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**Vitalii KOTSUR**

*PhD hab. (History), PhD (Political Sciences), Associate Professor, Rector of Hryhorii Skovoroda University in Pereiaslav, 30 Sukhomlynsky Street, Pereiaslav, Kyiv region, Ukraine, postal code 08401 (kotsurv@ukr.net)*

**ORCID:** 0000-0001-6647-7678

**ResearcherID:** AAJ-8183-2020

**Oleksandr KOVTUN**

*PhD (History), Associate Professor, Associate Professor of Department of Management, Practical Psychology and Inclusive Education, Hryhorii Skovoroda University in Pereiaslav, 30 Sukhomlynsky Street, Pereiaslav, Kyiv region, Ukraine, postal code 08401 (kovtun3029@gmail.com)*

**ORCID:** 0000-0003-0145-7988

**Віталій КОЦУР**

*доктор історичних наук, кандидат політичних наук, доцент, ректор Університету Григорія Сковороди в Переяславі, вул. Сухомлинського, 30, м. Переяслав, Київська обл., Україна, індекс 08401 (kotsurv@ukr.net)*

**Олександр КОВТУН**

*кандидат історичних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри менеджменту, практичної психології та інклюзивної освіти Університету Григорія Сковороди в Переяславі, вул. Сухомлинського, 30, м. Переяслав, Київська обл., Україна, індекс 08401 (kovtun3029@gmail.com)*

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**IDEOLOGY AND CONTROVERSY OF THE RETURN  
OF PEREIASLAV-KHMELNYTSKYI HISTORICAL NAME PEREIASLAV:  
MANAGEMENT ASPECT**

**Abstract.** *The article focuses on the analysis of the ideological aspects and contradictions of returning the historical name Pereiaslav to the city of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi. The research methodology is based on the principles of historicism, objectivity, methods of scientific analysis, generalization. The scientific novelty is that for the first time the ideological aspects and contradictions regarding the return of the historical name of Pereiaslav to the city of Pereiaslav-Khmelnysky are analyzed. The Conclusions. In the scientific discourse of historians, we should highlight two approaches of changing the toponymic names of settlements. It is revealed that the returning to the city of its historical name Pereiaslav should be considered in the light of two historical concepts: of the Soviet “All-Russian nation” and of the restoration of historical memory of the Ukrainian nation. At the present stage of*

state-making and nation-building processes in Ukraine, the main motives of the returning to the city of its historical name Pereiaslav, especially the historical, political and ideological, domestic, have been identified. Based on history lessons, the main stages of returning the city to the historical name have been identified. The public and political initiatives of the 1990s have been highlighted, where the problem of restoration historical memory and state processes since the times of Kyiv Rus and the role of Pereiaslav Principality was raised in the circles of local historians and researchers. There have been elucidated the political attempts of restoring the historical name of Pereiaslav at the beginning of the 2000s. It is proved that the activation of public and political initiatives on the return of the city's historical name Pereiaslav in 2014 – 2019 brought to the restoration of historical justice and, at the legislative level of the returning to the city of its historical name.

**Key words:** *Pereiaslav, Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, renaming, return of historical name, ideology, “brotherly peoples”, “reunification”.*

## **ІДЕОЛОГІЯ ТА ПОЛЕМІКА ЩОДО ПОВЕРЕННЯ МІСТУ ПЕРЕЯСЛАВ-ХМЕЛЬНИЦЬКИЙ ІСТОРИЧНОЇ НАЗВИ ПЕРЕЯСЛАВ: УПРАВЛІНСЬКИЙ АСПЕКТ**

**Анотація.** У статті проаналізовано ідеологічні аспекти та суперечності повернення історичної назви Переяслав місту Переяслав-Хмельницький. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципах історизму, об'єктивності, методах наукового аналізу, узагальнення. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що вперше аналізуються ідеологічні аспекти та суперечності щодо повернення історичної назви Переяслав місту Переяслав-Хмельницький. **Висновки.** У науковому дискурсі істориків слід виділити два підходи до зміни топонімичних назв населених пунктів. Виявлено, що повернення місту історичної назви Переяслав слід розглядати у річищі двох історичних концепцій: радянської “всеросійської нації” та відновлення історичної пам'яті українського народу. На сучасному етапі державо- і націєтворчих процесів в Україні визначено основні мотиви повернення місту історичної назви Переяслав, передусім історико-політико-ідеологічні, побутові. Беручи до уваги минуле Переяслава, визначено основні етапи повернення місту історичної назви. Висвітлено громадсько-політичні ініціативи 1990-х рр., де в колах краєзнавців та дослідників порушувалася проблема відновлення історичної пам'яті з урахування державотворчих процесів часів Київської Русі та ролі Переяславського князівства. Висвітлено політичні спроби відновлення історичної назви Переяслава на початку 2000-х рр. Доведено, що активізація громадських та політичних ініціатив щодо повернення місту історичної назви у 2014 – 2019 рр. привела до відновлення історичної справедливості, а на законодавчому рівні – до повернення місту його історичної назви.

**Ключові слова:** *Переяслав, Переяслав-Хмельницький, Богдан Хмельницький, перейменування, повернення історичної назви, ідеологія, “братні народи”, “возз'єднання”.*

**The Problem Statement.** For decades, not only in the circle of the Ukrainian historians, political scientists, but also public and state figures, there was an ongoing discussion about returning to the city of Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi its historical name – Pereiaslav. After the Revolution of Dignity, military aggression and continuing “hybrid war” of Russia against Ukraine, the return of the historical name to Pereiaslav acquired special importance, not only in the sense of national importance, but also in the sense of the revival of the chronicle truth. The well-known historian, Professor Anatolyi Podolynnyi in his article “Renaming as Part of the Ideological Policy of the State in the Past and at Present” quite rightly notes: “Unfortunately, this problem is not just an interesting phenomenon from the past for us today – it remains topical, as Ukraine has not yet established itself as a fully independent state entity. The threat of losing this independence is quite real” (Kotsur, 2016). At the same time, a well-known Ukrainian contemporary writer Vasyl Shklyar notes: “We have never known our true history, it was written to us by the occupant, distorted everything backwards. He called heroes bandits and bandits – heroes” (Shkliar, 2015). Consequently, the Soviet authorities tried to fix in the

names of settlements proper, not Ukrainian, history. The beginning of the ideological renaming of settlements by the communist authorities began back in the 20s of the twentieth century. At the same time, new settlements (Mnikh) began to be named after revolutionary figures.

**The purpose** of this review is to debunk the Soviet and post-Soviet myths about the return of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi historical name Pereiaslav, the transition of this topic from the counterversion to scientific constructivism in the context of the restoration of historical memory, the formation of a local toponymic strategy and practice, the model of returning the city of its historical name.

**The Analysis of Sources and Recent Researches.** Renaming and toponymic policy in Ukraine, in particular ideologization, deideologization, politicization of toponymy and memory policy in Ukraine have been the subject of research by a large cohort of domestic scholars, in particular, V. Viatrovycha (Reply Pereiaslav, 2016), S. Butka, S. Horobtsia, I. Karetnikova, B. Korolenka, M. Maiorova (Butko et al, 2015), I. Drohushevska (Drohushevska, 2017, pp. 22–27), Y. Karpenko (Karpenko, 1967, pp. 3–12), D. Buchko (Buchko, 1991, pp. 60–73), V. Luchyk (Luchyk, 2009, pp. 28–33), S. Kovtiukh (Kovtiukh, 2015, pp. 67–71), L. Beley (Beley, 2015, pp. 12–15), etc. The researchers dealt with the issues of restoring the historical name of Pereiaslav: T. Nahaiko, V. Kotsur, M. Tomenko, O. Lukashevych, O. Kolybenko, M. Tovkailo.

**The Main Material Statement.** In pursuit of ideological and political goals, in October 12, 1943 by the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR and KPU and the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic the city Pereiaslav was renamed to Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi (Kotsur & Nahaiko, 2018, p. 16), and only 76 years later, in October 30, 2019 the city of Pereiaslav was restored of its historic name.

The famous Ukrainian historians O. P. Motsia and V. M. Rychka also supported the return of the historical name to the city. They noted that Pereiaslav played an important political role during Kievan Rus (Program of the round table Pereiaslav... 2016). Another opinion is expressed by historians Petro and Oleksii Tolochky, who do not support decommunization and renaming. Thus, A. Tolochko notes: "You and I are present at the reformatting of historical consciousness of Ukrainian ... As a historian, I believe that renaming should be stopped. Otherwise, we will learn that all our heroes are actually traitors, and yesterday's traitors are actually heroes" (Chervonenko, 2019).

However, in our opinion, the cities of Ukraine should return their historical names. It is not the political conjuncture of certain eras, but immemorial historical national traditions that have the right to eternity. If we follow the "logic" of the Soviet totalitarian era, then the city of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi could be renamed to "Pereiaslav-Shevchenkivskyi", or "Pereiaslav-Sholomaleikhenskyi", etc. As Illia Erenburh (born in Kyiv in January 18, 1891) once noted, during World War II there was a total renaming of cities after liberation from the German Fascist Invaders. Sometimes this was done in order to "improve" the name of the city. For example, after the liberation by the Soviet troops of the city of Propoisk (Belarus), it was named Slavhorod, but the military unit that liberated the settlement was not called "Propoisk", but instead it was called as "Slavhorod" (Kotsur, 2016, p. 4).

At the present state and nation building processes in Ukraine, there was a justified request of society and, in particular, the community of Pereiaslav, to get rid of the last remnants of totalitarianism and communist propaganda, which "settled" in the local toponymic names. The historical local history practice synthesized first of all several motives for returning the historical name Pereiaslav to the city, namely:

**Historical motif.** The first written mention of the city of Pereiaslav refers to the year of 907. The Ukrainian nation was formed in the triangle of Kyiv-Chernihiv-Pereiaslav, according to historical reconnaissance of the prominent Ukrainian statesman and historian Mykhailo Hrushevskiy. Precisely Pereiaslav was in the epicenter of the heroic and at times tragic ancient and medieval history of Ukraine. At the end of the XIth century the reigning in Pereiaslav was an obligatory stage of the princely career before the transition to the Kyiv throne. The historicity of Pereiaslav and its name is testified by the systematic annalistic references, which confirm its importance as one of the main centers of the Old East Slavic state. Even the first mentioning of the word “Ukraine” in 1187 in the Ipatiiiv Chronicle is directly connected with the ancient city, with the death of Volodymyr Hlibovych, who was the King of Pereiaslav.

**Political and ideological motives.** The renaming of Pereiaslav city in 1943 has little political and ideological motivation. People’s deputy of Ukraine Mykola Tomenko also mentioned this. He notes that the return of Pereiaslav city its historical name is a logical step towards the decommunization of society, the dismantling of the Stalin-Brezhnev ideological rubble (Tomenko, 2016). The renaming of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi is ideological and counter-versionist. Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi and its distortion of its historical name should be considered from the perspective of the Soviet historical concept of “three fraternal peoples”, with a pronounced Russocentrism of the Ukrainian state concept of restoring historical memory. The Soviet concept took over the modern Russian Federation, turning it into an element of “hybrid politics”. The neo-imperial geopolitical doctrine of the “Russian world” is closely linked to the all-Russian idea. Modern Russian historians-ideologists of the “Russian world” consider the figure of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi as one of the factors of imperial neocolonialism.

It should be mentioned that during the 1930s – 1950s the Soviet historiography rewrote the history of Ukraine actively in order to establish the idea of “three fraternal peoples” where the leading role was played by Russia with the center in Moscow. In the new Soviet historiography the main hero of the “reunification” of the Ukrainian and Russian peoples was Bohdan Khmelnytskyi and the Pereiaslavsk Rada together with c. Pereiaslav. It is noteworthy that in the 1930s the Pereiaslavsk Rada was interpreted by the Soviet historiography as “the union of the Ukrainian feudals with the Russians” (Yusova & Yusov, 2004, pp. 96–121), which in essence was the beginning of the Russian colonial domination over Ukraine, and colonial policy according to the concept of Marxism-Leninism was an unconditional evil.

For the first time, Moscow authorities decided to rehabilitate B. Khmelnytskyi as a hero in 1937. In a resolution of the jury of the government commission for a contest for a textbook on the history of USSR, however, the historians of that time failed to cope with the task. However, already in 1939 Kyryl Osipov’s book “Bohdan Khmelnytskyi” was published, written on the basis of Kostomarov’s research. Also in 1939 Oleksandr Korniiichuk completed the creation of the play “Bohdan Khmelnytskyi” where he managed to reanimate the heroic image of the hetman, which was actively used for propaganda and ideological purposes (Kraliuk, 2017).

The Ukrainian historians of the 1940s succeeded in putting B. Khmelnytskyi at the service of the Soviet ideology finally. At that time M. Petrovskiy was one of the most professional historians, whose field of research was the history of Ukraine of the XVIIth – the XVIIIth centuries. He wrote a number of objective historical works in the 1930s, but already at the end of the 1930s M. Petrovskiy began to mount ideological constructions dangerous to the Ukrainian identity in the history: “seniority” of the Russian people; the “Eternal” desire to unite Ukrainian and Russian “Bratnii Narod” with the leading role of Moscow (CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 70, c. 399, pp. 1–5) and committed the ideological treatment of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi

(CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 70, c. 399, pp. 27–28). In the ideological works of M. Petrovskiy we can see how he interprets the national revolutionary war under the command of B. Khmelnytskyi: “In 1648 the national and civil war began in Ukraine. On behalf of the Ukrainian people there became a patriot of the native land, a progressive activist of those times, the great (the word “great” is fixed) hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi...”. In this case M. Petrovskiy generatively describes the beginning and the course of World War II (CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 70, c. 146, p. 95). At the same time he introduces into these theses the official ideology of the Kremlin, where he states: “A lot of the Russians, especially Don Cossacks, fight in the Ukrainian army. At the time of the temporary disasters, many Ukrainians resettled in the interregnum of the former Russian state, in the so-called Slobodska Ukraina. Bohdan Khmelnytskyi proposes and begins to implement a plan for the reunification of our people in the Ukrainian state. According to the will of his people, from the first steps of the war of liberation the hetman began negotiations with the Russian government on the accession of Ukraine to Russia (characteristically, during the war Khmelnytskyi did not interrupt these negotiations, but always led them (CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 70, c. 399, p. 22). Finally, at the beginning of 1654 this accession happened. Our people expressed aspiration for eternal unification with the Russian people on the well-known council in Pereiaslav in January 8, 1654 with cries: “God assure, God strengthen that we are all one for ever”. The incorporation of Ukraine into Russia strengthened ties of the Ukrainian and Russian peoples ... Until his death / 1657 / B. Khmelnytskyi, strengthening the act of annexation of Ukraine to Russia, also fought for the liberation from the occupiers of the Western Ukrainian lands ...” (CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 70, c. 146, pp. 96–97).

The ideological pressure on history intensified even more after 1947, when leading historians of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR were accused of bourgeois nationalism. Then a dictatorship of incompetent people began to reign in scientific institutions. Under the fear of reprisals and accusations, the Ukrainian historians finally subjected to revision the significant moments of the Ukrainian history, a number of the main concepts that were correct and reflected the real historical process. Among a large part of the rewritten historical events there was the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Pereiaslavskaya Rada. At that time, this event was given the importance of almost a “revolutionary event of all mankind” and, above all, such policy manifested itself in a change of terminology. Instead of “incorporation” it was declared “reunification” for Ukraine and Russia, which became obligatory for all scholarly researches of that time. But after 1947 the reunification of Ukraine with Russia began to be estimated as the best prospect for the Ukrainian people, as an unconditional good, as a natural result of the entire previous history of the two great “brotherly nations”. Thus, a cognitive dissonance arose in the history of Ukraine, because it turned out that the Ukrainian people had been fighting against their own independence for many centuries. The ideological collision was built by “exalting” of the Russian nation and, as a consequence, the Soviet Union became the heir to the “one and indivisible” Russia.

***At the same time, the real ideological motive behind the rewriting of history with the heroization of certain individuals perpetuated in toponymic names was as follows:***

First of all, the Ukrainian national hero Bohdan Khmelnytskyi was characterised in the Radianska historiography as the main fighter and enemy of the Poles, who always fought for the reunification of the Ukrainian and Russian peoples. The reason for such a prominent emphasis on the post of B. Khmelnytskyi was that the great hetman did not openly wage war with Moscow, and, therefore, his image was ideally suited for an ally of the Moscow tsar.

At the same time, the Soviet historians envisioned the fact that B. Khmelnytskyi waged a national war of will against both the Poles and the Muscovites.

Secondly, during World War II B. Khmelnytskyi was used to strengthen the support of the Ukrainians against the German occupation and to mobilise the population for the war. B. Khmelnytskyi was presented as a folk hero, who for the support of the people was able to oppose any external threat. This thesis is confirmed in the ideological articles of that period (“The Great Heroic Ancestors of the Ukrainian People: Bohdan Khmelnytskyi”, etc.). For example, in this article it is stated that “eight thousand Germans massacred Bohdan’s units at Kostiantyniv in 1648, Ten thousand Germans were killed by the Cossacks and killed in the battle of Batogom in 1652 ... People made all these sacrifices just to free Ukraine from the enemies ... Bohdan always had as many people as he needed. He always had a great number of people who were inevitably captured by the enemy and there they gave inhumane information even unto death and the enemy was wounded. The women went far into the enemy’s til for reconnaissance... The Ukrainians! Glorious partisans and partisans! Be worthy of our glorious ancestor – the national hero Bohdan Khmelnytskyi...”. (CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 70, c. 145, pp. 92–93).

Thirdly, the historical memory of the Ukrainians remained especially stable in the cities, which had an ancient history and which was much deeper than the history of Russia. The antiquities of the Ukrainian cities carried a direct threat to the existence of the myth of “brotherly peoples” and the “seniority” of the Russians. Therefore, the policy of erasing the memory was transferred to the practical plane, in particular renaming towns and villages, had a powerful symbolic meaning, preserving the national memory and identity of the Ukrainian. That is why, when renaming the city of Pereiaslav to Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi on October 12, 1943, during the terrible years of World War II, the ideologists of Stalinism wanted to uproot the tree of its thousand-year history and transplant it into an artificial pot of the form of 1943. The insidiousness of the colonial policy of the “big brother” was that, by adding to the name of our city the glorious name of the leader of the national liberation revolution of the Ukrainian people in 1648 – 1657, they wanted “to cut off Pereiaslav from the state and historical origins of Kievan Rus” permanently. In addition, after adding the name of our city to the glorious name of the leader of the national liberation revolution of the Ukrainian people in 1648 – 1657, B. Khmelnytskyi, they sought to “cut off” Pereiaslav from the state historical origins of Kievan Rus forever, losing it in the vast maze of provincial cities, mentioned only in connection with the anniversary of the falsified agreement on the “reunification of the Russian and Ukrainian peoples.

Fourthly, the belonging of the Ukrainians only to the Cossack period automatically made our people “lesser brother” of the Russians and at the same time wrapped in the Soviet myths and distorted concepts the figure of B. Khmelnytskyi made of him not a fighter for the Ukrainian national state, but only a fighter for reunification of the Russian and Ukrainian “brotherly” peoples, who in fact they never were.

Fifthly, adding to name of the city of Pereiaslav the word “Khmelnyskyi” was used only for propaganda and consolidation in the consciousness of the Ukrainian Pereiaslavsk Rada of 1654, during which allegedly “Khmelnyskyi accomplished the will and desire of the Ukrainian people to achieve that in 1654 Ukraine was annexed to Russia. Two fraternal, single-blooded nations united” (CSAPAU, f. 1, d. 70, c. 145, pp. 93–94).

The situation looks completely different in the current Ukrainian-Russian context. During his speeches the Russian president V. Putin emphasized that the Russians and Ukrainians are not just brothers, but even one people (Putin: Russians and Ukrainians, 2017), the Ukrainians are trying with all their might to prevent it. Thus, the re-consideration of the problem of

decommunization, the return of historical names to the settlements at the time, because, as V. Vernadskyi pointed out: “Old knowledge is enriched with modern ideas, new ideas, methods, competences are generated... Science is constantly moving forward, rethinking its own past” (Kolesnyk, 2013, p. 122).

In modern scientific discourse the policy of restoration of historical memory, rewritten in the Soviet times pages of the Ukrainian history, which led to the change of settlements, ancient cities and villages of our country being actively promoted.

The renaming of Pereiaslav on October 12, 1943, in our opinion, resulted not only in the distortion of its historical name but also in the devaluation of the state process in Ukraine and the formation of the modern Ukrainian nation. It should be noted that the renaming of Pereiaslav took place in the first weeks after the liberation of the city from the German occupation. At the time when Pereiaslav residents had not yet come to their senses, had not recovered from the tragic consequences of the forcing of the Dnipro river. From the stories of their parents, grandfathers and great grandfathers, the native Pereiaslav citizens know that about one million soldiers of the Red Army, including only those mobilized from Left-bank Ukraine, without arms and equipment died liberating Kyiv for the anniversary of the Bolsheviks revolution in 1917. As the Soviet writer Viktor Astafiev noted: “When 25,000 soldiers entered on one side of the Dnipro river, no more than 5 – 6 thousand came out on the opposite side” (Hrabovskiy 2017). Those tragic events are reminded by famous mass graves and erased in the memory of burials in the villages and towns of Kyiv and Pereiaslavschyna, museum tours, awards of soldiers. Nowadays, historians open new pages of the heroic and tragic history of the Battle of the Dnipro, bring to light the unjustifiability of hundreds of thousands of victims for the sake of Stalin’s ideological projects. In all armies of civilized countries the warrior-defender was pocinated, while predominantly Stalinist commanders viewed the soldier only as a means to achieve strategic goals, and the life of an ordinary man was seen as “expendable material” not worth anything (Kotsur, 2016, p. 4).

At the same time, the policy of creating a negative resonance around the renaming of Pereiaslav is noticeable nowadays. V. Viatrovych, Chairman of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (2014 – 2019) calls the aggravation of the situation about the decommunization of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi “inappropriate sarcasm”. He notes: “...in fact, this process is not the implementation of the law on decommunization, although it is certainly related to the overcoming of the Soviet legacy”. The historian notes that the renaming is important for a better understanding of the significance of this city in history and “will allow not to look at it only through the prism of the Pereiaslavska Rada and reunification with Russia”. K. Halushko, a historian, supports this thesis, in particular he notes: “I do not see in the renaming any humiliation of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi”. The appendix to the name of Pereiaslav is a legacy of the Soviet era, when the emphasis was placed precisely on the Pereiaslav Rada in the succession of Hetman ... He notes that the alliance with Russia for B. Khmelnytskyi was temporary, lasted for not long period of time, and soon his allies were already Sweden and Transylvania. At the same time, the historian notes that B. Khmelnytskyi’s name will remain immortalized in the name of the regional center, and there will be no such Soviet connotation. He pointed out that in 1943 the Soviet authorities renamed Pereiaslav to Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi solely for “opportunistic purposes” in order to perpetuate the Pereiaslav Rada of 1654 and the role of B. Khmelnytskyi. “... We should talk not so much about the fact that Bohdan Khmelnytskyi’s name was removed from the title, as about the deconstruction of the Soviet myth of the Pereiaslav Rada as the eternal

unification of Ukraine with Russia... which, by the way, did not really exist: it was a political military union”, summed up K. Halushko (Chervonenko, 2019).

**Domestic motive.** The use of the modern name of the city of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi leads to a number of everyday inconveniences, coincidences and metamorphoses. On official documents, advertising signs and road signs there should be distortions in the spelling of the official name “Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi”, “Per.-Khmelnyskyi”, “P.-Khmelnyskyi”, “P.-Khm”. Often an average citizen confuses the regional center of Khmelnyskyi with the ancient historical city of Pereiaslav. This situation causes inconvenience both in everyday life and business.

Since the city is a historical, cultural and tourist heart of Kyiv and Ukraine, such motives became the basis for returning the historical name to the city.

The initiative to return the historical name of the city can be divided into several stages.

**The first stage can be considered the beginning of the 1990s.** It was with the restoration of the Ukrainian independence in the narrow circles of local historians, scientists raised the problem of restoring historical memory, processes of state since Kievan Rus, where at that time the leading role in the political map was played by Pereiaslav. At that time, the return of the city to its historical name can be traced in the discourse of historians, the Ukrainian intelligentsia of the 1990s. Thus, a senior researcher of Pereiaslav-Khmelnysky State Historical and Cultural Reserve (nowadays, NIEZ “Pereiaslav”) Mykola Tovkailo in his article “Pereiaslav needs Khmelnysky Annex” notes: “... changing the name of the city in 1943, adding to the name the name of the glorious hetman Bohdan Khmelnyskyi is unlawful neither from a historical, nor ethical or moral point of view”. After all, by adding the name of a famous commander in Pereiaslav, it was tied to a specific historical era, namely the XVIIth century. But we know that the name of the city arose in the IXth century (and probably earlier). That is why, consciously or unconsciously, one-sidedness of the history of Pereiaslav took place, one page of its history was covered excessively, to the detriment of the others ... Nobody asked Pereiaslav inhabitants whether they agreed with such renaming in 1943. “In the huge Stalin’s cauldron, where everything was mixed up, where entire peoples disappeared from the historical arena, and from the geographical maps their names, the addition of another name of a small ancient town could weigh...” (Tovkailo, 1990, p. 3). Mykola Tovkailo’s scientific research was a manifestation of the author’s anti-Soviet views and simultaneously one of the first official publications on the restoration of the historical name of the city of Pereiaslav. This article was published in the Soviet local press, and therefore the newspaper editors did not share the author’s conclusions and suggestions.

**The second important stage in the restoration of historical justice should be considered the beginning of the 2000s.** In particular, the initiative of the Pereiaslav-Khmelnysky City Council to return the historical name Pereiaslav (Minutes of the plenary session of 15, 2000). At that time, initiative groups were created that collected signatures of citizens in support of the name change. It was planned to hold the local referendum together with the all-Ukrainian (Minutes of the plenary session of 16, 2000). The question was supposed to be considered in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, but was blocked by the Communist Party of Ukraine. Thus, the Communist Party of Ukraine together with local communists sued the local court to cancel the referendum, because there were violations in the signature lists, in particular, almost all signatories indicated their address as “c. P.-Khmelnyskyi”. The court, which received a recommendation from above, recognized these drawbacks as significant violations and ruled in favor of the CPU. The deadline for re-collection of signatures passed, and thus the local referendum did not take place (Sokur, 2017). However, under the political and ideological

conditions of the time, the issue of changing the names of settlements was debatable. Most of the decisions to change the names of administrative and territorial units were never made. In legal practice, there were four cases of failure to implement decisions on the naming and renaming of settlements. The procedure for naming or renaming of settlements (1991 – 2012) provided for: the holding of a local referendum, the application of the regional council to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for the renaming of a population center and the adoption by the Verkhovna Rada of a resolution on the renaming of settlements. For example, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine did not support the decision adopted by citizens to rename the village Leninske into Tarasivka, Skvyra region of Kyiv oblast, initiated by citizens in 2000. Leninske village regained its historical name only in February 2016 as part of the reform of decommunization. In general, the non-implementation of decisions made in referendums at that time were one of the most problematic aspects of the mechanism functioning of local referendums (Experience of local referendum in Ukraine, 2016).

***The third and final stage is 2014 – 2019.*** Public and political initiatives to return the city to its historical name of Pereiaslav became more active after the Revolution of Dignity, under conditions of the Russian aggression and in connection with the latest processes of decommunization of the Ukrainian society. In general, in the situation with Pereiaslav, it should be understood that the figure of Khmelnytskyi was used here only for ideological purposes – to bind Ukraine to Russia forever. One cannot deny the fact that the Soviet state had a monopoly on the renaming of settlements. It carefully monitored the implementation of the official policy of memory, embodied through targeted ideological measures.

In modern Ukraine, in accordance with Paragraph 29 of Paragraph 1, Article 85 of the Constitution of Ukraine, the question of renaming settlements refers to the powers of the Verkhovna Rada (the Constitution of Ukraine). Nowadays, the society actively joined the process of returning the historical names to the cities by means of public discussions, round tables with attraction of the expert environment. Before the Revolution of Dignity and the appearance of the Heavenly Hundred, the Soviet toponymy in our state was accepted neutrally, both by representatives of the state authorities, and a certain part of ordinary Ukrainians. Under modern conditions, against the background of the events that took place, such an attitude is contrary to the national interests of Ukraine. Our state is gradually shifting from the policy of transformation of the post-Soviet space to the construction of a new modern Ukrainian state. At the same time, in the neighboring Russian Federation, where, in the words of the well-known scholar and public figure Yaroslav Potapenko, a “collective Putin” with the characteristic features of a “mafia state” has formed, where fascism in the Russian dimension, has won, a return to the historical past of the Soviet era is underway. The more comprehensive the ideological break between Russia and Ukraine, the faster Ukrainians will become a nation with its own history. Therefore, it was not only necessary to participate in the return of historical truth, but also extremely important in the context of informational counteraction to the external aggressor. At the same time, the way to return the city to its historical name of Pereiaslav turned out to be difficult in terms of the current political situation and bureaucratic and legal obstacles. We remind you of the timeline of events on this issue.

At a meeting of the toponymic commission, its members unanimously supported the proposal to return the historical name of the city and held a round table “Pereiaslav through the ages” March 4, 2016 with leading experts in history and archaeology: Doctor of Historical Sciences, Director of the Institute of Archaeology, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Alexander Moschi and doctor of historical sciences, professor, leading researcher of the Institute of History, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Volodymyr Rychka.

On March 26, 2016 – the executive committee of the Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi City Council appealed to the Chairman of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, Volodymyr Viatrovykh, with a request to support the initiative of the city community to return Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi its historical name.

On April 11, 2016 – The Ukrainian Institute of National Memory reported that, given the historical facts, the initiative of the city council, in the case of a corresponding appeal of Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi City Council to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, it will support its recommendation to return the city's historical name (Appeal of the Mayor of Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi, 2016).

On May 20, 2016 – public hearings on the return of the historical name of the city “Pereiaslav” were held. During these hearings 70% of the participants of the public discussion voted “for” and only 5% “against”, all the rest abstained.

On June 23, 2017 – members of the Public Council under the executive committee of Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi City Council made a proposal to return the historical name “Pereiaslav” to the city, and on June 26, 2017 the chairman of the Public Council Vitaly Kotsur sent a letter to Mayor T. Kostina with a request to consider the return of the historical name “Pereiaslav” at the next session (Appeal of the Public Council, 2017).

As a result, on October 3, 2017 the Executive Committee of Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi City Council created a working group (decision № 351-17 from 3.10.2017) in order to return the historic name “Pereiaslav” to the city.

The return of the historical name “Pereiaslav” to the city was supported by the political elite, public figures, and intellectuals of the Pereiaslav region. Thus, in the name Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi the appendix “Khmelnytskyi” was too heavy, but at the same time there was a loss of the historical brand. Residents began to be referred to as “Pereiaslavkhmelnychany”. He noted that only in the case of a return to its historical roots and sources will Pereiaslav get a spiritual victory, which will lead us to the cohort of outstanding, famous cities of European Ukraine (Sokur 2017). But a local historian, T. Nahayko noted that in January of 2014 pro-Russian representatives of the so-called Sobor of Slavic peoples Tsarev and Zatulyn held a propaganda campaign in Pereiaslav to celebrate the 360th anniversary of the “Reunification of Ukraine and Russia”. Then Moscow Patriarch Kirill, then-Prime Minister Mykola Azarov, and Russian presidential advisor Sergey Glazyev addressed the meeting participants with official greetings. Two months later, the annexation of the Crimea took place, followed by the Russian Federation's military invasion of Donbass. In the context of Russia's current hybrid war against Ukraine, the ability to resist information and ideological influence is important for us. Our society should possible abandon the practice of confessing the Soviet ideological cliches as soon as, the artificiality of which is quite obvious. Both at the state level and at the level of local communities there should be purification from the imposed imperial stereotypes of the past. Against the background of democratic pro-European changes, the urgent task is to prevent the influence of Russian ideological myths on the formation of consciousness of modern generations of the Ukrainians. The revival of Pereiaslav in its historical name testifies to the role of the city in the formation of the deep state traditions of our homeland, returns not only the local community, but also the nation face to the memorable heritage of our ancestors (Nagayko).

At the same time, some district leaders of the 2018 – 2019 sample thought that B. Khmelnytskyi was a person who, in the interpretation of the Soviet historiography, realised “the centuries-old aspirations of the Ukrainian people to unite with the fraternal Russian people”, and therefore the older generation of people was not against leaving the city with its Soviet name, while only the

new generation of Pereiaslav residents demanded the renaming (Korolyova, 2019).

On October 26, 2017, the city council of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi decided to return the city its historical name (decision #03-44-VII) (Deputies Pereiaslav, 2017).

Before local deputies voted to return Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi its historical name, a letter from former mayor Hryhoriy Sokur (Sokur 2017) was published on the official portal of the city council. Unlike Yuri Klimenko, the ex-mayor is confident that the renaming will improve the life of the city in all spheres. "It is the name that will unite all residents of the community, will be a factor, a stimulus for progress, the development of the territory. The name of the city determines its history, character, life, architecture, culture, transport infrastructure, the behavior of its inhabitants" (Koroleva 2019). This opinion was supported by the mayor T. Kostin, who noted: "the decision to rename did not affect the attitude of residents to the historical figure of the hetman. Bohdan Khmelnytskyi is a powerful figure in history, and we respect him very much".

He recalls that at the beginning of the campaign to return the city's historical name, the majority of local residents opposed the initiative. At the same time, at public hearings, 70% of those present voted for the return of the historical name (Koroleva 2019). Bohdan Korolenko, the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, (UNIMP) notes that the decision taken was not exactly in the context of decommunization, but rather in decolonization, since the name of the city of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi did not contain symbols of the communist totalitarian regime. "It is about getting rid of the Soviet ideological stamps and clichés" noted B. Korolenko (Why they renamed ...).

On December 14, 2017 it was decided to initiate a petition before the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine by Kyiv Regional Council of the seventh convocation to return the name "Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi" to the city of Kyiv region.

On April 4, 2018 – the Committee on State Building, Regional Policy and Local Self-Government recommended the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to support the submission of Kyiv Regional Council to rename Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi city of Kyiv region to Pereiaslav city.

On May 19, 2018 – there was registered a draft resolution on the renaming of the city of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi Kyiv region (№ 8307 from 19.04.2018).

This issue was several times put on the agenda of the plenary sessions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VIIIth convocation, but was not adopted.

On September 18, 2019 – Committee on the organization of state power, local government, regional development and urban development on behalf of the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the IXth convocation, Dmytro Razumkov considered and unanimously approved the submission of Kyiv Regional Council on the renaming of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi city of Kyiv region to Pereiaslav city (Draft Resolution, 2019).

On October 30, 2019, the city of Pereiaslav was returned to its historical name (Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada, 2019). Recall that the UOC-Kyivan Patriarchate was the first to return the historical name to Pereiaslav in 2018, without waiting for the decision of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Patriarch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) Filaret said that their church "renamed" the city without waiting for official decisions. As soon as the decision was made at a session of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi city council, it changed the title of Metropolitan Epiphany of Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi to "Pereiaslavskyi". Changes were also made in the corresponding church documents.

**The Conclusions.** Thus, after the Revolution of Dignity (2013 – 2014) the state and society had unique opportunities to return the city of Pereiaslav memorable name. Firstly, there was a

public demand to get rid of the last remnants of totalitarianism and communist propaganda that had “settled” in the local toponyms. Secondly, the expert environment supported the initiative to return one of the oldest cities in Ukraine (the first written mention in 907) to its historical name. Thirdly, the Verkhovna Rada of the IXth convocation had all preconditions to return the city its historical name. With the restoration of the name Pereiaslav we return to our historical sources, where in the triangle Kyiv-Chernihiv-Pereiaslav, according to the historical researches of the prominent Ukrainian statesman and historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky, the Ukrainian nation was formed. It was Pereiaslav that was in the epicenter of the heroic and at times tragic ancient and medieval history of Ukraine. By giving our city its original name, we have returned it to the great Ukrainian history, and now the “museum city” may argue for inclusion in the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List. The return of the historical name to the city of Pereiaslav is an essential indicator of the national self-consciousness, self-identification, and an inherent sign of the state-territorial affiliation. Under the conditions of the “hybrid war” of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the preservation of the old name Pereiaslav-Khmelnytsky would mean a historical, ideological, value capitulation to the Russian imperial neocolonialism, both on the scale of the small motherland and Ukraine as a whole. The return of the historical name to Pereiaslav is a rejection of politicized and ideologized markers of the Soviet era and simultaneously a revival in the European civilized world.

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