police in Volhynia as well as terror by the Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*, AK) and other Polish formations in this region, the Galicia and Kholm region,

during the years 1943 – 1944. Of course, such attempts to keep silent about the common responsibility of the Polish and Ukrainian politicians and organizations for the tragic Polish-Ukrainian conflict of the past does not promote a deepening of understanding between the two nations today as well as in the future. However, as long as research analysis of Polish-Ukrainian relations during the years of World War II restricts its focus to the criminal aspect only, it remains limited and thematically undeveloped.

Only separate authors in Poland distanced themselves from the hagiographic commemoration, the accent on an exaggerated data of the Polish victims that never was confirmed by common Polish-Ukrainian investigations and large-scale common archeologic research works, and memoirs of Ukrainian eyewitnesses of these events. For example, Tadeusz Olszanski cast a fresh glance on confrontation of the forces of the Polish and Ukrainian underground and its history (Olszański, 1991). Small part of Polish historians represented relatively objective point of views, e. g. Zbigniew Kowalewski (Kowalewski, 1993).

Specifically worth mentioning here is Professor Ryszard Torzecki, who wrote a monograph on the Poles and the Ukrainians in 1939 – 1945, where he thoroughly studied the Ukrainian issue in the Polish policy at the same time. He was one of the first to demand an objective study of the acute problems in the Polish-Ukrainian relations during the above-mentioned period. His book represents probably the best and most objective Polish research that has ever been written about these relations during World War II. Torzecki does not have a passion for political speculation about this problem. One of the most comprehensive frameworks for conceptualizing the issues of the Polish-Ukrainian relations during World-War II can be found in this recent work. As Torzecki points out, the Poles were indeed adamant in viewing both Volhynia and Galicia as integral parts of the Polish state. The Polish government-in-exile would go only as far as offering civil rights to Volhynian and Galician Ukrainians equal to other citizens of Poland. This, however, was utterly not enough for the OUN-B. That was one of the main reasons why its leadership treated the AK armed formations from the summer of 1943 not only as a possible ally, but also as a potential future occupant of their country and thus one of the main enemies of Ukrainian independence. In consequence, the mistakes of the Polish policy are well highlighted. The central aim of Torzecki's book was also to provide a general history using noteworthy archival materials to present the Polish-Ukrainian relations in the international situation, the role of "the third force" in exploiting ethnic conflict between the Poles and Ukrainians, etc. Thus, readers of his book will find that the picture of events is far more balanced (Torzecki, 1993, pp. 197–224).

The works on the history of the Polish Home Army and its confrontation with the UPA are, by their critical analysis, of extraordinary importance for understanding the situation in Volhynia during the years of World War II. Despite statements by their authors about the small number of armaments of local AK detachments, the content of these publications confirms that there were well-trained military formations organized partially by officers and non-commissioned officers of the pre-war Polish army, who had received good military training before September of 1939. These works also give historians enough facts and information to draw the conclusion that in many cases these formations were organized earlier and better than the UPA detachments. Chief among these works are the monographs of Józef Turowski (Turowski, 1990) and Waclaw Romanowski (Romanowski, 1993), the informative article and books of Adam Peretiatkowicz (Peretiatkowicz, 1994, pp. 33–44; Peretiatkowicz, 1994; Peretiatkowicz, 1997), as well as the articles of Michal Klimecki (Klimecki, 1998, pp. 55–76) and Roman Striłka (Striłka, 1998, pp. 77–85). These authors describe the activities of the AK

underground forces in Volhynia 1939 – 1944 – the successors of Volhynian Infantry Division 27 of the AK, calling them self-defence units.

The books of Jerzy Węgierski, a former AK officer, were devoted to the Polish Home Army and partially to its participation in the struggle against the OUN-B underground and the UPA detachments in Galicia. Most of them describe the activities of the Union of Armed Struggle (*Związek Walki Zbrojnej* or ZWZ in Polish abbreviation, renamed the AK in February of 1942) in this region from the end of 1939 to the end of 1944 (see, e.g., Węgierski, 1991; Węgierski, 1994; Węgierski, 1996).

One of the best-known critics of the Ukrainian interpretations of the confrontation between the OUN-B/UPA and AK forces during the years of the German-Soviet War was Grzegorz Motyka. Initially some time after Torzecki's book, Motyka shifted to a positive evaluation in appraising relations between the UPA and the Polish underground resistance by the end and immediately after World War II. His book (in cooperation with Rafal Wnuk) "Masters and Slayers: Cooperation between the UPA and AK during the 1940s" was not only a new view, but a turning point in the Polish historiography, urging the public to concentrate on the factors that united, rather than divided, the two nations (Motyka, Wnuk, 1997).

On the one hand, later Motyka, despite a critical review of Volodymyr Viatrovykh's book, in fact supported his concept of the Polish-Ukrainian war, claiming that from 1943 "repeating the scenario of 1918" or "the outbreak of the Polish-Ukrainian war for Lviv" was typical of the situation in Western Ukraine. On other hand, he shifted from some positive estimations of the OUN-B in book "Masters and Slayers" to negativism in assessing the Ukrainian underground, stating that the anti-Polish actions of the Ukrainian nationalists were acts of deliberate ethnic cleansing on the part of the OUN-B, which ideologically dominated the UPA and wanted to transform Volhynia into a homogeneous ethnically Ukrainian territory (Motyka, 2011, pp. 124, 242). He also shows that the Polish collaborationists, who are ignored by many Polish historians, had committed, under the guidance of the Nazis, punitive operations not only on the occupied territory of Volhynia but in the territories of Polissia and Galicia as well (Motyka, 1998, pp. 128–131; Motyka, 1999, pp. 118–121). On the other hand, Motyka also briefly summarizes the anti-Ukrainian actions of the AK and various other Polish armed formations, while the anti-Polish UPA actions are dealt with at great length in many his works.

In simplifying the history of Polish-Ukrainian relations, some historians in Poland see one of the means for disguising the Polish government-in-exile's pretensions to the Western Ukrainian lands during World War II. Some Polish authors also state that many Ukrainians, who served the German occupation authorities, were involved in the Polish-Ukrainian conflicts too. Simultaneously some Polish authors portray the Poles who also collaborated with the Nazis against the Ukrainians not as betrayers of their country, but, justifying them, as fighters against the Ukrainian terror, and as supporters of the Polish underground movement (Siemaszko; Siemaszko, 2000, vol. 2, pp. 1077–1078). However, even some historians in Poland unmask these false statements. Individual Ukrainian archival documents have been widely used lately by these authors as sources in works devoted to Ukrainian-Polish relations (e.g., by Wladyslaw Filar, Grzegorz Motyka), confirming collaborationism of the Polish police in the Nazi service in Volhynia directed against the Ukrainians (Filar, 2003, pp. 181–201; Motyka, 2011, pp. 105–107)).

The collection of articles "Anti-Polish Action of the OUN-UPA 1943 – 1944. Facts and Interpretations" was of great importance for understanding the newest Polish interpretations of warfare between participants of the Polish and Ukrainian underground forces. The



narratives and constructions of the Polish historians on the nature of ethnic confrontations (Kwaśniewski, 1994, pp. 39–54; Sokołowski, 1994, pp. 39–48; Szykiewicz, 1996, pp. 15–30), general sketches of Polish-Ukrainian relations in historical perspective, general strategies and tactics in their historical relations (Malikowski, 2003, pp. 189–214), military preparations and activities of the Polish armed formations (Klimecki, 1998, pp. 55–76; Krawczyk, 2008, pp. 102–132), an analysis of the human losses in the conflicts (Hryciuk, 2005), etc. also are interesting for understanding the reasons, processes and results of the Polish-Ukrainian conflicts during World War II.

By the last two decades, a clear tendency was evident in Poland to exaggerate “another side’s guilt” and to relativize the guilt for “one’s own crimes”. Quite often, some authors only demonstrated an evident ignoring of information undesirable for them, rather than simply forgetting it. Continuing to label the Volhynian tragedy as an anti-Polish genocide, when entire Ukrainian villages across the so-called Curzon line (the lands of Zakerzonnia) were wiped out in 1943–1944, many Polish authors did not see this as genocide. For instance, E. Siemaszko and the others expressed the opinion that the Poles who murdered Ukrainian civilians in Sahryn in 1944, and in Pawlokoma in 1945, are free of any guilt since it was the fault of the Ukrainians (Dytkowski, 2011; Isakowicz-Zaleski, 2011; Siemaszko, 2011; Kulińska, 2006; Konieczny, 2000).

**The Conclusions.** Analyzing the works of the Polish historians, the conclusion can be drawn that the “Polonocentric perception” of the Polish-Ukrainian conflicts during the years of the German-Soviet War shapes the contemporary reception of this topic in Poland. Quite obvious is a tendency to accept empathy for the Polish victims with a simultaneous ignorance of the Ukrainian casualties of this inter-national confrontation. “Political intervention” through myth-making about the history of these dramatic events by some authors in Poland has blocked constructive discussion of these tragic and even bloody pages of common Polish-Ukrainian history. A decisive influence on the historical treatment of the Ukrainian-Polish relations during the years of the German-Soviet War has been played political interference in their study by some historians in contemporary Poland. On the basis of their statements and conclusions, the Polish mass media have generated emotional perceptions in ways that are particularly problematic and that stimulate further politicization of the past, which sometimes has produced no less trouble in continuing Polish-Ukrainian relations than the historical intervention of Russia into these relations from the outside. However, only by taking into account all the arguments and conceptual approaches of historians of Poland and Ukraine can we have a broad enough field for generalizations on the problem under study and on other difficult issues of Polish-Ukrainian history.

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