STATE ACTIVITY OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC CENTRAL COUNCIL: A COMPARATIVISTIC ANALYSIS AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF DIPLOMACY IN CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPE

INTRODUCTION

The end of the Great War in Europe marked the fall of the Central European empires (Austro-Hungarian, Russian, and Ottoman) and the emergence of new nation-states. The emergence of these independent entities took place against the backdrop of the unfavorable diplomatic atmosphere of World War I. One such country, standing on the Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire, was the Ukrainian People’s Republic (hereinafter – P.R. Ukraine), headed by a new democratic government - the Central Council. According to K. Kondratyuk, March 7 should be considered the date of establishment of the Ukrainian Central Rada (hereinafter UCR). It consisted of representatives of 19 political parties. Most of the members of the parties belonged to the socialists, which affected the state activity of the Ukrainian government. Having proclaimed the II Universal (June 10, 1917), the UCR assumed the state functions. At the same time, the III Universal (adopted November 6, 1917) proclaimed a broad program of future reforms in Ukraine concerning land, economic, social, and national spheres. Although the reign of the Central Council was not long, however, its achievements and historical role are notable. It is a great historical phenomenon. It is connected with basic state transformations, processes of consolidation of the nation, restoration of the Ukrainian statehood and development of democracy, parliamentary forms on Ukrainian territories of that time. As it is known at that time Ukraine has not kept its independence under blows of Russian Bolsheviks. In their work the then officials staked not on military force, but on diplomacy. For this reason, the negotiation methods of politics of the first quarter of the twentieth century require careful analysis, given the ambiguity of this approach in the wartime realities. It is also weighty that there are not many separate studies devoted to purely diplomatic activities of the UNR of the Central Rada period in Europe.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of the state activity of the Ukrainian People’s Republic in the background of diplomatic relations raises a lot of discussions, because the leading experts are trying to characterize the international policy of the Ukrainian People’s Republic in different ways. State missions of foreign missions in 1917 – 1919, has analyzed MATYASH (2019) in a thorough way. The researcher, on the basis of a multi-genre source base, highlighted the functions, role, and significance of international diplomatic institutions in the Ukrainian People’s Republic, subsequently and in the Ukrainian state throughout the Ukrainian Revolution. Also, the author investigated the main tasks and processes of formation of diplomatic representations of the Ukrainian People’s Republic. It is significant that (MATYASH, 2019) paid much attention to the main personalities who were directly involved in the foreign missions of that time. In addition, the researcher highlighted the evolution of Ukrainian-Bulgarian diplomatic relations. Fundamental works are outstanding studios P. Hay-Nizhnik. He characterized relations of the Ukrainian People’s Republic with Germany and Austria-Hungary in the context of their financial reciprocity. In addition, the researcher thoroughly described the international relations of Ukraine of the Central Rada period with Great Britain. RENDYUK (2018) analyzed the establishment and evolution of the relations of the Ukrainian People’s Republic with Romania through the prism of a diplomatic vision. He notes that the main urgent task of the Ukrainian Mission in Iasi was the evacuation of Ukrainian military forces from the past monarchist army, and also Ukrainian property. Kravchenko N. highlighted the development of Ukrainian diplomacy in the period of the Ukrainian People’s Republic as a tool for the protection of statehood. The researcher favors
the international activities of the Ukrainian People's Republic and believes that the young diplomatic service of the Ukrainian People's Republic made powerful moves to protect the new statehood. The country not only managed to get out of the war, but also achieved international recognition and received real military aid. Also weighty are KROPIVKO Studios (2019), which highlighted the organizational and legal principles of the NRA's foreign policy. The studies of Lviv professor K. Kondratyuk, who analyzed in detail the events of the Ukrainian revolution of 1917-1921, are outstanding, (KONDRATYUK, 2018). GOLOVCHENKO (2017) thoroughly illuminated the diplomacy of the Ukrainian People's Republic through the prism of formation of Ukrainian nationality. In order to cover the topic objectively, we turn to foreign researchers, in particular Russian historian and German scholars (PUCHENKOV, 2020; DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017).

METHODOLOGY
The work is based on the use of analytical methods. It is a study of historical, diplomatic, economic, and political information in order to illuminate the main problems of state activity of the Ukrainian People's Republic of the Central Rada period. For the sake of a successful and understandable construction of the material, an overview of general diplomatic processes that were taking place at that time in Central and Eastern Europe, whose countries differently conducted foreign policy relations with the newly created Ukrainian People's Republic, is also conducted. Such construction of the work contributes to illuminating the discussion and establishing the international place of Ukraine in the twentieth century. With the help of comparative-historical method it was possible to establish certain paradigms of work of diplomatic institutions of the Ukrainian People's Republic. At the same time, the history of state and law of Ukraine is in dense connections with general history, history of state and law of foreign countries, theory of international relations, theory of state and law. Thus, the history of the state and law uses other methods, as it is at the junction of sciences.

Dialectical method of research is also used in the article. It is a universal method based on dialectics, it is said about the knowledge concerning the basic laws of the evolution of thought, nature, and society. The outlined method allows you to demonstrate the relationship between specific socio-historical phenomena that are essential to the development of Ukrainian statehood. The work also applies theoretical methods of research. It is, in particular, the axiomatic approach, which is based on the use of well-established assumptions - axioms, on the basis of which logical conclusions and new obtained knowledge are constructed. The historical approach is based on descriptions of the real processes of emergence and further evolution of the objects of study. The international system of foreign policy in Central and Eastern Europe is illuminated using the method of systems analysis.

As a result, the region under study should be identified with the sum of constant mutual contacts of developing countries. Other general scientific methods have also been used, such as functional, systematic, and structural ones. Also, in the work a lot of space is given to the application of general methods of thinking: analysis, synthesis, and comparison. As a result, we obtained an objective position regarding the characteristics of state activity of the Ukrainian People's Republic during the Central Rada against the background of general diplomatic processes that took place in Central and Eastern Europe.

RESULTS
World War I caused the collapse of the two empires: the Russian and Austro-Hungarian and the impact on the development of national liberation movements of previously oppressed peoples. The emergence of new states, among which was the Ukrainian People's Republic, caused a new geopolitical location of Europe. The Ukrainian People's Republic, quickly developed from autonomy to an independent direction. During the Central Rada era (1917-1918), the basic principles of Ukrainian national foreign policy were formed, initial institutions were formed, and temporary plenipotentiary missions were eventually transformed into permanent diplomatic missions (KONDRATYUK, 2018). During this period, many legislative acts were developed and adopted, which in practice became instructions for the diplomatic services of the Ukrainian State and the UNR Directorate, determining the main directions of the formation of agencies and their institutions (MATYASH, 2019). Given that the Central
Rada of Ukraine, which was headed by M. Hrushevsky (1866-1934), initially stood on autonomist positions (about being part of federalist, but not Bolshevik Russia), at the initial stage of state processes lost the meaning of formation of a separate ministry of foreign affairs and other foreign policy structures (KONDRATYUK, 2018). These lost chances were caused by the unjustified romanticism of the then Ukrainian political elite, which was reinforced by the permanent political confrontation around utopian slogans. It was only over time that the foundations for international cooperation were established: a mature ministry of foreign affairs, the deployment of foreign missions among the bloc of Central Powers and the formation of ties with the new post-imperial countries of Russia and the governments of neutral states (GOLOVCHENKO, 2017). Thus, the active process of creating foreign policy bodies was initiated after the proclamation of the III Universal (July 6, 1917). It was then that the General Secretariat, the executive authority, was created. The Chairman of the General Secretariat, Vladimir Vinnichenko (1880-1951) and influential politician Alexander Shulgin (1889-1960) decided to approve the “Draft Law on the establishment of the General Secretariat of International Affairs” (GOLOVCHENKO, 2017). This body was fully formed after the adoption of the IV Universal and the proclamation of the independence of the UNR. Since that time, state activity began to create a number of different diplomatic and consular institutions, whose work was to be regulated by the basic laws and regulations adopted by the General Secretariat of International Affairs. This executive body formed both the appropriate legal basis for the representative activities of the Ukrainian People’s Republic in the world and was engaged in the training of the necessary political personnel. From the period of the Central Rada, the Ukrainian People's Republic established contacts with the leading countries of the world. For example, in December 1917, the Ukrainian government established contacts with the Entente States by receiving diplomats from France and Great Britain (GAY-NIZHNÍK, 2021).

The Ukrainian People’s Republic failed to establish relations with Soviet Russia. The Central Rada generally underestimated the strength of the Bolsheviks, reasoning that they would not last long in power. The leaders of the Ukrainian People's Republic did not recognize the Council of People’s Commissars, headed by Lenin, as the new Russian power. Instead of developing Ukrainian statehood, the Central Rada proposed that the regional governments of the Kuban, Crimea, Don, and Siberia enter into negotiations to form a federation (KONDRATYUK, 2018). Such ideas failed to materialize, but they provoked a sharply negative attitude of Bolshevik Russia toward the leadership of the Central Rada. At the end, minor diplomatic conflicts escalated into a war between the Council of People's Commissars of Russia and the Ukrainian People’s Republic. The former recognized the Central Rada as a bourgeois and counterrevolutionary body (PUCHENKO, 2014). Military threats from the Sovnarkom grew at the same time there was a threat of occupation of Ukrainian territory by German and Austro-Hungarian forces. In such a situation, the Ukrainian government appealed to the belligerent and neutral European countries with a note stating that it did not recognize the right of Russia to negotiate on behalf of its former peoples and would negotiate independently with Germany and Austria-Hungary (KRAVCHENKO, 2019). The leaders of the Fourth Union announced to the Ukrainian government that they were expecting a Ukrainian People's Republic delegation in the city of Brest-Litovsk. The Ukrainian representation arrived in Brest on December 25, 1917, from which time long negotiations between Ukraine, Germany and its allies began (KONDRATYUK, 2018). It is worth recognizing that the negotiations with the Central States that took place during January-February 1918 and the adoption of the Brest Peace Treaty were the greatest achievements of the Ukrainian People’s Republic diplomacy.
Given the fierce confrontation with the Sovnarkom delegation led by Trotsky, the political victory at Brest was a telling diplomatic victory for the Central Rada over the Bolsheviks in the confrontation for independence from Moscow. The peace agreement of the Ukrainian People’s Republic with the states of the Fourth Union, adopted on February 9, 1918, recognized Ukraine’s independence and defined its western borders, which coincided with the Austro-Russian border of 1914; the countries renounced mutual claims and payments; military operations in the Ukrainian direction-the Southwestern and Romanian sections of the front stopped (DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017). Understanding in economic policy was achieved, separate trade treaties were approved. Taking advantage of the difficult military situation of Austria-Hungary and its disputes with the German command, the diplomats of the Ukrainian People’s Republic achieved the annexation of Kherson and Podlasie, two fragments of Ukrainian ethnic territory in the Ukrainian People’s Republic (GOLOVCHENKO, 2017). At the same time, according to a secret deal with Vienna, the Austrian side undertook to create from Galicia and Bukovina a separate autonomous region with its own self-government (KONDRATYUK, 2018). An agreement was also reached to return prisoners of war from the former Russian army to Ukraine. The military convention adopted by the Ukrainian People’s Republic with Germany and Austria-Hungary stipulated that these states were to provide armed aid aimed at liberating Ukrainian lands, then almost entirely under Bolshevik occupation (DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017). It is clear that the Ukrainian People’s Republic did not seek to argue with Bolshevik Russia, so the Russian-Ukrainian war (1917-1918) was initiated by the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR. After the signing of the Brest Peace Treaty (February 14) with Germany and Austria-Hungary, the Ukrainian People’s Republic offered Russia peace negotiations (KONDRATYUK, 2018).

The next step hoped to liberate Ukrainian territory without the active participation of Austrian troops - through the voluntary withdrawal of Russian military from Ukrainian lands and recognition of Ukraine’s independence as stipulated by the Brest Agreement. Russia also received a number of claims related to the transfer to Ukraine of the Crimean Peninsula, ethnic Ukrainian territories on the border and the entire Black Sea Fleet. Due to the fact that the Council of People’s Commissars rejected all provisions, on February 18, 1918, German and then Austro-Hungarian armies went on the offensive (GOLOVCHENKO, 2017). As early as March, Ukrainian units entered Kyiv, and then the Central Rada state organs returned. As the Northern and Western fronts quickly collapsed, Bolshevik power was on the brink of disaster. Bolshevik Russia, saving its position, ceded a considerable amount of land and had to pay a significant contribution (in particular, to settle with gold reserves) (DORNIK, 2015).

In addition, she had to dissolve the army and navy. Note that the main goal was to keep power in the state, at which time it could have been threatened. The Brest Treaty was a notable defeat for Russian diplomacy, but for Ukraine it was a certain success, because the treaty itself did not contain “humiliating clauses for the Ukrainian People’s Republic”. The parties renounced mutual claims for compensation for damages caused by the war, restored previously lost economic relations, and exchanged prisoners of war (DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017). At the same time, the demands on the Ukrainian People’s Republic were quite specific. It was about deliveries for the first half of 1918 60 million pounds of bread and subsequently deliver 2 million 750 thousand cattle and other agricultural products and raw materials (KONDRATYUK, 2018). The adopted treaty had several meanings. First of all, Ukraine was moving closer to being recognized by the Central States as an equal world power. Second, attempts to resolve the problem of territorial borders, especially with Poland, on positions favorable to Ukraine developed positively (DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017). The Ukrainian issue was actively discussed by the international community. For example, in the U.S., the Brest Treaty was considered good for both Ukraine and Germany, as the latter gained an advantage in Central-Eastern Europe, gaining powerful influence from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. (DORNIK, 2015). At the same time, Ukraine was territorially in dispute with Austria over Galicia and Bukovina, receiving much stronger support from Germany.

The latter was taking control of Lithuania and Ukraine and thus found itself in a favorable geopolitical position (KONDRATYUK, 2018). Note that the adoption of these agreements had certain positive meanings for the NRA. First, broad prospects for the recognition of Ukraine in the international arena were created. Second, it entailed the active formation of foreign policy structures. Thirdly, the signing of the treaty influenced the creation of new Ukrainian
diplomatic missions. The great importance of Ukrainian diplomacy of that time was the work in the direction of recognizing the country as a real participant in international relations, as well as defending the unity of Ukrainian lands on the foreign policy level. We are talking about the events in Brest, when Ukrainian diplomats took part in the Brest Peace Conference and managed in part to reach a solution to the territorial disputes over Kholmshchina, Galicia and Bukovina (DORNIK, 2015). The Brest Peace caused a radical transformation in the political orientations of Ukrainian People's Republic diplomacy. In the latter, primacy was given to Germany and its allies, while relations with the Entente countries, primarily France and England, ceased for a certain period. A significant achievement of the concluded peace was the strengthening of diplomatic activity of the Ukrainian representation in Austria-Hungary, Germany, Romania, and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Another notable result of the Brest Treaty was the establishment of a Ukrainian military corps of prisoners of war camps in Austria-Hungary and Germany. Germany facilitated financial support for Ukraine and the arming of the Ukrainian People’s Republic foot divisions. On the other hand, it contributed somewhat to the activities of the ULU (Union for the Liberation of Ukraine). Note that the latter began extensive activities in Ukrainian POW camps (DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017). For example, a significant achievement was the formation of the Siniozhupannoy division, which was headed by V. Zelinsky (1864-1940) in February 1918.

At the same time, in Vladimir-Volynsky was formed Gray Division of Ukrainian soldiers who arrived from the camps in the city (KONDRATYUK, 2018). Thus, studying the diplomatic activities of the Ukrainian People’s Republic, we note that although the country was under direct threat from a powerful neighbor (Bolshevik Russia), the country still pursued an active foreign-political diligence. Thus, the Ukrainian People’s Republic sought support from Central European countries, which eventually contributed to the newly created state taking a prominent place in international relations, gaining recognition and the right to the status of a subject of foreign relations (KRAVCHENKO, 2019). If we turn to the assessments of the participants of the events described, they also differ according to political preferences. For example, the first general secretary (head of government) of the Ukrainian People's Republic V. Vinnichenko (1880-1951), characterizing the Brest Treaty, noted that Ukraine received many advantages from the establishment of the Brest Peace. In particular, according to him, the Ukrainian state was recognized as an important subject of international law by many countries, not only members of the Triple Alliance. In fact, the approval of the Brest Peace Treaty was the first “recognition” of Ukraine’s independence in modern history (DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017). At the time of the Central Rada, the first permanent missions of foreign states (military commissariats) began to form. They were formed directly for the purpose of protecting their own state interests (MATYASH I., 2019). This process took place within the framework of the formation of interstate relations of the sovereign Ukraine, the ratification of international treaties provided it with an opportunity to show itself as an active player in international politics. Georgia and Armenia were the first to appoint military commissars. Already 1917 (December). Note that Georgia maintained close relations with the Ukrainian People’s Republic. Thus, the Georgian National Rada sent its own representative to the capital of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (MATYASH I., 2018) At first, the Georgian military commissariat was headed by Lordkipanidze I. N. (1889-1937), who soon passed his authority to D. V. Vacheishvili. The main purpose of the GNR was to protect the rights of the Georgian population on the territory of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (MATYASH, 2018).

The Armenian Military Commissariat of the Ukrainian People’s Republic was similarly commissioned. It was established almost simultaneously with the representation of Georgia (January 7, 1918) and was headed by A. T. Tonyants. The main goal of the Armenian representation was to cooperate with the authorities of the Ukrainian People's Republic and to protect the rights of the Armenian population, to create a militia of Armenians and redirect it to the Transcaucasia (HUZUN, 2018). The mentioned representation was subordinated to the Central Armenian National Rada. We emphasize that the main function of the military commissariats of the new Eastern European states, which emerged as a result of the collapse of the Russian Empire, mainly converged on the redeployment to their homeland of soldiers who became citizens of the new state formations, after the end of hostilities, however, on the Romanian front (GUZUN, 2018). Note that Romania figured among the first group of Eastern
European countries with which the Ukrainian People's Republic established diplomatic relations (RENDYUK, 2019). The intention to conduct bilateral relations belonged to Kyiv, which in the person of A. Shulgin, - secretary of international affairs, addressed to Romania a request for assistance. It is about the protection from criminals of military depots, which were located in the then Ukrainian cities: Odessa, Poltava and Kyiv and Poltava (BELOUSOVA, 2015). It is clear that Romania had an actual interest in the beginning of relations with the independent Ukrainian state. Its main goal was the return of several thousand prisoners of war of Romanian citizens, who were former soldiers of the Austrian army. Another main task of Romania was to return its own military property, which during the First World War had fallen into the territory of the UNR. Another aim of Romania to make diplomatic contact with Ukraine of those times was to keep the Rumanian Council of Ministers (also directly King Ferdinand I (1865-1927)) informed. According to the extraordinary political changes and military events that were taking place at an accelerated pace on the territory of the then Ukrainian People's Republic (RENDYUK, 2018). Romania's first military diplomat, C. Coanda (1857-1932) was actively involved in the defection of the Romanian population to the homeland. However, as early as the beginning of 1918. Ukraine-Romanian relations began negative trends, caused from the Ukrainian side - the reorientation of the government to strengthen cooperation with the Fourth Union, and from the Romanian - the entry of Romanian military forces on the territory of Bessarabia and its further consolidation on March 27, 1918 (MATYASH I., 2018). In such a situation, the main goal of Ukrainian-Romanian cooperation was to establish relations based on the settlement of the acute Bessarabia issue. Regarding Bessarabia, the Ukrainian People's Republic emphasized an important interest, on this territory lived the majority of the Ukrainian ethnmos (RENDYUK, 2018).

Against the backdrop of the Brest Treaty, the relationship of the Ukrainian People's Republic with Bulgaria was also taking shape. On February 12, a treaty was signed between the two states to regulate public and private legal relations. There were also approved conditions on the return of prisoners of war, on the amnesty that was to be given on the establishment of peace (Matias I., 2019). In addition, as a result of the Brest negotiations, Latvia recognized the Ukrainian People's Republic in December 1918. The Second Polish Republic, which emerged in 1918, was somewhat cautious about the Ukrainian People's Republic. However, the figures of the Central Rada managed to sign agreements with the Polish Corps. It was the agreement of April 4, 1918, on the presence of Polish soldiers on the territory of Ukraine. On the part of Ukraine of that time, on April 8, 1917, there were sent resolutions about the claims to non-Polish territories stated by the Polish State Council in its declaration regarding the appeal of the Russian Provisional Government to reunify the Poles. Among the new countries which appeared as a result of the collapse of the Russian Empire was Belarus. It was making noticeable steps towards the formation of bilateral relations with the Ukrainian People’s Republic. Even before the independence of the Ukrainian People's Republic, on December 17, 1917, at the All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets, the Ukrainian People’s Republic welcomed its “native sister” with a round of applause (MATYASH, 2019). At first, Ukrainian-Belarusian relations were aimed at seeking promotion from the Ukrainian side of the idea of Belarusian statehood. In addition, the Ukrainian People's Republic supported the concept of forming a Belarusian delegation to the Brest negotiations. However, Belarusian delegates got to Brest-Litovsk only as advisors to the Ukrainian side (PANASYUK, 2016).In particular, the Entente countries made certain steps to establish direct contacts with representatives of the Central Rada. Consequently, information of foreign diplomatic missions about the state of affairs in Ukraine was improved by consular offices of England, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Persia - they existed here since the times of the Russian Empire (BELOUSOVA, 2015; MATYASH, 2019). The authority to establish diplomatic relations was given to the French diplomat J. Tabouy on behalf of his government. Likewise, Great Britain proclaimed P. Bagge, an experienced diplomat who served as consul in Odessa, as its ambassador to Ukraine (BELOUSOVA, 2015). The Central Council regarded these appointments as a de facto recognition of the Ukrainian People’s Republic among the Entente countries. At the same time, the governments of France and England could not aid the Ukrainian government, avoided real and expressive commitments to the Central Rada (GAY-NIZHNIK, 2018). After the conclusion of the Brest Peace, these contacts almost ceased (DORNFIELD, SEEWALD, 2017). In addition, there were permanent missions of the BNR on the territory of the then Ukraine (PANASYUK, 2016). Consequently, during the period of activity of the Central Rada, the basis for real steps to the
formation of the Ukrainian People's Republic relations with the new states that appeared on the territory of the former Russian Empire were created. For example, A. Y. Shulgin (Secretary General of International Affairs) emphasized that “the brilliant development of our statehood, which for a time made Ukraine” an oasis “among the all-Russian disorder, drew everyone's attention…” (MATYASH, 2019). Thus, representatives from various countries began to come to the capital of the Ukrainian People's Republic and with interest to observe the “organizational activities, was imbued with nationwide enthusiasm” (MATYASH, 2019). He noted that similar practices were being tried again by states on their own territory. This was the first impetus for the arrival of representatives of these countries in Kyiv in early 1918. The key motive of their appearance in the capital of the Ukrainian People's Republic consisted in the recognition of Ukraine of their new state formations, receiving material support from the Ukrainian People's Republic and the establishment of commodity exchanges.

At the same time, note that the presence in Ukraine of delegations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Germany contributed to the additional opportunity to address the Eastern European countries with slogans about the emergence of new states in the world. The following main types of foreign missions appeared in the capital of the Ukrainian People's Republic during the Central Rada: 1) diplomatic missions, established under the Russian Empire, however, they successfully continued to operate even after the formation of the Ukrainian People's Republic; 2) public organizations, on the basis of which foreign missions were created (we are also talking about military commissars). The specified type was focused mainly on the protection and support of their own citizens living on the territory of the Ukrainian state 3). special missions (we are talking primarily about trade direction) with specific diplomatic rights. In general, the representations of the first type had close ties with each other and managed to organize consular collegiums to identify certain interests. For this purpose, an elder (duayen) P. Gripari (MATYASH, 2019) Note that mainly the consuls of foreign countries operating on the territory of then Ukraine (first of all we are talking about Greece, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Norway, France) were representatives of the industrial elite, landowners, and bank employees. Through their common activities, they achieved successes in complex socio-political affairs. We are talking about in the requisitioning of bakeries, obtaining military weapons for the purpose of self-defense (MATYASH, 2019). The second type of foreign missions belonged to the commissariats, above all Armenia and Georgia (MATYASH, 2018). The latter ostentatiously proclaimed their main purpose as assisting the citizens of their states in cases of return to their homeland. Since their missions involved more than just POW issues, representatives from Armenia and Georgia quite often negotiated with the Ukrainian People's Republic to negotiate their rights to limited consular activities in order to support and protect their own citizens. The third type of foreign missions were the figures of the Entente states and their allies.

A separate place was occupied by the signatories of the Brest Peace, who began to act in the capital of the Ukrainian People's Republic for the ratification by their own countries of the provisions of the negotiations held in Brest-Litovsk (MATYASH, 2019). Representatives of the Entente believed that only a single Russian Empire was capable of confronting Germany. In particular, this was directly stated in the U.S. government - Secretary of State Robert Lansinr (1864-1928). did not even recall the Ukrainian People's Republic during the solemn announcement of the “14 points” established by President Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924). An important role in creating such an unfavorable attitude towards Ukraine was played by analytical reports of the American embassy in the former Russian Empire, in which Ukraine and the leaders of the Central Rada were accused of pro-German sympathies, as well as - in “socialist” policy (GAY-NIZHNIIK, 2018). Note that the U.S. did not again recognize the Ukrainian People's Republic. In general, the Entente and the U.S. rejected the outlined priorities of Ukrainian diplomatic policy - the struggle for a universal peace without territorial annexations and payment of contributions (this initiative was proclaimed in the first note of the General Secretariat of the Ukrainian People's Republic of December 24, 1917, addressed to the governments of all warring countries).

In addition, the autonomist tendencies in state-building were a tangible omission in the formation of the foreign policy of the Ukrainian People's Republic, which harmed the image of the country. Diplomats from Ukraine were not perceived as representatives of an
independent state, but only as spokespersons for the will of part of the Russian population. For this reason, support and established cooperation could be established with the countries of the Triple Alliance, because Germany sought to end the war on the Eastern Front in order to redeploy the military forces there to the West (KONDRATYUK, 2018). After a while, however, relations between the UNR and Germany began to deteriorate. The Ukrainian government was unable to provide food supplies to Germany and Austria-Hungary (DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017). The prerequisites for the removal of the Ukrainian People’s Republic from the international arena were gradually taking shape (DORNFELD, SEEWALD, 2017). Political groups of Ukrainian conservatives took an active part in behind-the-scenes negotiations on this, because Germany and its allies were simply interested in the establishment of strong power in the Ukrainian People’s Republic, which would guarantee the timely export of products and raw materials. Thus, after the declaration of independence, the Ukrainian People’s Republic began actively pursuing diplomatic significance primarily on the European continent (KONDRATYUK, 2018) From the status of the Brest debacle, which was the first notable step of international presence toward ending World War I, the Ukrainian People’s Republic began to introduce stable representations in other states (KRAVCHENKO, 2019). At the same time, once again, the state began to work purposefully to form the basic official organizational norms for the diplomatic institutions of then-Ukraine.

DISCUSSION

The topic of state activity of the Ukrainian People’s Republic, however, its diplomatic component is quite debatable in Ukrainian historiography as a whole. Some historians are favorable to gradual state steps of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (MATYASH, 2019), however, there are also those who believe that the Central Rada delayed with real developmental decisions and illusorily believed in the democratization of Russia and future joint activities with them (KONDRATYUK, 2018). At the same time, we note that today there are active discussions about the definition of the result of the Brest Peace for the Ukrainian People’s Republic. Such scholarly debates take place among contemporary Ukrainian diaspora, Russian, and domestic historians alike. In general, the majority of historical and analytical works positively evaluate the meaning of the Brest Treaty and the work of Ukrainian diplomats in the international arena in 1917-1918. However, Russian scholars adhere to a somewhat Soviet vision of the problem and analyze the treaty through the prism of Russia’s loss of Ukraine and attempts to destroy Soviet power by relying on an alliance with Germany (PUCHENKOV, 2014).

In our view, the Brest Treaty brought both positive and negative consequences for the Ukrainian lands. After all, due to political weakness, the Ukrainian Central Rada was unable to defend itself decisively against the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, the Ukrainian state was weak in its confrontation with the Central Powers. However, the signing of the Brest Peace Treaty meant breaking off diplomatic relations with the Entente taps. However, as a result of several diplomatic successes, the diplomacy of the Ukrainian People’s Republic failed on key issues such as: 1. There were no established relations with Bolshevik Russia. 2. The Entente countries did not recognize the Ukrainian People’s Republic 3. Germany’s assistance was short-lived. It should be noted that after the Brest agreements, despite the appeals of the Ukrainian leadership regarding its neutral status in interstate relations, the Entente countries believed that Ukraine had gone over to the enemy camp, and such confidence interfered tangibly and permanently when considering the following Ukrainian issues (DORNIK, 2015).

Some contemporary Ukrainian historians consider a possible alternative diplomatic reality that would have ensured the restoration of Ukrainian independence in the future. If Ukraine had not agreed to accept the Brest Peace Treaty and continued to be among the belligerent Entente countries, it would have guaranteed itself a job at the Paris Peace Conference, which would have enabled it to establish itself among the leading states of the world, just as Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, and other central states managed to do. However, a detailed consideration of the geopolitical situation in Ukraine in the first half of 1918, characterized by the unfavorable course of the First Russian-Ukrainian war and the concrete danger of losing independence, allow us to conclude that historical circumstances did not give the leadership of the then Ukrainian diplomatic office other alternatives.
CONCLUSIONS

Despite the fact that various events were taking place in Central and Eastern Europe, including those of a military nature, the newly formed Ukrainian People's Republic began to form its own statehood. The battles of World War I took place on the Romanian front, and in Russia, after the collapse of the empire, the Bolsheviks seized power. On the ruins of the former empires emerged new countries, which maintained diplomatic relations with the Ukrainian People's Republic. During the short period of time (March 17, 1917 - April 29, 1918), Ukraine of the Central Rada managed not only to establish the principles of national self-government, to guarantee the people specific rights and freedoms, to form the basis for Ukrainian science and education, but also to work towards recognition of the Ukrainian People's Republic by the world. Thus, during the period of the Central Rada, the first powerful steps in the international arena were made. Along with great achievements, the then Ukrainian government made certain miscalculations and mistakes. The main problem was that the new government had no practical political experience and was euphoric in some matters. In addition, the Central Rada lacked a sense of real danger. These things led to rash decisions and mistakes in the leadership of the state. The state activity of the Central Rada at that time was characterized by inconsistent tactical actions and groundless changes of strategic guidelines. At the same time, the Ukrainians of that time lacked a developed national consciousness and understanding of the need to create and develop their own statehood. However, despite all these blunders, the activity of the Central Rada and its diplomatic role became a significant page in the history of Ukraine. Despite the unfavorable climate for conducting diplomacy, the Ukrainian People’s Republic took many notable steps to form Ukrainian diplomatic structures. First, an executive body, the General Secretariat of International Affairs, headed by A. Shulgin, was formed. This organization adopted a lot of documents regarding the legal regulation of Ukraine’s diplomacy.

Thus, after the proclamation of independence, the Ukrainian People's Republic began to actively develop diplomacy, especially in Europe. From the status of its debut at the Brest negotiations, which was the first big step of Ukrainian diplomacy to end hostilities, the Ukrainian People’s Republic began to introduce representations in other European states. At the same time again, the state began purposeful work on the formation of the main official organizational norms of diplomatic institutions of the then Ukraine, and paid attention to the formation of new personnel in the diplomatic ministries. Also, in the Ukrainian People's Republic there were international missions of European countries. In Kyiv there were consular offices of England, Belgium, Greece, Italy, and Persia, which had existed there since the times of the Russian Empire. Representative offices of new East-European countries were first of all formed in Ukraine for the purpose of protection of their own state interests. This process took place in the framework of the establishment of interstate contacts of the sovereign Ukrainian People’s Republic, and its ratification of international treaties gave it the prospect of showing itself as an active player in international politics.

Georgia and Armenia were the first to appoint military commissioners to the Ukrainian People's Republic, which had such assignments. Their main objective was to be in cooperation with the authorities of the Ukrainian People’s Republic, and to protect the rights of their own citizens. In addition, Romania was also one of the Eastern European countries with which the Ukrainian People's Republic established diplomatic relations. It is noted in the work that the intention to start bilateral relations belonged directly to Kyiv, primarily to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs A. Shulgin. Romanian consuls also had their own interests in starting diplomatic relations with the independent Ukrainian state. Romania’s main objective was to return military property and prisoners of war to the Romanian citizens, who were former soldiers of the Austrian army. Despite this, in early 1918. Ukraine-Romanian relations worsened, this was caused by the so-called Bessarabia question, when Romanian troops entered the territory of Bessarabia. The Central Rada never succeeded in solving this problem. Thus, the state activity of the Ukrainian People’s Republic, against the backdrop of an unfavorable diplomatic situation against the background of an active offensive of the Bolsheviks, still managed to lay a strong substrate for the formation of the new Ukrainian state.
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State activity of the Ukrainian People’s Republic Central Council: a comparative analysis against the background of diplomacy in Central-Eastern Europe

Atividade estatal do Conselho Central da República Popular Ucraniana: uma análise comparativa sobre o contexto da diplomacia na Europa Centro-Oriental

Actividad estatal del Consejo Central de la República Popular de Ucrania: un análisis comparativista en el contexto de la diplomacia en Europa Central y Oriental

Resumo
O artigo descreve as atividades estatais da República Popular Ucraniana no contexto da implementação de sua diplomacia na região da Europa Central e Oriental. Ao mesmo tempo, destaca-se o processo de formação do corpo diplomático executivo da República Popular ucraniana - SecretariaGeral de Assuntos Internacionais. A liderança ucraniana ofereceu a ideia utópica de formar uma federação aos governos regionais de Kuban, Crimeia, Don e Sibéria. Assim, o artigo analisa os principais erros da Rada Central sobre a forma de formação do estado e destaca os principais vetores de discussão sobre o tema. O principal clima geopolítico, em particular na Europa Central e Oriental, que existia para a atividade diplomática do Estado ucraniano também é investigado. Em particular, nota-se que a situação diplomática em geral não era particularmente favorável para a atividade estatal da Ucrânia.

Palavras-chave: República Popular Ucraniana. Europa Central e Oriental. Diplomacia. Atividade estatal. Missões estrangeiras.

Abstract
The article describes the state activities of the Ukrainian People’s Republic against the background of its diplomacy in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. At the same time, the process of formation of the executive diplomatic body of the Ukrainian People’s Republic - General Secretariat of International Affairs is highlighted. The Ukrainian leadership offered the utopian idea of forming a federation to the regional governments of Kuban, Crimea, the Don, and Siberia. Thus, the article analyzes the main blunders of the Central Rada on the way of formation of statehood and highlights the main vectors of discussion on this issue. The main geopolitical climate, in particular in Central and Eastern Europe, which existed for the diplomatic activity of the Ukrainian state is also investigated. In particular, it is noted that the diplomatic situation in general was not particularly favorable for the state activity of Ukraine.

Keywords: Ukrainian People’s Republic. Central and Eastern Europe. Diplomacy. State activity. Foreign missions.

Resumen
El artículo describe las actividades estatales de la República Popular de Ucrania en el contexto de la implementación de su diplomacia en la región de Europa Central y Oriental. Al mismo tiempo, se destaca el proceso de formación del órgano diplomático ejecutivo de la República Popular de Ucrania - Secretaría General de Asuntos Internacionales. El liderazgo ucraniano ofreció la idea utópica de formar una federación a los gobiernos regionales de Kuban, Crimea, el Don y Siberia. Así, el artículo analiza los principales errores de la Rada Central en el camino de la formación de la estadidad y destaca los principales vectores de discusión sobre este tema. También se investiga el principal clima geopolítico, en particular en Europa Central y Oriental, que existía para la actividad diplomática del estado ucraniano. En particular, se observa que la situación diplomática en general no era particularmente favorable para la actividad estatal de Ucrania.

Palabras-clave: República Popular de Ucrania. Europa Central y Oriental. Diplomacia. Actividad estatal. Misiones en el extranjero.