Andriy SHCHEGLOV
PhD (History), Head of the Military-Historical Research Scientific Laboratory, Army Scientific Center, Hetman Petro Sagaidachny National Army Academy, 32 Heroiv Maidanu Street, Lviv, Ukraine, postal code 79012 (deep_in_faith@ukr.net)

ORCID: 0000-0002-6484-0864
Researcher ID: ABF-7217-2020

Андрій ЩЕГЛОВ
кандидат історичних наук, начальник науково-дослідної лабораторії військово-історичних досліджень Наукового центру Сухопутних військ, Національна академія сухопутних військ імені гетьмана Петра Сагайдачного, вул. Героїв Майдану, 32, м. Львів, Україна, індекс 79012 (deep_in_faith@ukr.net)

THE RUSSIAN FACTOR IN THE UKRAINIAN-POLISH RELATIONS ESCALATION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20th CENTURY
(on the example of damage to monuments at military cemeteries in Poland and Ukraine)

*Abstract. **The purpose of the research** is to carry out a historical analysis of the place and role of the military historical markers of World War II on the territory of Poland and Ukraine in the Ukrainian-Polish relations of the 2010s, the Russian Federation's information campaigns influence on the interstate and interethnic relations escalation. **The methodology of the research** is based on a complex of general scientific methods and methods of special historical research to identify, describe and explain the reasons for the escalation in the Ukrainian-Polish relations, which was often caused by the commemoration issue. **The scientific novelty** consists in the fact that the author, on the basis of a critical analysis of the Ukrainian historiography and information sources, offered a comprehensive understanding of the prerequisites, course and consequences of a short-term escalation of the Ukrainian-Polish political relationsdue to the opposite representation of the damage to monuments at military burials during World War II under the influence of the information psychological operations carried out by the Russian Federation and the intervention of "agents" of the Russian influence in Poland and Ukraine. **The Conclusion**. According to the author, there were numerous facts of damage to monuments, especially in the period of 2015 – 2017, at military burials of World War II period, which were primarily crimes that should be condemned, and their perpetrators should be identified and claimed criminal liability. At the same time, the actualization of mutual grievances and insults of the common historical past of the Ukrainian and Polish peoples was actively applied to manipulate and broadcast propaganda by the Russian Federation in the hybrid war strategy implementation. Hence, there is a drastic need for an appropriate assessment regarding the political, public and scientific environments of Ukraine and Poland, which used the topic of damage to monuments at military burials actively for the realization of their own interests and to the detriment of the national interests of both states. The full-fledged war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine on February 22, 2022 actualized the above-mentioned issue, which, under the Russian external intervention, may become a noticeable negative factor in strategic Ukrainian-Polish relations in a short- and medium-term historical perspective.*
***Key words:** military burials, hybrid war, Ukrainian-Polish relations, Russia.*

Andriy SHCHEGLOV

РОСІЙСЬКИЙ ЧИННИК ЩОДО ЕСКАЛАЦІЇ УКРАЇНСЬКО-ПОЛЬСЬКИХ ВІДНОСИН НА ПОЧАТКУ XX ст. (НА ПРИКЛАДІ ПОШКОДЖЕННЯ ПАМ'ЯТНИКІВ НА ВІЙСЬКОВИХ ПОХОВАННЯХ У ПОЛЬЩІ ТА УКРАЇНІ)

*Анотація. **Метою** роботи є історичний аналіз місця й ролі військово-історичних маркерів доби Другої світової війни на території Польщі та України в українсько-польських відносинах 2010-х рр., вплив інформаційних кампаній Російської Федерації на ескалацію міждержавних і міжнаціональних відносин. **Методологічну базу** дослідження становить комплекс загальнонаукових методів та методів спеціальних історичних досліджень виявлення, опису і пояснення причин ескалації в українсько-польських відносинах, до якої нерідко призводила комемораційна проблема. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що автором на основі критичного аналізу української історіографії та інформаційних джерел запропоновано комплексне розуміння передумов, перебігу та наслідків короткотермінової ескалації українсько-польських політичних відносин через протилежне представлення пошкодження пам'ятників на військових похованнях періоду Другої світової війни під дією інформаційно-психологічних операцій РФ та втручання "агентів" російського впливу в Польщі та Україні.*

*У **висновках** автор виходить з того, що численні факти пошкодження пам'ятників, особливо в період 2015 – 2017 рр., на військових похованнях періоду Другої світової війни є насамперед злочинами, які мають бути засуджені, а їхні виконавці – встановлені та притягнені до кримінальної відповідальності. Одночасно актуалізація взаємних кривд й образ спільного історичного минулого українського та польського народів активно використовувалася з маніпулятивно-пропагандистською метою російською федерацією у реалізації стратегії гібридної війни. При цьому відповідної оцінки потребують політичні, громадські та наукові середовища України і Польщі, які активно використовували тему пошкодження пам'ятників на військових похованнях для реалізації власних інтересів та на шкоду національним інтересам обох держав. Розгортання 22 лютого 2022 р. широкомасштабної агресії РФ проти України актуалізувало цю проблему, яка, за російського зовнішнього втручання, може стати помітним негативним чинником у стратегічних українсько-польських відносинах на коротко- та середньострокову історичну перспективу.*

Ключові слова: військові поховання, гібридна війна, українсько-польські відносини, Росія.

The Problem Statement. Due to the full-fledged war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, there is a drastic need to rethink the previous theoretical and methodological approaches and the results of the Ukrainian-Polish relations study in the first decades of the 21st century, based on the need to identify the past destructive Russian influence on their character. There were numerous facts of damage to monuments at military burials in Poland and Ukraine during the period of 2014 – 2017, which became one of the Russian Federation's tools of the hybrid war, both against Ukraine and Poland. The fact that the specified facts were not properly studied, an appropriate legal assessment was not provided, and appropriate information was not presented in the public media space allows the agents of the Russian influence to carry on their activities and be ready for further provocations against the background of the tragic historical experience of World War II period. Such activities can be deployed under special conditions, for example, when there is the growth of "fatigue from the war in Ukraine" in the Republic of Poland and the next elections to the Senate and the Diet (Sejm) are scheduled for the autumn of 2023, which are already being preceded by the growing popularity of the far-right party the "Confederation of Freedom and Independence" (in Polish – Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość), whose representatives often speculated and manipulated historical memory, especially Volyn tragedy of 1943.

The Analysis of Recent Research. It is important to mention the works, written by the Ukrainian historians I. Patryliak and M. Borovyk when reviewing the works on the issue

under analysis, as the above-mentioned authors covered the Ukrainian Liberation Movement activities during World War II and the Ukrainian-Polish conflict (Patrilyak & Borovyk, 2010). Another scholars, H. Kasianov analysed the historical politics and its conflict-causing potential (Kasianov, 2018), L. Khakhula devoted his work to the issues of modern Ukrainian-Polish relations in the light of difficult pages of common history (Khakhula, 2016), A. Bolianovsky carried out a historiographical study on the confrontation issues between the Ukrainians and the Poles during World War II (Bolianovskyi, 2021).

It is worth highlighting among the Polish historians the works, written by H. Motyka, who is considered to be one of the best scholars of the Ukrainian-Polish confrontation of the mid-1940s of the last century. H. Motyka was criticized by the Ukrainian scholars for the one-sidedness of the research, in particular the adherence to the theory that only the Poles were the victims of the conflict, but Motyka managed to distance himself from the criticism. It should be noted that there is also valuable information about the international relations during the years of events in his works, as well as the conclusions about their influence on the national memory of both peoples (Motyka, 2011; Motyka, 2016).

We should mention the research, conducted by H. Fedoryshchak, in which the author, performed the analysis of the institutional mechanisms of the countries under consideration, in the field of the memory policy implementation, among other conclusions, came to the following conclusions: there is a connection between political interests and the memory policy implementation, and the result such realization can be both cohesion of society against a historical background, and possibility of its disintegration (Fedoryshchak, 2017).

The works of Volyn researchers L. Strilchuk and A. Ninichuk are a thorough study of the historical memory issue and its influence on modern Ukrainian-Polish relations. The above-mentioned authors covered the Ukrainian-Polish conflicts in the field of the so-called "war of memory" and "war of monuments", highlighted the problems of harmonizing the visions of the countries on common historical events and showed possible ways of the inter-ethnic reconciliation in detail. Despite the fundamental nature of these studies, in their works the authors only briefly mention a destructive influence of the Russian Federation on the process of aggravation of relations between countries due to damage to military and civilian burials (Strilchuk & Ninichuk, 2017; Strilchuk & Ninichuk, 2019; Ninichuk, 2019a; Ninichuk, 2019b).

The Ukrainian scholar V. Hulai, based on his own political and communicative research, substantiated the external side of the political provocation of relations between the studied countries at the modern stage with the tools of a hybrid warfare for the first time (Hulai, 2018). The scholar singled out the most powerful agents of the Russian provocative influence in Poland on the Ukrainian-Polish relations escalation in the last decade for the first time (Hulai, 2017).

The Polish historian R. Drozd presented the methodological remarks on the prerequisites and nature of the use of the military burials issue of World War II period in modern Ukrainian relations several years ago (Drozd, 2020).

The analysis made by O. Nikonorov can serve as an empirical addition to the Russian influence on the Polish political environment (Nikonorov, 2017).

We can consider the article, written by N. Tuziak as a successful example of the use of technologies for working with open data to elucidate historical issues (Tuziak, 2017).

The editors of the renowned Internet resource the "Historical Truth" offered a generalizing historical and political retrospective of one of the plots of attempts to provoke the Ukrainian-Polish relations in the course of Russia's hybrid aggression against Ukraine (Vandalizm, 2017).

The research, done by Volyn historian O. Kalischuk is valuable from the point of view of the Ukrainian-Polish history interpretation, the stereotypes and mitologems formation (Kalischuk, 2023a; Kalischuk, 2023b).

The analysis of an intercultural interaction in the areas adjacent to the Ukrainian-Polish border caused by, among other things, commemorative factors was carried out by R. Chmelyk and L. Khakhula (Chmelyk & Khakhula, 2022).

Despite a number of works, there is no comprehensive comparative study of the damage to monuments at military cemeteries in Poland and Ukraine in the context of the hybrid warfare strategy implementation by the Russian Federation.

The purpose of the research is to carry out a historical analysis of the place and role of the military historical markers of World War II on the territory of Poland and Ukraine in the Ukrainian-Polish relations of the 2010s, the Russian Federation's information campaigns influence.

According to the set purpose, it is vital to solve the following ***objectives***:

– to summarize the facts of damage to monuments at military burials during World War II in Poland and Ukraine during the period of 2014 – 2017;

– to substantiate the causes, nature and manifestations of provocations by the Russian "agents of influence" of the Ukrainian-Polish relations using the example of damage to monuments at military burials in Poland and Ukraine during World War II;

– to indicate the threat of the political provocation reccurence in the sphere of the memory policy of the Ukrainian and Polish peoples.

The methodology of the research is based on a complex of general scientific methods and methods of special historical research to identify, describe and explain the reasons for the escalation in the Ukrainian-Polish relations of the last decade due to the issue of military burials during World War II.

The Results of the Research. In order to understand the beginning of the "conflict of memory", it should be stated that there were the remarks made by the Polish historian R. Drozd, who, did the research on the issue of commemorating the victims of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict, emphasized the Polish population's attitude towards the burial places of the Ukrainians. In the case of civilian victims of the conflict, the attitude was neutral, i.e. it did not cause objections in society. The reaction to the errection of tombstones for soldiers of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (the UPA) was quite the opposite. The majority of the Polish society considered the UPA soldiers to be the criminals, who were involved in the murders of their loved ones not only on the territory of modern Ukraine, but also in Poland. That is, the directly opposite attitude of the Ukrainian underground activities by the Ukrainians and the Poles affected the perpetuation of the UPA soldiers (Drozd, 2020, p. 92).

The actual aggravation of the Polish-Ukrainian "war of memories", which concerns the military burials of World War II soldiers, came after 2014, when Russia, implementing a hybrid strategy of geopolitical revenge against Ukraine, annexed the Autonomous Republic of the Crimea and the city of Sevastopol and established in separate districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions controlled by quasi-state terrorist organizations, the so-called "Donetsk People's Republic" and "Luhansk People's Republic". The Republic of Poland support for the state sovereignty restoration and territorial integrity of Ukraine could not suit the Russian Federation. In this context, the following words should be mentioned by the renowned Polish researcher, director of the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Grzegorz Motyka: "... nothing separates the Poles and the Ukrainians, except for the dispute

over one fragment of history – Volyn crimes", assuming the possibility of using those events as a benefit to Russia in modern hybrid warfare (Tregub, 2017).

A retrospective analysis of the damage to monuments at military cemeteries in Poland and Ukraine over the past decade should begin with the testimony of the head of the Association of Ukrainians in Poland, Petro Tyma, who mentioned another act of vandalism, in addition to the destruction of burial sites in the villages of Hrushovychi, known at that time, Radruzh, Molodych, Verbytsia, Monastyr, Pikulychi, Lisky, – on October 9, 2015, the representatives of the Ukrainian minority discovered a destroyed monument to the Ukrainians, among whom there were members of the UPA, at the cemetery of the village of Verkhrata, Liubachiv poviat, Subcarpathian Voivodeship (Na skhodi Polshchi, 2017).

The next similar act took place on March 10, 2016 – unknown people destroyed one of the two slabs of the monument to the UPA soldiers and local residents in the village of Molodychi in the Subcarpathian Voivodeship of Poland, located on the site of the former Greek-Catholic cemetery. According to P. Tyma, the destruction of the monument in Molodychi was not "a joke, but a classical provocation". "All these acts of vandalism were recorded on video and can be found on the Internet, in particular on the website novorossia.today, the authors of which were the representatives of the nationalist organization "Obóz Wielkiej Polski". P. Tyma emphasized the following: "To my mind, these were actions inspired by Russia. All this was done in the interests of Russia, which wanted to make the Poles and the Ukrainians to bicker" (Wandale zniszczyli pomnik, 2016). O. Nikonorov analysed the origins, character and provocative activities of the organization "Obóz Wielkiej Polski" ("The Camp of Greater Poland") in more detail (Nikonorov, 2017).

Another monument was destroyed in the village of Verkhrata in Subcarpathian (Podkarpackie) Voivodeship at the beginning of October of 2016. It is about a stone cross on the territory of the Greek Catholic cemetery. It was errected in 1993 and dedicated to the memory of te Ukrainian civilians and the UPA soldiers, who died during World War II and the post-war years. According to the video from Verkhrata posted on YouTube, it is obvious that the Ukrainian monument is being destroyed during a daylight. Two young men break a stone cross with a jackhammer, and then a pedestal. In the description of the video, it is said that the monument was destroyed by the "patriots" from the "Tykhotemni" (Silent) group. The video was posted online by the Polish pro-Kremlin figure David Gudziec, known for his support of the militants in Donbas (Savytsky, 2016) .

The ultranationalists from the group "Obóz Wielkiej Polski" took responsibility for the attacks on monuments to the soldiers of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in eastern Poland in November of 2016, based on the publications of some Ukrainian electronic mass media. (Ukraina – Polshcha: viina pamiatnykiv, 2017).

We agree with the opinion of the Polish journalist and researcher of a modern political life of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus Michal Kacewicz: "These were planned actions, which were carried out by the "Obóz Wielkiej Polski" and the nationalists mainly. And it's not just about cemetery vandalism, insults to the Ukrainians and demonstrations of hatred for the UPA. For the first time, the shameful destruction of tombstones was accompanied not only by the anti-Ukrainian slogans related to Volyn, the UPA and the tragic Polish-Ukrainian history, but also by the slogans related to the war in eastern Ukraine. Thus, they fit perfectly into the propaganda war waged by Moscow. Their aim was to cause a breakdown in the sympathies of the Poles towards Ukraine, which was fighting against the Russian aggression" (Kacewicz, 2016).

The generalized statistics of attacks on burial places of the Ukrainians in Poland were the following: 2014 – 5; 2015 – 6; 2016 – 3; the first half of 2017 – 1. There is the list of damaged or destroyed graves, which includes: a memorial sign to the UPA soldiers (Bialostok tract); a memorial sign commemorating the Ukrainian victims of the communist repression (Verbytsia village); a monument at the mass grave of 13 UPA soldiers (the village of Verkhrata); a monument to the Ukrainian community of the village (Molodychi village); a memorial sign to the UPA soldiers on Mount Monastyr (near the village of Verkhraty); a memorial sign commemorating the Ukrainian victims of the communist repression (Radruzh village); a gravestone monument to the UPA soldiers (Hrushovychi village); the graves of the Ukrainian military cemetery (Pykulovychi village) (Ataka, 2017; Za try roky, 2017).

In addition to the actual attacks on the burial places of the Ukrainians in Poland, the provocations often occurred during the events commemorating them. A vivid example of such actions is an annual visit to the Ukrainian military cemetery in Pykulychi near Przemyśl. As a rule, this holiday of the national memory consists of a liturgy in the local UGCC cathedral, a procession from the church to the burial places and a memorial service at the military cemetery. The attacks on the march participants and provocations occurred quite often during the period under study. As the Ukrainian historian M. Lytvyn, a frequent participant in these events, recalls, all the provocateurs were usually the Polish youth, they were dressed in the same T-shirts with the anti-Ukrainian symbols, their actions were planned and synchronized, they obstructed the movement of the convoy, shouted the anti-Ukrainian slogans and tried to get into a fight. M. Lytvyn also emphasized the presence of the Russian journalists: "Our procession moved through the streets of the town from the Cathedral of the UGCC of St. John the Baptist to the cemetery in the village of Pykulychi. When there was the movement of the convoy, a man approached me, who introduced himself as a correspondent of the newspaper "The Krasnaya Zvezda" (publishing house of the armed forces of the Russian Federation – A. Shchehlov). She asked about the purpose of the hike and my assessment of the event. The journalist speaks Russian without an accent and, in my opinion, she knew that the provocations related to Volyn tragedy, the OUN, the UPA had been already planned ..." (Lytvyn, 2023). The very course of the provocations was preserved on the network (Protest, 2017).

In the context of Russia information war against Ukraine and its use of the historical memory of the events of 1943 in Volyn, it is also crucial to mention the unprecedented fact of an appeal in 2013 by the pro-Russian politicians – the people's deputies of Ukraine at that time with a call to the Polish Diet to recognize the events in Volyn as a genocide. The majority of the so-called "group of 148" were the deputies of the Party of Regions, 25 were the members of the Communist Party of Ukraine, and eight were non-factional deputies. We consider such an act not only an outright subversive activity, but also an incitement of the inter-ethnic enmity. Many of the signatories of the letter are now in the Russian Federation, and some cooperate with the occupiers, such as Volodymyr Saldo and Yevhen Balytsky (Sereda, 2013).

The journalistic intelligence and analytical materials are important for exposing the role of the Russian Federation in attempts to provoke the Ukrainian-Polish relations. Hence, at the beginning of March of 2017, the volunteers of the "InformNapalm" community published part of the analysis of the data obtained by the hackers from the "Ukrainian Cyber Alliance" (UCA) from the mailbox of one of the coordinators of the so-called the "Russian world" in Eastern Europe – Oleksandr Usowski, which provided an evidence, among other things, that the money for the OUN-UPA monuments looting in Poland were given by Russia (InformNapalm, 2017).

At the end of summer – mid-autumn of 2014, there were active anti-Ukrainian actions and actions in the Republic of Poland. Usowski interacted with the members of the right-wing organization the "Camp of Greater Poland" (OWP – Obóz Wielkiej Polski) (more about this organization in the context of the Ukrainian-Polish relations (Nikonorov, 2017)), Mateusz Piskorski's Samooborona and other middle-level activists. According to the study, it was noted the following: "OWP activist Wojciech Waclaw Wojtulewicz helped Usowski more actively than the others in the fight against the Ukrainian monuments. In August of 2014, they actively communicated with Usowski regarding the action near the monuments to the UPA soldiers in Eastern Poland. In particular, it was about the monument in Khrushchovytsi... It is interesting that the Kremlin pays for such "patriotic" impulses of the Polish right. The price is quite moderate. Such an action with a monument to the UPA and a trip to a rally in Budapest cost the Russian budget only 2,000 dollars (or euros) (InformNapalm, 2017).

In turn, Jan Pieklo, a director of the Polish-Ukrainian Foundation for Cooperation PAUSI (in the past, the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Ukraine – A. Shchehlov) was convinced that the destruction of the Ukrainian monuments on the territory of Poland was carried out by the hands of the Kremlin's puppets. Ja. Pieklo noted the following: "The fact that information appears on the "Novorossiya" website rapidly, indicates that there is a direct connection between the Russian agents, Russia and the destruction of these Ukrainian UPA monuments on the territory of Poland" (Savytsky, 2015).

According to experts' forecasts, the "war of monuments" carried on. The next acts of vandalism took place already in Ukraine, in Lviv region. The first provocative attempt to escalate the Ukrainian-Polish relations around the issue of damage to World War II monuments was the looting of the memorial to the Polish residents of the village of Huta Peniatska, which was located on the territory of the modern Pidkaminska community of Lviv region. On January 8, 2017, the memorial tables with the names of the dead were filled with blue and yellow, black and red paints, and the central cross composition was broken into pieces (Dudar, 2017; Lewicki, 2017; Smoleński, 2017; Pomnik Polaków w Hucie Pieniackiej, 2017).

The reaction of the Polish side was prompt and unambiguous. For example, the Consul of the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Lviv, the First Counselor of the Consulate Maryan Orlikovskyi visited the damaged memorial in Huta Peniatska on January 10 and later on noted the following: "It is definitely a provocation. It's hard for me to speak. I do not understand who did it, in what way and why. The relevant services will take care of that. On the other hand, I can express my great satisfaction with the presence of so many people here, especially from Lviv Regional State Administration, which shows that everyone was worried" (Belovolchenko, 2017).

"Their interest and problems with carrying out the provocation indicate unambiguously that the source of all this is Moscow. It is also confirmed by the fact that the Russian mass media were the first to inform about this event," said the adviser to the head of the Polish Foreign Ministry, Professor Przemysław Zurawski vel Grajewski, in a comment to the Ukrinform agency (Radnyk Vashchykovskoho zaiavliaie, 2017).

He also drew attention to the fact that the video from YouTube was captioned in Ukrainian with the use of Russianisms and emphasized that "during 2015 – 2016, during the destruction of the Ukrainian monuments in Poland, the vandals also left the Polish inscriptions with some mistakes". According to him, the destruction of the monument at Huta Peniatska cemetery was the proof that "there is an intensive attempt to antagonize the peoples of our region, who are threatened by Russia" (Radnyk Vashchykovskoho zaiavliaie, 2017).

A well-known Polish scholar, Ewa Siemaszko, stated that the Russian provocateurs were involved in the attack on the memorial in Huta Peniatska: "All signs in the sky and on the ground point to the Russian "paws" ...a video of this event appeared on YouTube with the caption that it was made by the "Right Sector". The "Right Sector" renounced it immediately and declared that it had nothing to do with it. It is interesting that there was a spelling mistake in the mentioned signature indicating the Right Sector, which a Ukrainian would not have made. The above-mentioned mistake indicated a connection with the Russian language. Moreover, Siemaszko said the following: "I learned that the first information about the destruction of the monument appeared on the Russian government portal" Semashko said (Ewa Siemaszko, 2017).

The next stage of the Ukrainian-Polish relations provocation occurred at the beginning of March of 2017, when on March 10, the vandals desecrated a monument to the Polish professors, who died at the hands of the Gestapo in July of 1941 on the Vuletski Hills in Lviv. It was smeared with red paint, and the inscription "death to liakhy" was also painted on it (Lavryshyn, 2017).

On March 12 of the same year, an act of vandalism occurred in the village of Pidkamin, which is not far from the above-mentioned Huta Peniatska cemetery. The commemorative tables with the names of the dead were covered with red paint, the inscription "Death to liakhy" and swastika were written on the cross (Tereshchuk, 2017).

It is worth agreeing with V. Hulai, who claimed that the individual media resources were adding salt to the conflict. Quite often, the Ukrainian and Polish mass media tried to make a sensation out of the above-mentioned provocations on the territory of Ukraine and Poland, which, as a rule, were behind the Russian side (Hulai, 2017, p. 622).

In contrast to this, the results of the journalistic investigation of the Internet resource ZAXID.NET are worthy of special attention, which testify convincingly that the main goal of the unknown vandals was to raise a resonant information wave, and not to damage the memorial (Tuziak, 2017). Next, we will outline the main results of the author's research:

– for the first time, the information about destruction of the monument in Huta Peniatska appeared in the anti-Ukrainian groups of the "Vkontakte" network on the morning of January 9;

– the first message about the desecration of the monument appeared in the group "Russia, Ukraine and Belarus –are the Holy Rus'" (10:24 9 січня);

– 1:45 p.m. On January 9, information about this case appears on the Facebook page of former "Inter" TV host and "Antimaidan" host Yuriy Kot. He did not add a photo from the scene, writing only that "Glory to Ukraine" was written on the monument. The post was created long before the publication of the first news on this topic and has already gained greater resonance;

– in particular, Yuriy Kot's post was shared by the page of Zhovkva district organization "Party of Regions" and followers of Viktor Medvedchuk. In addition to them, several VKontakte users also copied this post.

– one of the first messages among news sites was published at 4:51 p.m. The Russian news agency "NA Kharkiv" published an article with the telling title "What is going to happen! Banderivtsi declared the war on the Poles in Western Ukraine";

– for the first time, the photos from Huta Peniatska were published on the pro-Russian blog varjag2007su in LiveJournal at 7:35 p.m. varjag2007su himself refers to the Russian agency Regnum, but there the news about the destroyed monument appeared at 20 minutes later than in the LiveJournal post.

– the metadata of the published photos indicate that they were created around 5:30 p.m. (this is the time when the photo was uploaded to the site). It is also interesting that the video from the scene of the incident was uploaded to YouTube at 6:54 p.m., that is, half an hour before it was published on the LiveJournal blog. Apart from the video from Huta Penyatska, there is nothing else on the "Vilna Ukraina" YouTube channel

– already with a reference to the Russian Regnum, information about the destroyed monument went to other sites. The "Correspondent" was one of the first Ukrainian agencies to report this news at 8:51 p.m., which is part of the UMH media holding, which is still owned by the scandalous fugitive businessman Serhiy Kurchenko (Tuziak, 2017).

We agree with V. Hulai's thesis and state that in both states it was clear to the politicians and experts, who took advantage from it and who was the initiator of the Polish-Ukrainian "monument war". However, the society saw the photo, formed appropriate associations and demanded a reaction from the politicians (Hulai, 2017, pp. 619–620).

The Conclusion. Hence, on the basis of the analysis of historiography and information sources, a new comprehensive understanding was elucidated on the prerequisites, course and consequences of attempts to escalate the Ukrainian-Polish relations through the representation of damage to the monuments at military burials during World War II under the influence of information and psychological operations of the Russian Federation and the intervention of the "agents" of the Russian influence in Poland and Ukraine. There were numerous facts of damage to monuments, especially during the period of 2015 – 2017, at military burials of World War II period, which were primarily crimes that should be condemned, and their perpetrators should be identified and claimed criminal liability. In our opinion, the deployment of the Russian Federation full-scale war against Ukraine on February 22, 2022 removed from the "priority agenda" the above-mentioned issue, which under another Russian external intervention could become a noticeable negative factor in the strategic Ukrainian-Polish relations during the period of resistance to the Russian armed aggression against our state.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Ataka. (2017). Ataka z tylu: "Typovyi Usovskyi" ta antyukrainski intryhy Kremlia u Polshchi (Infohrafika, Videohrafika) [Attack from the rear: "Typical Usovsky" and the Kremlin's anti-Ukrainian intrigues in Poland (Infographics, Videographics)]. *Inform Napalm.* URL: https://informnapalm.org/ua/u-polshhi-infografika/ [in Ukrainian]
Ataka z tylu. (2017). Ataka z tylu: intryhy Kremlia u Polshchi [Attack from the rear: the intrigues of the Kremlin in Poland] *Petr i Mazepa.* URL: https://petrimazepa.com/kremlinfrontinpoland.html [in Ukrainian]
Belovolchenko, H. (2017). Provokatsii i rosiiskyi slid: kudy nas pryvede "viina na mohylakh". [Provocations and the Russian trail: where will the "war on the graves" lead us]. *Dyvys.Info.* URL: http://dyvys.info/2017/03/14/provokatsiyi-i-rosijskyj-slid-kudy-nas-pryvede-vijna-na-mogylah/ [in Ukrainian]
Bolianovskyi, A. (2021). 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. *Skhidnoievropeiskyi istorychnyi visnyk – East European Historical Bulletin, 18,* 239–251. doi: 10.24919/2519-058X.18.226505 [in English]
Chmelyk, R. & Khakhula, L. (2022). Ukrainian-Polish Intercultural Communication in the Border Areas (the end of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century). *Skhidnoievropeiskyi istorychnyi visnyk – East European Historical Bulletin, 23,* 214–225. doi: 10.24919/2519-058X.23.258987 [in English]

Drozd, R. (2020). "Konflikt pam'iati": do pytannia pro vshanuvannia zhertv polsko-ukrainskoho protystoiannia 1940-kh rr. na terytorii suchasnoi Polshchi ["Conflict of Memory": on the Issue of Commemorating the Victims of the Polish-Ukrainian Conflict of the 1940s on the Territory of Modern Poland]. *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal – Ukrainian Historical Journal, 5,* 90–102. [in Ukrainian]

Dudar, O. (2017). Na Lvivshchyni vandaly pidirvaly memorial (foto, video) [Vandals blew up a memorial in Lviv region (photo, video)]. *Dyvys.Info*. URL: https://dyvys.info/2017/01/10/na-lvivshhyni-vandaly-pidirvaly/ [in Ukrainian]

Ewa Siemaszko. (2017). Ewa Siemaszko o zniszczeniu pomnika w Hucie Pieniackiej: Wszystkie znaki na niebie i ziemi wskazują na "łapki" rosyjskie [Ewa Siemaszko on the destruction of the monument in Huta Pieniacka: All the signs in the sky and earth point to Russian "paws"]. *wPolityce.pl*. URL: https://wpolityce.pl/polityka/322746-nasz-wywiad-ewa-siemaszko-o-zniszczeniu-pomnika-w-hucie-pieniackiej-wszystkie-znaki-na-niebie-i-ziemi-wskazuja-na-lapki-rosyjskie [in Polish]

Fedoryshchak, Kh. (2017). *Instytutsiini mekhanizmy realizatsii polityky pamiati na derzhavnomu rivni (na prykladi Ukrainy ta Respubliky Polshcha)* [Institutional mechanisms for the memory policy implementation at the state level (on the example of Ukraine and the Republic of Poland)]. *(PhD thesis)*. Ivano-Frankivsk: Prykarpatskyi natsionalnyi universytet im. V. Stefanyka. [in Ukrainian]

Hulai, V. (2017). Rosiiskyi provokatyvnyi vektor konfrontatsii vidnosyn Polshchi ta Ukrainy (2015 – 2017): polityko-komunikatyvnyy vymir analizu ta prohnozuvannia [Russian Provocative Vector of Confrontation of Relations Between Poland and Ukraine (2015 – 2017): Political and Communicative Dimension of Analysisand Forecasting]. *Ukrainsko-polski vidnosyny. Novitnia doba – Ukrainian-Polish relations. New age,* 609–622. [in Ukrainian]

Hulai, V. (2018). Polityko-komunikatyvnyi vymir dyskursu politychnoi komunikatsii vidnosyn Ukrainy ta Polshchi na prykladi poshkodzhennia polskykh pam'iatnykiv pochatku 2017 roku [The Political-Communicative Dimension of the Discourse of Political Communication of Relations Between Ukraine and Poland Using the Example of Damage to Polish Monuments in Early 2017]. *Mizhnarodni vidnosyny: teoretyko-praktychni aspekty – International relations: theoretical and practical aspects*, 1, 255–265. doi: https://doi.org/10.31866/2616-745x.1.2018.142009 [in Ukrainian]

InformNapalm. (2017). InformNapalm pokazav, yak Kreml finansuie polskykh radykaliv [InformNapalm showed how the Kremlin finances Polish radicals]. *Ukrinform*. URL: https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-abroad/2185467-informnapalm-pokazav-ak-kreml-finansue-polskih-radikaliv.html [in Ukrainian]

Kacewicz, M. (2016). Nienawiść, czyli komu służy niszczenie ukraińskich pomników? [Hate, or who benefits from destroying Ukrainian monuments?] *NewsWeek Polska*. URL: https://www.newsweek.pl/opinie/pomniki-upa-w-polsce-niszczenie/4jshh09 [in Polish]

Kalischuk, O. (2023a). Ukrainsko-polski vzaiemyny v roky Druhoi svitovoi viiny: interpretatsii mynuloho v umovakh zminy heopolitychnykh realii [Ukrainian-Polish Relations during the Second World War: Interpretations of the Past in the Conditions of Changing Geopolitical Realities]. *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal – Ukrainian Historical Journal, 4,* 98–112. doi: 10.15407/uhj2023.04.098 [in Ukrainian]

Kalishchuk, O. (2023b). Mythologemes "Hero", "Enemy", "Victim" in the Context of Ukrainian-Polish History of the first half of the 20th century. *Skhidnoievropeiskyi istorychnyi visnyk – East European Historical Bulletin, 26,* 144–152. doi: 10.24919/2519-058X.26.275199 [in English]

Kasyanov, H. (2018). *Past continuous: istorychna polityka 1980-kh – 2000-kh. Ukraina ta susidy* [Past Continuous: Historical Politics of the 1980s – 2000s. Ukraine and Neighbors]. Kyiv: Laurus, Antropos-Lohos-Fil′m. [in Ukrainian]

Khakhula, L. (2016). *"Rizuny" chy pobratymy? Suchasni polski dyskursy pro Ukrainu* ["Cutthroats" or brothers? Contemporary Polish discourses about Ukraine]. Lviv: Instytut ukrayinoznavstva im. I. Krypyakevycha NAN Ukrayiny. [in Ukrainian]

Lavryshyn, Yu. (2017). U Lvovi vandaly oskvernyly pam'iatnyk rozstrilianym polskym profesoram [In Lviv, vandals desecrated a monument to shot Polish professors]. *Zaxid.net*. URL: https://zaxid.net/u_lvovi_vandali_oskvernili_pamyatnik_rozstrilyanim_polskim_profesoram_n1420270 [in Ukrainian]

Lewicki, S. (2017). Kto prowokuje w Hucie Pieniackiej? [Who provokes in Huta Pieniacka?]. *Myśl Polska, 5/6,* 3. [in Polish]

Lytvyn, M. (2023). Sviato ukrainskoi natsionalnoi pam'iati u misti Peremyshl: [interv'iu z doktorom istorychnykh nauk, profesorom M. Lytvynom pro istoriiu, tradytsii ta suchasnyi stan provedennia Sviata ukrainskoi natsionalnoi pam'iati v Polshchi] [Holiday of Ukrainian National Remembrance in the city of Przemyśl: [interview with Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor M. Lytvyn about the history, traditions and current state of the Holiday of Ukrainian National Remembrance in Poland]. *Osobystyy arkhiv A. Shchehlova.* [in Ukrainian]

Motyka, G. (2011). *Od rzezi wołyńskiej do akcji Wisła. Konflikt polsko-ukraiński 1943 – 1947* [From the Volhynia massacre to Vistula operation. Polish-Ukrainian conflict 1943 – 1947]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie. [in Polish]

Motyka, G. (2016). *Wołyń '43* [Volyn' 43]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie. [in Polish]

Na skhodi Polshchi. (2016). Na skhodi Polshchi vkotre znyshchyly ukrainske pokhovannia [In the east of Poland, a Ukrainian burial ground was once again destroyed]. *Polskie Radio.* URL: http://archiwum.polradio.pl/5/38/Artykul/27466 [in Ukrainian]

Nikonorov, O. (2017). Aktyvnist prorosiiskykh orhanizatsii i rukhiv v Polshchi [Activity of pro-Russian organizations and movements in Poland]. *Polsko-ukrainska konfrontatsiia chy spivpratsia?: materialy kruhloho stolu (25 travnya 2017 r., m. Kyyiv)* [Polish-Ukrainian Confrontation or Cooperation?: Materials of the Round Table (May 25, 2017, Kyiv)], (pp. 10–18). Kyiv: Fond pidtrymky demokratychnykh initsiatyv. [in Ukrainian]

Ninichuk, A. (2019a). Mediinyi aspekt ukrainsko-polskykh superechok navkolo mists natsionalnoi pam'iati [The Media Aspect of Ukrainian-Polish Disputes over Places of National Memory]. *Hileya, 143,* 148–151. [in Ukrainian]

Ninichuk, A. (2019b). *Mistsia natsionalnoi pam'iati v suchasnykh ukrainsko-polskykh vzaiemynakh (1991 – 2018 roky)* [Places of National Memory in Modern Ukrainian-Polish Relations (1991 – 2018)] *(PhD thesis).* Lutsk. [in Ukrainian]

Patrilyak, I. & Borovyk, M. (2010). *Ukrayina v roky Druhoyi svitovoyi viyny: sproba novoho kontseptual'noho pohlyadu* [Ukraine during the Second World War: an Attempt at a New Conceptual View]. Nizhyn: PP Lysenko M. M. [in Ukrainian]

Pomnik Polaków w Hucie Pieniackiej. (2017). Pomnik Polaków w Hucie Pieniacka na Ukrainie został wysadzony [The monument to Poles in Huta Pieniacka in Ukraine was blown up]. *Newsweek Polska.* URL: https://www.newsweek.pl/swiat/pomnik-polakow-w-hucie-pieniackiej-na-ukrainie-zostal-wysadzony/9wchqls [in Polish]

Posolstvo Ukrainy. (2020). Posolstvo Ukrainy povidomylo MZS Polshchi pro znyknennia memorialnoi tablytsi z mohyly UPA [The Embassy of Ukraine informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland about the disappearance of the memorial tablet from the grave of the UPA]. *Ukrinform*. URL: https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-polytics/2859585-posolstvo-ukraini-poinformuvalo-mzs-polsi-pro-zniknenna-memorialnoi-tablici-z-mogili-upa.html [in Ukrainian]

Protest. (2016). Protest podczas procesji w Przemyślu [Protest during the procession in Przemyśl]. *RBR.INFO.pl* URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpzXsXlanxk [in Polish]

Radnyk Vashchykovskoho zaiavliaie. (2017). Radnyk Vashchykovskoho zaiavliaie pro "ruku Moskvy" u vandalizmi na Lvivshchyni [Councilor of Vashchikovsky declares "Moscow's hand" in vandalism in Lviv Oblast]. *Ukrinform*. URL: https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-polytics/2153775-radnik-vasikovskogo-zaaviv-pro-ruku-moskvi-u-vandalizmi-na-lvivsini.html [in Ukrainian]

Savytsky, Yu. (2015). Pam'iatnyky UPA u Polshchi ruinuie ahentura Kremlia – Yan Pieklo [Monuments of the UPA in Poland are being destroyed by an agent of the Kremlin – Jan Peklo]. *Radio Svoboda.* URL: https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/27200020.html [in Ukrainian]

Savytsky, Yu. (2016). Ruinuvannia ukrainskykh pam'iatnykiv u Polshchi: polska vlada movchyt, ale reahuie hromadskist [Destruction of Ukrainian monuments in Poland: the Polish authorities are silent, but the public reacts]. *Radio Svoboda*. URL: https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/28046418.html [in Ukrainian]

Sereda, S. (2013). Deputaty zi "spysku 148-my": My ne zradnyky [Deputies from the "list of 148": We are not traitors]. *Radio Svoboda.* URL: https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/25048283.html [in Ukrainian]

Smoleński, P. (2017). Zniszczono cmentarz w Hucie Pieniackiej. Gdzie dwóch sie kłóci, tam Rosja korzysta [The cemetery in Huta Pieniacka was destroyed. Where two quarrel, Russia benefits]. *Gazeta*

Wyborcza. URL: https://wyborcza.pl/7,75968,21225912,zniszczono-cmentarz-w-hucie-pieniackiej-gdzie-dwoch-sie-kloci.html [in Polish]

Strilchuk, L. & Ninichuk, A. (2017). Pytannia istorychnoi pam'iati v suchasnykh ukrainsko-polskykh vzaiemynakh. [The question of historical memory in modern Ukrainian-Polish relations]. *Naukovyi visnyk Chernivetskoho natsionalnoho universytetu imeni Yuriia Fedkovycha. Istoriia – Scientific Bulletin of the Chernivtsi National University named after Yury Fedkovich. History, 1,* 63–68 [in Ukrainian]

Strilchuk, L. & Ninichuk, A. (2019). *Viina pamiati ta viiny pamiatnykiv u suchasnykh ukrainsko-polskykh vidnosynakh* [War of Memory and Wars of Monuments in Modern Ukrainian-Polish Relations]. Lutsk: Tower-Print. [in Ukrainian]

Tereshchuk, H. (2017). "Viina pam'iatnykiv" iz Polshchi peremistylas v Ukrainu: dva akty vandalizmu shchodo polskykh pam'iatnykiv na Lvivshchyni [The "War of Monuments" has moved from Poland to Ukraine: two acts of vandalism against Polish monuments in the Lviv region]. *Radio Svoboda.* URL: https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/28365954.html [in Ukrainian]

Tregub, H. (2017). Gzhegozh Motyka: "Sohodni mozhna skazaty, shcho poliakiv ta ukraintsiv nishcho ne rozdiliaie, okrim superechky pro odyn frahment istorii – volynski zlochyny" [Grzegorz Motyka: "Today, we can say that nothing separates Poles and Ukrainians, except the dispute over one fragment of history – the Volyn crimes"]. *Ukrainskyi Tyzhden.* URL: https://tyzhden.ua/gzhegozh-motyka-sohodni-mozhna-skazaty-shcho-poliakiv-ta-ukraintsiv-nishcho-ne-rozdiliaie-okrim-superechky-pro-odyn-frahment-istorii-volynski-zlochyny/ [in Ukrainian]

Tuziak, N. (2017). Khto pryhotuvav provokatsiiu u Huti Peniatskii [Who prepared the provocation in Huta Peniatskaya]. *Zaxid.net.* URL: http://zaxid.net/news/showNews.do?hto_prigotuvav_provokatsiyu_u_guti_penyatskiy&objectId=1414635 [in Ukrainian]

Ukraina – Polshcha: viina pamiatnykiv. (2017). Ukraina – Polshcha: viina pamiatnykiv chy vtruchannia tretoi syly? [Ukraine – Poland: a war of monuments or the intervention of a third force?]. URL: https://www.volynnews.com/news/society/ukrayina-polshcha-viyna-pamiatnykiv-chy-vtruchannia-tretoyi-syly/ [in Ukrainian]

Vandalizm. (2017). Vandalizm u Huti Peniatskii. Reaktsiia v Ukraini ta Polshchi [Vandalism in Guta Peniatskaya. Reaction in Ukraine and Poland]. *Istorychna pravda.* URL: https://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2017/01/11/149447/ [in Ukrainian]

Wandale zniszczyli pomnik. (2016). Wandale zniszczyli pomnik żołnierzy UPA na Podkarpaciu [Vandals Destroyed a Monument to UPA Soldiers in Podkarpacie Region]. *PolskieRadio.pl.* URL: https://www.polskieradio.pl/5/3/Artykul/1593245,Wandale-zniszczyli-pomnik-zolnierzy-UPA-na-Podkarpaciu [in Polish]

Za try roky. (2017). Za try roky u Polshchi oskvernyly 15 ukrainskykh pam'iatnykiv – UINP [During Three Years, 15 Ukrainian Monuments Were Desecrated in Poland – UINP]. *BBCNewsUkrayina.* URL: https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/news-39814874 [in Ukrainian]