

Waldemar Rezmer

THE POLISH-UKRAINIAN FORUM OF HISTORIANS 2015–2017 AND ITS RESULTS

Abstract:

The topic of the article is the Polish-Ukrainian dialogue of historians initiated in 1996. It was conducted in 1996–2008 in the formula of a historical seminar under the title “Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions” (13 seminars were held). Their lasting result is ten volumes of material, published under the title *Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions*. Political and media activities blocked the work of the Seminar in 2008. The Polish-Ukrainian historical dialogue was broken. It was resumed in 2015 in the form of the Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians, established by the Polish and Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance. Five scientific meetings were held in the years 2015–2017. At the turn of 2017 and 2018 the work of the Forum was suspended, and in February 2018 Dr. Volodymyr Viatrovyh, President of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, announced that he “does not see any possibility of its continuation”. Publishing materials from any of the Forum’s five sessions was not possible.

Key words

The Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians 2015–2017; Historical Seminar “Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions”, Polish-Ukrainian dialogue, Volyn crime.

Polish-Ukrainian relations in the first half of the 20th century should be competently and impartially studied, and their re-

sults promoted as widely as possible. This finding also applies to the crime committed in 1939–1947 on the inhabitants of Volyn, Eastern Galicia (Eastern Lesser Poland) and the south-eastern territories of today’s Republic of Poland. Poles, on the basis of their historical experience, know that normal good neighborly relations will not be achieved without a final explanation of the Volyn crime (in such a mental shortcut it lies in the historical consciousness of Polish society). It is in the Polish – and not only Polish – well-understood interest that Ukraine should be a democratic, law-abiding and prosperous country. However, it should also know its history. Therefore, the crime committed on the inhabitants of these areas should be “restored to the historical memory of contemporary generations”¹ not only in Poland, but also in Ukraine.

This is how the initiators and participants of the International Historical Seminar “Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions” understood their task when they started this scientific undertaking in the mid-1990s. They understood that there could be no dialogue and no lasting reconciliation without building a solid substantive foundations for it. It could only be achieved through the historical truth about the causes, course and tragic consequences of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in the first half of the 20th century. Establishing facts and revealing the truth was the most important goal, otherwise their work would not make any sense. “Since [...] no official Polish and Ukrainian research centers have undertaken comprehensive research on the subject, two social organizations: The World Association of Home Army Soldiers and the Association of Ukrainians in Poland decided to take the initiative to change this state. The inspiration for [...] actions was a conference of Polish

1. *Uchwała Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 15 lipca 2009 r. w sprawie tragicznego losu Polaków na Kresach Wschodnich* [Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of July 15, 2009 on the tragic fate of Poles in the Eastern Borderlands], Warsaw: Monitor Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 31, 2013, item 606.

and Ukrainian historians organized by the ‘Karta’ Center in 1994 in Podkowa Leśna”.²

The initiators of the Seminar were persons from the top management of the community of the 27th Volyn Home Army Infantry Division – World Association of Home Army Soldiers – Volyn Branch (Edmund Bakuniak, Władysław Filar, Andrzej Żupański), who managed to find a partner in the form of the Association of Ukrainians in Poland. According to the agreement signed in 1996, both Unions did not participate in the scientific work of the Seminar, but provided it with organizational support.³ The scientific and factual management of the seminar was taken over by the Military Historical Institute in Warsaw on the Polish side, and by the Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University in Lutsk on the Ukrainian side. The ‘Karta’ Center dealt with publishing issues. For some time the financial, organizational and technical support was provided by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Scientific Research Committee, the Council for the Protection of the Memory of Struggle and Martyrdom, the Office for War Veterans, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the ‘Polish Community’ Association and the Academy of National Defense. As the organizational conditions changed in 2005 (e.g. the Military Historical Institute ceased to exist in Poland, the Institutes of National Remembrance were established in Poland and Ukraine), the Seminar had to be given a new shape. It was decided that two research units, the Nicolaus Copernicus University

2. “Wstęp” [Introduction], [in:] *Polska–Ukraina: trudne pytania, t. 1–2. Materiały II międzynarodowego seminarium historycznego “Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie w latach 1918–1947”, Warszawa, 22–24 maja 1997* [Poland–Ukraine: difficult questions, vol. 1–2. Materials of the Second International Historical Seminar “Polish-Ukrainian Relations in the Years 1918–1947”, Warsaw, May 22–24, 1997] (Warsaw, 1998), 7.

3. The most important provisions of this agreement are provided by Andrzej Żupański, *Tragiczne wydarzenia za Bugiem i Sanem przed ponad sześćdziesięciu laty. Poznaj werdykt historyków polskich i ukraińskich* [Tragic Events Behind the Bug and San More than Sixty Years Ago. Learn about the Verdict of Polish and Ukrainian Historians] (Warsaw: Rytm, 2007), 10.

in Toruń and the Ivan Franko National University in Lviv would be responsible for the scientific side. The Nicolaus Copernicus University was to be supported organizationally and financially by the World Association of Home Army Soldiers and the Polish Institute of National Remembrance. The University of Lviv was to receive assistance from the I. Krypjakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, and the Centre for Research of Liberation Movement in Lviv.

The first Seminar took place in March 1996 in Lutsk and was hosted by the Lesya Ukrainka Volyn State University. In total, thirteen seminars were held between 1996 and 2008. The last one – the thirteenth Seminar – was held in Lviv between June 3 and June 6, 2008. All the seminars were attended by several dozen researchers from several Polish and Ukrainian research centers. Most of them participated in a number of meetings, some in all. The Polish team consisted of 34 historians, who came from 10 Polish academic centers, while on the Ukrainian side there were 49 historians representing 9 academic centers in Ukraine and the Ukrainian community living in Poland, Germany and the United States.

In the papers and in the course of discussions, many important issues were analysed and a huge number of previously unknown documents and descriptive sources were discovered. They often encountered extremely painful facts, monstrous deeds, difficult to describe even for professional historians, due to their drastic nature. However, the participants of the seminar believed that only by showing the truth, even the most terrible one, they were paving the way for real reconciliation, and not the reconciliation that was top-down declared and medially trumpeted.

The lasting result of the seminars from 1996–2001 is nine volumes of material published under the title *Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions*. Volume 9 was printed in 2002 and includes materials from the ninth and tenth seminars. Unfortunately, financial

and technical difficulties caused that only four volumes, apart from the Polish language version, were published in Ukrainian (volumes 3, 4, 5, 9).

The eleventh seminar (outside the program), balancing the whole achievements of Polish-Ukrainian scientific meetings from 1996–2001, took place in April 2005 in Warsaw. The materials from this meeting, in the form of 10 volumes, were published in 2006.⁴

Closing the first round of the Seminar (11 scientific meetings), its participants – members of the Polish team as well as the Ukrainian team, and many of their collaborators, including the Association of Ukrainians in Poland, and the ‘Karta’ Center – were fully aware that they did not manage to investigate and discuss many important issues, and did not manage to answer all the difficult questions concerning Polish-Ukrainian relations in the first half of the 20th century. For this reason it was decided that the Polish-Ukrainian historical dialogue should be continued in the form of another (2nd) round of the Seminar. The readiness to take over the scientific responsibility for its continuation was expressed by Prof. Waldemar Rezmer, Dean of the Faculty of Historical Sciences at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, and Prof. Leonid Zashkilnyak of the Ivan Franko National University in Lviv, then deputy director of the II. Krypiakievych Institute of Ukrainian Studies.

Unfortunately, out of the planned second series of seminar meetings, only two have been carried out: the twelfth Seminar (October 12–13, 2006) at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, and the thirteenth Seminar (June 3–6, 2008) at the Ivan Franko National University in Lviv. The organizational and financial difficulties were growing. A massive media campaign against the organiz-

4. *Polska–Ukraina: trudne pytania. T. 10: Materiały XI międzynarodowego seminarium historycznego „Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie w latach II wojny światowej” Warszawa, 26–28 kwietnia 2005* [Poland–Ukraine: difficult questions. Vol. 10: Materials of the Eleventh International Historical Seminar “Polish-Ukrainian Relations in the Years of World War II” Warsaw, April 26–28, 2005], Warsaw, 2006.

ers and participants of the seminar intensified. They were accused of evil intentions, ideologizing research on the past, and even of betraying national interests. They were told that “the basic precept of the Polish and Ukrainian national interest (...) is (...) concern for the sovereignty of the state and democratic order in this state. Polish-Ukrainian conflicts can only bring harm. Both our nations need peace and secure borders”.⁵ It was argued that taking up sensitive subjects does not serve to develop partnership contacts between both countries, it can only spoil them.

Twelve years ago, Adam Michnik wrote in an article entitled “The Wound of Volyn”: “We expect historical science to draw up a reliable balance of facts. From moral reflection – an accurate balance of sins. From political thought – an honest balance of interests”.⁶ In other words, historians, both Polish and Ukrainian, should be required to objectively use all available instruments of the scientific workshop to present a true and complete picture of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the first half of the 20th century. Clerics and moral authorities should be required to make ethical assessments on the basis of the historical material provided, politicians should be required to draw conclusions from the past and to conduct a realistic policy that takes into account the vital interests of the Polish and Ukrainian states.

Unfortunately, these rightful demands did not correspond to reality. In practice, it is not known why historians studying Polish-Ukrainian relations were asked much more than researchers of other historical problems. They were supposed to be not only professionals in their scientific discipline, reliably reproducing the image of the past, but also guardians of human conscience and follow the ‘realpolitik’. There are people who still believe that

5. A. Michnik, “Rana Wołynia” [The Wound of Volyn], [in:] *Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie. Historia i pamięć* [Polish-Ukrainian Relations. History and Memory], ed. J. Marszałek-Kawa and Z. Karpus (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2008), 256–257.

6. *Ibid.*, 253.

these last two tasks are even more important than purely historical research.

Those who authenticated such theses and formulated historical policy guidelines probably did not realize that exactly the same arguments were made during the communist period, when it was claimed that taking up borderline issues, including Polish-Ukrainian issues, could harm Polish-Ukrainian relations, that it would suit the purposes of Western German revisionists and American imperialists. A significant and influential part of the Polish political elite, including the circle of people associated with the “Kultura” magazine in Paris and the “Tygodnik Powszechny” circles, tried hard to bring about Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation. In these circles it was believed that the investigation of the Volyn crime and other painful topics would make it difficult to tighten the strategic Polish-Ukrainian partnership, and could only spoil this process. This was a mistaken assumption, the negative effects of which are now being revealed with full force. The authors of this concept did not understand that

...the reference to Giedrojć’s policy and the so-called Jagiellonian idea has long since lost any semblance of a political proposal, but has become a handy tool in the ‘Cold Civil War’ waged since 2005. [...] the authors do not seem to understand that Poland should not be held hostage to relations with Kiev in the sense that any attempt at contact with Russia is immediately interpreted as a betrayal of Kiev and the abandonment by the Republic of Poland of its previous foreign policy rudiments. In such an approach, Poland’s entire activity in the East boils down to a zero-one pattern: if with Kiev, then against Moscow; if anything with Moscow, then against Kiev. Such a policy can only result in paralysis and hostage to Russia and Ukraine. Such an approach seems particularly absurd when the

Ukrainians themselves do not see their own position as a confrontation between Russia and the West.⁷

The effect of political and media activities was to block further scientific meetings in the formula of the Historical Seminar “Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions”. In this way, the difficult but fruitful Polish-Ukrainian historical dialogue was broken. The harmfulness of this fact was quickly realized. Historical questions were increasingly weighing heavily on current Polish-Ukrainian relations. There was a growing conviction that the full truth about the tragedy of the inhabitants of Volyn and the southeastern part of the Second Polish Republic in 1939–1947 had to be revealed. Under this social pressure, on July 15, 2009, on “the 66th anniversary of the beginning of the so-called ‘anti-Polish action’ by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army on the Borderlands of the Second Republic of Poland – mass murders of ethnic cleansing and genocidal origins”, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland in its special resolution “On the tragic fate of Poles on the Eastern Borderlands” stated that “the tragedy of Poles on the Eastern Borderlands of the Second Republic of Poland should be restored to the historical memory of contemporary generations. This is a task for all public authorities in the name of the better future and the understanding of the peoples of our part of Europe, especially Poles and Ukrainians”.⁸

Janusz Kurtyka, President of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance, was a supporter of the revival of the Polish-Ukrainian dialogue between historians, which could lead to “the restoration of the historical memory of contemporary generations” as indicat-

7. B. Sienkiewicz, “Ukraina jednak buforowa” [Ukraine, though, a buffer state], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, March 9, 2010, 25.

8. *Uchwała Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 15 lipca 2009 r. w sprawie tragicznego losu Polaków na Kresach Wschodnich* [Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of July 15, 2009 on the tragic fate of Poles in the Eastern Borderlands], Warsaw: Monitor Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 31, 2013, item 606.

ed in the Sejm's resolution. On his initiative, in December 2009, a working meeting of the Institute's management took place in Warsaw, with the participation of the last organizers of the seminars: Prof. Leonid Zashkilnyak and Prof. Waldemar Rezmer. It was agreed then that the seminar would be resumed. The scientific matters were to continue to be managed by Prof. Zashkilnyak from the Ivan Franko National University in Lviv and Prof. Rezmer from the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, while Polish and Ukrainian Institutes of National Remembrance were to be responsible for organizational, financial and publishing issues. President Kurtyka had already made the necessary arrangements with the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

The tragic death of President Janusz Kurtyka on April 10, 2010 in the Smolensk catastrophe has cancelled the realization of these arrangements regarding the resumption of the Polish-Ukrainian historical dialogue in the already proven formula of the Historical Seminar "Poland-Ukraine: Challenging Questions".

Recognizing the importance of historical problems in Polish-Ukrainian relations and the need for a constructive debate on issues related to the common past, less than a year later, in February 2011 the heads of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland and Ukraine – Radosław Sikorski and Kostiantyn Gryshchenko – established the Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum, whose aim was "to provide a platform for civil dialogue and cooperation between the two nations, to serve [...] as a consultative and advisory body, to increase contacts between Poland and Ukraine, and to strengthen the process of rapprochement and reconciliation between the two nations".⁹ Minister Sikorski stated that "our intergovernmental dialogue will now be complemented by a dialogue of intellectuals, artists, journalists and the people of culture". In turn, Minister Gryshchenko emphasized that the Forum "faces a huge task of

9. *Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum*, accessed December 2, 2020, <http://www.kew.org.pl/polsko-ukrainskie-forum-partnerstwa/>.

reviewing the pages of history and issuing our recommendations for the future by the authorities, well-known personalities, to move towards a European Union in which the nations sharing common values and building a common future are united”.

Expectations that the Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum would become a platform to inspire and create optimal conditions for the Polish-Ukrainian historical debate were not confirmed. The historical projects undertaken within its framework were (and still are) of a marginal nature, as the most important and most emotional and controversial subjects were avoided.¹⁰ Meanwhile, historical issues in Polish-Ukrainian relations have become increasingly important. This was, among others, related to the 70th anniversary of the Volyn massacre, falling in 2013.

Already in March 2013, the first page of the “Alehistoria” supplement to “Gazeta Wyborcza” was marked with a huge title “Rzeź wołyńska” (Volyn massacre), and in the article one could read that

In the fall of 1942, the Banderivtsi (members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) took a decision that the Poles must be removed from the future Ukrainian state.¹¹ On February 9, 1943, a unit of the UPA (the Ukrainian Insurgent Army), an armed branch of nationalists, murdered the entire population of the first Polish village of Parośle. Others followed, and by June 9, 1943, nine thousand Poles were killed. These first attacks were often extremely cruel, and people were killed with e.g. axes. By slaughtering the population of individual villages, the UPA

10. See, for example: The Program of the Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum Meeting in Kiev of June 3, 2017, accessed December 2, 2020, <https://jagiellonia.org/w-kijowie-odbylo-sie-posiedzenie-polsko-ukrainskiego-forum-partnerstwa-pawel-bobolowicz/>.

11. “Rzeź wołyńska” [Volyn Massacre], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, supplement: Alehistoria, March 25, 2013, 1 and 7.

wanted to encourage the remaining Poles to escape and at the same time hide a premeditated genocidal cleansing under the guise of an alleged folk rebellion.¹² (...) when, after the first attacks, it turned out that some Poles did not flee, but created self-defense bases, in May 1943 the UPA command decided to murder the entire Polish community in Volyn. On July 11, the UPA carried out a simultaneous, concentric attack on 99 Polish villages. It was a slaughter.¹³

“Ethnic cleansing bearing the hallmarks of genocide”, which started in Volyn and later transferred to the area of Eastern Galicia and the land of present-day Poland, lasted until May 1945. “About 100,000 Poles fell victim to it, it was planned and carried out in cold blood by one of the two factions of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists”.¹⁴ It reached its peak in mid-July 1943. On July 11–12, nearly 200 attacks on localities inhabited by Poles were recorded. In addition to the UPA units, the OUN Security Service militia took part in them, as well as the local Ukrainian population (the so-called *siekierniki* – people killing with axes), sometimes encouraged by the prospect of impunity for the robbery of the murdered Poles. Another wave of murders took place in August 1943 in the western districts of Volyn. “The fate of two neighbouring villages – Ostrówek and Wola Ostrowiecka, in which almost all 1100 inhabitants were murdered – has become a symbol”.¹⁵ The liquidation of the Polish population bearing the hallmarks of genocide was the first stage of depolonization of Volyn. As early as in the fall of 1943, the OUN leadership ordered the destruction of the material evidence of the

12. *Ibid.*, 8.

13. *Ibid.*, 9.

14. *Ibid.*, 7.

15. G. Hryciuk, “Rana, która wciąż krwawi” [A Wound that is Still Bleeding], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, supplement: *Wołyń 1943. Przed 70. rocznicą zbrodni* [Volyn 1943. Before the 70th Anniversary of the Crime], June 22, 2013, 1.

presence of Poles in the area: “Even the trees that could testify to the existence of once Polish villages there were to be grubbed up”.¹⁶

The highest legislative and executive authorities of the Republic of Poland also addressed the issue. On June 20, 2013, the Senate of the Republic of Poland adopted a resolution in which it called the Volyn crime “an ethnic cleansing bearing the hallmarks of genocide”.¹⁷ On June 27–28, 2013 in Warsaw, under the patronage of President Bronisław Komorowski, an international scientific conference “Volyn Crime – History, Memory, Education. On the eve of the 70th anniversary” was organized by the Institute of National Remembrance and Education. On July 2, 2013 the Polish Parliament passed a resolution recognizing the Volyn crime as an ethnic cleansing bearing the hallmarks of genocide.¹⁸ It stated:

July 2013 will mark the 70th anniversary of the apogee of the wave of crimes committed by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and units of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in the Eastern Borderlands of the Second Republic of Poland. The organized and mass dimension of the Volyn Crime gave it the nature of ethnic cleansing bearing the hallmarks of genocide. In 1942–1945 in Volyn and Eastern Galicia about 100 thousand Polish citizens became victims of the crime.¹⁹

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Uchwała Senatu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 20 czerwca 2013 r. 70. rocznicę Zbrodni Wołyńskiej* [Resolution of the Senate of the Republic of Poland of June 20, 2013 on the 70th anniversary of the Volyn Crime], Warsaw: Monitor Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 12, 2013, item 582.

18. *Uchwała Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 12 lipca 2013 r. w sprawie uczczenia 70. rocznicy Zbrodni Wołyńskiej i oddania hołdu Jej ofiarom* [Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of July 12, 2013 on commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Volyn Crime and paying tribute to its victims], Warsaw: Monitor Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 31, 2013, item 606.

19. *Ibid.*

On July 4, 2013, ceremonies to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Volyn crime with the participation of Bronisław Komorowski, President of the Republic of Poland, Kostiantyn Gryshchenko, Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine, and Archbishop Mieczysław Mokrzycki, Metropolitan Archbishop of Lviv, took place in Lutsk. Three years later, on July 22, 2016, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, by way of a resolution, established July 11 as the “National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Genocide committed by Ukrainian Nationalists on Citizens of the Second Republic of Poland”. The Sejm paid tribute to all the citizens of the Second Republic murdered by Ukrainian nationalists in 1943–1945.²⁰

The majority of Ukrainian commentators were surprised by the fact that the Polish side raised the issue of the anniversary of the Volyn crime. The motives were different from the need to remember the crime and commemorate the places where its victims are buried.

The political changes in Ukraine, initiated at Majdan in 2014, led to a revival of Polish-Ukrainian contacts not only in the political sphere, but also at other levels important for our societies. It should have been thought that this would also be done in historical research. It turned out, however, that the actions of the new Ukrainian authorities were ambivalent. It can be pointed out that in April 2015, on the day of the visit to Kiev of the Polish President Bronisław Komorowski, and immediately after his speech in the mentioned Council, the Verkhovna Rada passed a law *“On the legal status and respect for the memory of participants in the fight for independence of Ukraine in the 20th century”*.

20. Uchwała Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 22 lipca 2016 r. w sprawie oddania hołdu ofiarom ludobójstwa dokonanego przez nacjonalistów ukraińskich na obywatelach II Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w latach 1943–1945 [Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of July 22, 2016 on paying tribute to the victims of genocide committed by Ukrainian nationalists on the citizens of the Second Republic of Poland in 1943–1945], Warsaw: Monitor Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 29, 2016, item 726.

In order to weaken the effect of the decision of the Verkhovna Rada, very badly received in Poland, the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko, during a telephone conversation with the President of Poland, Bronisław Komorowski, announced the introduction of changes to this law; in fact, his declaration was never realized.

A political clash was created between Warsaw and Kiev, which originated from historical issues, and – I suppose – was to be mitigated by making a decision to reactivate the Polish-Ukrainian debate on historical issues. Less than a month later, in May 2015, during a meeting between the management of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) and the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) in Kiev, it was decided that a team of historians would be formed under the auspices of both Institutes to investigate the causes, course and effects of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in the first half of the 20th century, especially in the most bloody years 1939–1947.

In order to implement this agreement, a meeting of historians took place on July 28, 2015 in the Warsaw headquarters of the Institute of National Remembrance. It was agreed that the Polish group of historians participating in the debate would include: Prof. Grzegorz Hryciuk (University of Wrocław), Prof. Grzegorz Mazur (Jagiellonian University), Prof. Grzegorz Motyka (Polish Academy of Sciences), Prof. Jan Pisuliński (University of Rzeszów), Prof. Waldemar Rezmer (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń), Dr. Mariusz Zajączkowski (Institute of National Remembrance). Prof. Waldemar Rezmer was elected as the chairman of the group.

By agreeing to participate in the Polish-Ukrainian dialogue of historians, I believed that only by following this path we would be able to draw a complete picture of the causes, course and effects of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict and the Volyn crime. The experience of several years of participation in the seminars “Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions” prompted me to think that the knowledge of what happened in Polish-Ukrainian relations in the first half of the

20th century permeates and becomes established in the historical awareness of Poles and Ukrainians. This process cannot be stopped. However, one should make sure that this knowledge is based on historical facts, scientifically verified by professional researchers.

On November 2–5, 2015 in Kiev, the first meeting took place, with the participation of Polish historians (listed above) and Ukrainian ones: Prof. Bohdan Hud', Prof. Ihor Iliushin, Prof. Ivan Patrylak, Prof. Yuri Shapoval – Chairman of the Ukrainian Forum Group, Dr. Volodymyr Viatrovych, Prof. Leonid Zashkilnyak. The inaugural part of the meeting was attended by: Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Culture of Ukraine Vyacheslav Kyrylenko, Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine Serhiy Kwita, Counselor, Deputy Head of the Diplomatic Mission of the Republic of Poland Rafał Wolski, as well as Director of the SBU (Security Service of Ukraine) State Archive Ihor Kulyka.

The first part of the meeting, on November 3, 2015, was devoted to organizational issues and establishing fundamental principles of work of the Polish-Ukrainian team of historians. Having experience from previous work in the Historical Seminar “Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions”, I believed that regulating these issues would prevent disputes on extra-territorial issues. Therefore, I presented “Aims, tasks, methods, deadlines for the work of the Group/ Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians/Dialogue of Historians”.

After discussion, it was decided that:

- periodical scientific meetings would be called *Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians*;

- the substantive scope of its work would cover the years 1939–1947;

- The Forum would be composed of 6 Polish and 6 Ukrainian scholars and 2 secretaries, respectively. In addition, no more than 2 specialists from each side, not belonging to the permanent composition of the Forum, invited by the Polish and Ukrainian side to carry out the commissioned research task (development of the topic) and present the results of the research;

- meetings would be conducted by two persons – the presidents of the Polish and Ukrainian historians team;
- the list of topics would be mutually agreed; if necessary, the list could be extended and the topics modified;
- on each of the topics previously approved by the Forum members, the paper would be prepared by a Polish and Ukrainian historian. During each meeting two topics would be heard and discussed;
- within the framework of both Institutes of National Remembrance, a team would be established to edit the Forum's materials in 'paper' and electronic form. The publication would be of scientific and popularizing character;
- the Forum meetings would be held twice a year, alternately in Poland and Ukraine;
- the meetings would be closed to the public and the media.

During the second part of the meeting, on November 4, 2015, Prof. Jan Pisuliński delivered a paper "Polish-Ukrainian relations 1939–1947 in Polish historiography – a review of research", while Prof. Leonid Zashkilnyak presented "Inventory of problems of common history of the 20th century". The conclusions of both lecturers became the basis for determining the topics that should be addressed first, with a caveat that, if necessary (in order to reveal new and controversial problems), the list of topics could be extended after approval by the Forum members.

From November 2015 to autumn 2017, five Forum meetings were held – the last ones on October 19–22, 2017 in Cherkasy, Ukraine.

While participating in the Forum, I assumed that the aim of the committee was to explain the most difficult issues of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the years 1939–1947. Therefore, the group was composed of professional historians with serious achievements and scientific authority, who knew the sources and were able to make a critical, objective analysis. I thought that by

means of a painstaking but authentic scientific dialogue, we would come to reliable substantive findings. There is always a problem with the interpretation of historical facts and there does not have to be unanimity, but thanks to professional approach to the problem, using all available sources and historical workshop, it is possible to establish (prove) irrefutable, unquestionable facts.

The first two meetings of the Forum gave hope that this is how we would work and recreate Polish-Ukrainian relations based on undisputed facts. Unfortunately, later there were signs that the Ukrainian side was not interested in establishing undisputed facts, but in reconstructing the full picture of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the first half of the 20th century, especially all aspects of the Volyn crime. Probably, the management of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (President of the Institute, Volodymyr Viatrovych was a member of the Forum) realized that history was not its ally. They realized that the results of the research presented at the Forum, confirmed by the exhumation of the victims of the crime, would undermine the myth of the UPA and its members as noble knights of the independence struggle, which they were building hard during that time. Volodymyr Viatrovych – the President of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance and a member of the Forum – claimed that the mass crimes in Volyn and Eastern Lesser Poland were the result of the Second Polish-Ukrainian War. He included such theses in his book published in 2011, entitled “The Second Polish-Ukrainian War 1942–1947”, which already had three editions.²¹ It met with devastating criticism from professional Polish and Ukrainian historians. One of them, Grzegorz Motyka, in his review wrote:

In fact, it is not even a scientific work, but a loose historical sketch. Although perhaps it should be said rather explicitly that we are dealing with a kind of

21. В. В'ятрович, *Друга польсько-українська війна 1942–1947* [Second Polish-Ukrainian War 1942–1947], Київ, 2011; Київ, 2012; Warszawa, 2013.

defensive speech delivered by an able but emotionally involved attorney. The author does not even try to conceal the fact that he is defending the bandwagon faction of OUN and UPA, against, in his opinion, unjust accusations of murdering Polish civilians. He decided to devote himself to this task to such an extent that after reading the book I even have the impression that the author is not very interested in what actually happened between Poles and Ukrainians during World War II. With this I am trying to explain to myself why Viatrovykh writes under a predetermined thesis, rejecting or omitting all arguments and facts that do not fit in with it.²²

Professor Motyka pointed out that “the use of the term *war* does not preclude the simultaneous use of the term *genocide*”. In his opinion, Viatrovykh’s use of the term *war* is a result of an attempt to deny the crimes of the UPA’s anti Polish action.²³

However, being unable, for political and propaganda reasons, to ‘put down’ the Forum by its own voluntary decision, the Ukrainian side took actions which were to lead to this. They consisted in escalating the historical conflict instead of limiting and deescalating it.

It was initiated at the third Forum, which was held in Kiev on October 24–27, 2016. As agreed, it dealt with the topic “July 1943 – the course of events in Volyn in the view of documents”. In Poland, the main work on the tragedy of Volyn is the book by Ewa and Władysław Siemaszko entitled *Ludobójstwo dokonane przez nacjon-*

22. G. Motyka, “Nieudana książka. Recenzja książki Wołodymyra Wiatrowy-
cza *Druha polsko-ukraińska wojna 1942–1947* (Druga wojna polsko-ukraińska
1942–1947)” [Unsuccessful book. Review of the book by Volodymyr Viatro-
vykh *Druha polsko-ukraińska wojna 1942–1947* (Second Polish-Ukrainian
War 1942–1947)], *Nowa Europa Wschodnia*, no. 2 (2012), electronic docu-
ment, accessed December 3, 2020, [https://zbrodniawolynska.pl/zw1/historia/
spory-o-wolyn/152,Grzegorz-Motyka-Nieudana-ksiazka.html](https://zbrodniawolynska.pl/zw1/historia/spory-o-wolyn/152,Grzegorz-Motyka-Nieudana-ksiazka.html).

23. *Ibid.*

alistów ukraińskich na ludności polskiej Wołynia 1939–1945 [*Genocide committed by Ukrainian nationalists on the Polish population of Volyn 1939–1945*], vol. 1 and 2, Warsaw, 2000. At previous meetings, Ukrainian members of the Forum questioned its scientific value and credibility of the sources on which it was based. In order to check the factual basis of these allegations, a special team of historians under the leadership of Dr. Tomasz Bereza was appointed to carry out a re examination, but on the basis of completely different sources, not used by the Siemaszkos. It was at the third Forum that Tomasz Bereza reported on the bloody Sunday of July 11, 1943 in the south-eastern districts of Volyn, including a detailed account of the slaughter of the Polish residents of Orzeszyn and the surrounding colonies. It was then again alleged that these new sources were also unbelievable. Therefore, I suggested that, according to the scientific workshop, the findings of the historians should be empirically verified and the victims of the crimes that are still lying there in a nameless pit should be exhumed. After all, the Polish Institute of National Remembrance had an excellent team of Prof. Krzysztof Szwagrzyk specializing in such exhumation works. However, there was no consent to this. Soon after all, Svyatoslav Sheremeta, secretary of the State Inter-ministerial Committee for Wars and Political Repression, responsible for matters of historical commemoration, forbade the Polish team to carry out any exhumation and search. So we had a situation where, if we presented facts and sources that confirmed them, they were questioned, and if we proposed to carry out material verification, we received an administrative ban in response. The Forum member, Professor Motyka, asks a question, “which many Ukrainians may find incorrect: if indeed the Polish estimates of the number of victims are so exaggerated, why do almost all requests for permission to exhume people murdered by the UPA meet with a negative reaction from the Ukrainian authorities? After all, there is no easier way to resolve the dispute than to analyse the remains still resting in nameless graves”.²⁴

24. *Ibid.*

The second way of action, which was supposed to make the Polish side resign from further work of the Forum – as this allowed to accuse it of interrupting the Polish-Ukrainian dialogue – consisted in provocative, anti-Polish actions of the Ukrainian authorities, carried out – as it seems – with the knowledge and consent of the Ukrainian IPN.

As I explained earlier, at the first Forum in November 2015, we adopted a list of topics to be examined and discussed, and, if new and controversial topics should be revealed, to request their inclusion on the list of topics to be examined. What turned out. Knowing that in the last decade of October 2017 the fifth Forum was planned (it was held on October 19–22 in Cherkasy), three days before the arrival of the Polish group, i.e. on October 16, a mausoleum dedicated to the riflemen of Carpathian Sich was unveiled on Veretsky Pass in the Carpathians. The plaques were placed there reading: “Heroes of the Carpathian Ukraine shot by Polish and Hungarian occupants in March 1939” and “On March 18, 1939, on Veretsky Pass, Polish border guards from the Border Guard Corps shot about 600 captured Carpathian Sich riflemen”.

At the meeting in Cherkasy, I pointed out to our partners that during the two years of the Forum’s work they have not once raised the issue of the members of Carpathian Sich from the Veretsky Pass. They also did not present any evidence to support the thesis of mass execution of members of these structures in March 1939. However, there was no resistance to accuse Polish soldiers of this crime. I asked myself, what is it like? We meet, we have to explain difficult problems, narrow down the conflict area, and our partners create their new areas in an exceptionally perfidious way? How is it possible that the central institutions of the state (including the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (IPN)), with which we try to maintain the partnership relations, whom we support on the European arena and provide help in very different areas, are suddenly blocking our activities,

which should not cause any controversy, because they are the foundation of humanitarianism.

The next stage of the escalation of the conflict was a statement by Svyatoslav Sheremeta, secretary of the Ukrainian State Commission dealing with the issue of commemoration, who three weeks after the Forum in Cherkasy, on November 13, 2017, declared that the cemetery in Bikovnia, where the remains of 3,500 Poles from the so called Ukrainian Katyń list are buried, was established and exists illegally.²⁵ I was surprised and astonished – a Ukrainian official questions the legality of the necropolis ceremonially unveiled in 2012 by the presidents of Poland and Ukraine, the highest representatives of both countries.

Unfortunately, there were more and more such cases. One can recall, for example, the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Witold Waszczykowski on November 5, 2017 in Lviv, during which he wanted to visit the museum – the Prison on Łącki Street. He refused, however, when he found out that there were *“exhibitions in the museum that refer to the three occupations of Lviv: Polish, mentioned as the first, German, and Soviet”*.²⁶ Unfortunately, similar statements were also made during the discussion at the Forum. Many times I drew the attention of Dr. Viatrovych, President of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance and other members of the Ukrainian team to the fact that Poland has never occupied Eastern Małopolska and Volyn. The areas we are talking about were part of the Republic of Poland under international law. However, there was no reaction to my comments, objections and protests. During the last meeting, at the fifth Forum, Dr. Viatrovych again

25. “Szeremeta: Cmentarz Katyński w Bykowni pod Kijowem jest nielegalny” [Sheremeta: Katyń Cemetery in Bykovnia near Kiev is illegal], *Kresy.pl*, November 15, 2017, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://kresy.pl/wydarzenia/regiony/ukraina/szeremeta-cmentarz-katynski-bykowni-kijowem-nielegalny-video/>.

26. “Mer Lwowa: rozdrapywanie ran historycznych jest zgubne” [Mer of Lviv: the tearing of historical wounds is disastrous], *Dzieje.pl. Portal Historyczny*, November 6, 2017, accessed December 3, 2020: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/mer-lwowa-rozdrapywanie-ran-historycznych-jest-zgubne>.

used the term ‘Polish occupation’, and almost all Ukrainian historians – members of the Forum – followed him. This meant that historical facts did not matter to them. It escalated.

I regret to note these actions. As they were escalating, on November 17, 2017, I resigned from the post of vice-president of the Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians and from chairing the Polish team of historians in this body. I would like to remind you that the aim of the Forum was to conduct a substantive Polish-Ukrainian historical dialogue, especially with regard to the dramatic period in the history of both nations – the years 1939–1947. Meanwhile, instead of dealing with the authentic problems of the difficult Polish-Ukrainian history, we had to – of necessity – point out new cases of falsification or warping. The historical facts are unambiguous, so I could not accept the relativisation of history and bending to political, ideological and propaganda needs. This path led ‘to nowhere’. It was, after all, a scientific debate on selected topics, which ended with a substantive conclusion, and then the publication of its results. Unfortunately, the edition of materials from the five Forum meetings also became an unsolved problem. It was not possible to publish the results of the research, because the Ukrainian members of the Forum – responsible for the elaboration of the selected topics – did not pass the texts of papers (expert opinions) to the Forum secretaries.

The proverbial ‘final nail in the coffin’ of the Forum was stuck three months later. In February 2018, Dr. Viatrovych said that “he did not see the possibility of its continuation in the previous format”. The new format was, according to him, “to continue the historical discussions in Ukraine, where there are no restrictions or political dictates on previous assessments”.²⁷ In other words, in con-

27. “Ukraiński IPN nie widzi możliwości współpracy z Polską w ramach forum historyków” [Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance does not see any possibility of cooperation with Poland within the framework of the forum of historians], *TVP Info*, February 7, 2018, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.tvp.info/35923820/ukrainski-ipn-nie-widzi-mozliwosci-wspolpracy-z-polska-w-ramach-forum-historykow>.

temporary Poland, scientific debates cannot be conducted because “there are limitations and political dictates”. These absurd accusations were formulated by a person who forgot about the adoption, by the Verkhovna Rada in 2015, of the Law No. 2538-1 “*On the legal status and respect for the memory of participants in the struggle for independence of Ukraine in the 20th century*”. It provided for the penalization of all those who would show disregard for the veterans, denying the purposefulness of their fight. This also applied to the veterans of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, among whom were those responsible for “ethnic cleansing bearing the hallmarks of genocide” in Volyn, Eastern Galicia and south-eastern areas of today’s Republic of Poland.

Already the day after the announcement of the President Viatrovyh, Dr. Jarosław Szarek, the President of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), expressed his surprise with this statement and reminded that “the Polish-Ukrainian dialogue concerning also the difficult aspects of our common past, started much earlier than the establishment of the Ukrainian IPN. For this reason we are convinced that despite the unfavorable position of UIPN, Polish-Ukrainian scientific contacts will continue”²⁸

In the aforementioned announcement, the President of the Ukrainian IPN also wrote:

(...) discussions about the past should remain the prerogative of historians, not politicians. It is the thoughtful professional conversation, not loud political declarations, that is one of the foundations of understanding between nations.²⁹

28. “IPN ‘zdziwiony’ oświadczeniem Wiatrowycza” [IPN ‘surprised’ by Viatrovyh’s statement], *Kresy24.pl*, February 8, 2018, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://kresy24.pl/ipn-zdziwiony-oswiadczeniem-wjatrowycza/>.

29. “Ukraiński IPN nie widzi możliwości współpracy z Polską w ramach forum historyków” [Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance does not see any possibility of cooperation with Poland within the framework of the

If Dr. Viatrovykh and part of the Ukrainian elite – who actively support the creation of the myth of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army – were guided by this right statement in their actual activities, then the Polish-Ukrainian historical debate would probably be at a different, much more advanced stage.

It is to be hoped that the current (since December 4, 2019) President of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, Anton Drobovych, who replaced Volodymyr Viatrovykh, dismissed by the new Ukrainian authorities, who is considered to be one of the architects of Ukrainian historical policy and who is considered in Poland to be the apologist for the activities of the OUN and the UPA, remembers this.

Leaving the post of president of the Ukrainian IPN and becoming an active, prominent politician (member of the European Solidarity party, member of the Verkhovna Rada), Dr. Viatrovykh boasted that during his term of office, from 2014, he managed to achieve most of his goals. He also informed:

I have received assurances from Prime Minister Oleksiy Honcharuk that, regardless of the change in the position of president, the Institute will maintain its status as an authority and an instrument of national remembrance policy, and that the format and directions of its work will be continued.³⁰

If such a declaration of the Prime Minister was actually made, there is little chance for a constructive Polish-Ukrainian historical dialogue.

forum of historians], *TVP Info*, February 7, 2018, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.tvp.info/35923820/ukrainski-ipn-nie-widzi-mozliwosci-wspolpracy-z-polska-w-ramach-forum-historykow>.

30. “Wołodymyr Wiatrowycz zwolniony ze stanowiska szefa ukraińskiego IPN” [Volodymyr Viatrovykh dismissed from the post of head of the Ukrainian IPN], *Dzieje.pl. Portal Historyczny*, September 18, 2019, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/wolodymyr-wiatrowycz-zwolniony-ze-stanowiska-szefa-ukrainskiego-ipn>.

Despite such discouraging signals, however, it was assessed in Warsaw that the new authorities of the Ukrainian IPN in Polish-Ukrainian context will perhaps change their priorities in their actions. Political and ideological issues will come to the fore. In this way, conditions will be created for the resumption of dialogue on historical issues. The new leadership could entrust the dialogue to professional historians, whose only goal would be to reconstruct the facts and, on the basis of them, to determine the actual course and take stock of the bloody Polish-Ukrainian conflict of 1939–1947.

Probably based on such an assumption, on December 3, 2020, the President of the Polish IPN, Dr. Jarosław Szarek, met with the President of the Ukrainian IPN, Dr. Anton Drobovych:

They discussed the issues of exploration, exhumation and commemoration by the Polish side in Ukraine, and the question of Ukrainian activities in Poland. (...) In the communication sent to PAP after the meeting, the president of the IPN stressed that the foundation for further cooperation can only be the historical truth, including the painful truth about the victims of genocide by Ukrainian nationalists. He stressed that the Polish side demands the preservation of memory, the possibility of burying the victims of genocides and crimes of totalitarianism, fallen soldiers, as well as their worthy commemoration with due respect. He stated that it is still necessary to resume the search and exhumation process in Ukraine. (...) The Ukrainian side insisted on the need to return to the original version of the Monastyrz hill commemoration as a condition for further exhumation and commemoration in Ukraine. This, in turn, cannot be accepted by the Polish IPN until the doubts about

the number and identity of people buried there are finally clarified.³¹

The effects of the meeting in Warsaw do not give grounds for optimism. All the more so because Dr. Drobovych stated ultimately that only unconditional fulfillment of the Ukrainian expectation would open the way to obtain “unlimited number of exploration permits in Ukraine”,³² while the management of the Polish IPN has communicated that “unfortunately, the effects of positive gestures made so far by the Polish side justify the limited trust in such declarations. (...) The IPN is of the opinion that a state that takes seriously its obligations towards citizens who have been victims of wars and repressions cannot decline to seek to establish their fate, as well as find and arrange a burial place. Adopting the Ukrainian solution – while there are significant discrepancies in the documents regarding the number of people buried in the Monastyrz hill grave – would be such an omission”.³³

The public was informed that the presidents of the institutes decided that there was a need “to establish a joint Polish-Ukrainian group to deal with specific issues in this area”.³⁴ However, they did not set a deadline for their decision, which means that they put it off *ad calendas graecas*, i.e.: in your dreams.

The Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians will probably meet a similar fate. During the Warsaw meeting, the Presidents of both institutes agreed that “the resumption of the meeting of the Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians would take place after the publication in both countries of the hitherto existing findings”.³⁵

31. “Prezes IPN Jarosław Szarek spotkał się z dyrektorem ukraińskiego IPN Antonem Drobowyczem” [President of the IPN Jarosław Szarek met with Anton Drobovych, Director of the Ukrainian IPN], *Dzieje.pl. Portal Historyczny*, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://dzieje.pl/wiadomosci/prezes-ipn-jaroslaw-szarek-spotkal-sie-z-dyrektorem-ukrainskiego-ipn-antonem-drobowyczem>.

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

However, it will be extremely difficult, given that – as I informed earlier – it could not be done before, as the Ukrainian participants of the Forum did not provide the texts of their papers (expert opinions). Will they do it now? Will the door to the Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians be opened?

Translated by Michelle Atallah

Bibliography:

I. Sources:

1. *Polsko-Ukraińskie Forum Partnerstwa* [Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum]. Accessed December 2, 2020. <http://www.kew.org.pl/polsko-ukrainskie-forum-artnerstwa/>.

2. *Uchwała Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 15 lipca 2009 r. w sprawie tragicznego losu Polaków na Kresach Wschodnich* [Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of July 15, 2009 on the tragic fate of Poles in the Eastern Borderlands]. Warsaw: Monitor Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 15, 2009, no. 47, item 684.

3. *Uchwała Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 12 lipca 2013 r. w sprawie uczczenia 70. rocznicy Zbrodni Wołyńskiej i oddania hołdu Jej ofiarom* [Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of July 12, 2013 on commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Volyn Crime and paying tribute to its victims]. Warsaw: Monitor Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 31, 2013, item 606.

4. *Uchwała Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 22 lipca 2016 r. w sprawie oddania hołdu ofiarom ludobójstwa dokonanego przez nacjonalistów ukraińskich na obywatelach II Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w latach 1943-1945* [Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of July 22, 2016 on paying tribute to the victims of genocide committed by Ukrainian nationalists on the citizens of the Second Republic of Poland in 1943–1945]. Warsaw: Monitor

Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 29, 2016, item 726.

5. *Uchwała Senatu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 20 czerwca 2013 r. w 70. rocznicę Zbrodni Wołyńskiej* [Resolution of the Senate of the Republic of Poland of June 20, 2013 on the 70th anniversary of the Volyn Crime]. Warsaw: Monitor Polski (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland), July 12, 2013, item 582.

6. “Ukraiński IPN nie widzi możliwości współpracy z Polską w ramach forum historyków” [Ukrainian IPN does not see any possibility of cooperation with Poland within the framework of the forum of historians]. *TVP Info*, February 7, 2018. Accessed December 3, 2020. <https://www.tvp.info/35923820/ukrainski-ipn-nie-widzi-mozliwosci-wspolpracy-z-polska-w-ramach-forum-historykow>.

II. Papers:

7. Bobołowicz, P. “W Kijowie odbyło się posiedzenie Polsko-Ukraińskiego Forum Partnerstwa” [A meeting of the Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum was held in Kiev, Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum in Kiev]. *Jagiellonia.org*, June 3, 2017. Accessed December 2, 2020. <https://jagiellonia.org/w-kijowie-odbylo-sie-posiedzenie-polsko-ukrainskiego-forum-partnerstwa-pawel-bobolowicz/>.

8. Hryciuk, G. “Rana, która wciąż krwawi” [A wound that is still bleeding]. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, supplement: *Wołyń 1943. Przed 70. rocznicą zbrodni* [Volyn 1943. Before the 70th anniversary of the crime], June 22, 2013.

9. “Mer Lwowa: rozdrapywanie ran historycznych jest zgubne” [Mer of Lviv: the tearing of historical wounds is disastrous]. *Dzieje.pl. Portal Historyczny*, November 6, 2017. Accessed December 3, 2020. <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/mer-lwowa-rozdrapywanie-ran-historycznych-jest-zgubne>.

10. Michnik, A. “Rana Wołynia” [The wound of Volyn]. [In:] *Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie. Historia i pamięć* [Polish-Ukrainian

relations. History and memory], edited by J. Marszałek-Kawa and Z. Karpus. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2008.

11. Motyka, G. “Nieudana książka. Recenzja książki Wołodymyra Wiatrowycza *Druha polsko-ukrajńska wijna 1942–1947* (Druga wojna polsko-ukraińska 1942–1947)”, [Unsuccessful book. Review of the book by Volodymyr Viatrovych *Druha polsko-ukrajńska wijna 1942–1947* (Second Polish-Ukrainian War 1942–1947)]. *Nowa Europa Wschodnia*, no. 2 (2012). Electronic document, accessed December 3, 2020. <https://zbrodniawolynska.pl/zw1/historia/spory-o-wolyn/152,Grzegorz-Motyka-Nieudana-ksiazka.html>.

12. *Polska–Ukraina: trudne pytania. T. 1–2: Materiały II międzynarodowego seminarium historycznego „Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie w latach 1918–1947”*, Warszawa, 22–24 maja 1997 [Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions. Vol. 1–2: Materials of the II International Historical Seminar “Polish-Ukrainian Relations in the World War II”, Warsaw, May 22–24, 1997]. Warsaw, 1998.

13. *Polska–Ukraina: trudne pytania. T. 10: Materiały XI międzynarodowego seminarium historycznego „Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie w latach II wojny światowej”*. Warszawa, 26–28 kwietnia 2005, [Poland–Ukraine: Challenging Questions. Vol. 10: Materials of the XI International Historical Seminar “Polish-Ukrainian Relations in the World War II”, Warsaw, April 26–28 2005]. Warsaw, 2006.

14. “Rzeź wołyńska” [Volyn massacre]. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, supplement: *Alehistoria*, March 25, 2013.

15. Sienkiewicz B. “Ukraina jednak buforowa” [Ukraine, though, a buffer state]. *Gazeta Wyborcza*, September 3, 2010.

16. Siemaszko E., Siemaszko W. *Ludobójstwo dokonane przez nacjonalistów ukraińskich na ludności polskiej Wołynia 1939–1945* [Genocide committed by Ukrainian nationalists on the Polish population of Volyn 1939–1945]. Vol. 1–2. Warsaw: Von Borowiecky, 2000.

17. “Szeremeta: Cmentarz Katyński w Bykowni pod Kijowem jest nielegalny” [Sheremeta: The Katyń cemetery in Bikovnia near

Kiev is illegal]. November 15, 2017. Accessed December 3, 2020. <https://kresy.pl/wydarzenia/regiony/ukraina/szeremeta-cmentarz-katynski-bykowni-kijowem-nielegalny-video/>.

18. Żupański, A. *Tragiczne wydarzenia za Bugiem i Sanem przed ponad sześćdziesięciu laty. Poznaj werdykt historyków polskich i ukraińskich* [Tragic events behind the Bug and San over sixty years ago. Learn the verdict of Polish and Ukrainian historians]. Warsaw: Rytm, 2007.

19. В'ятрович, В. *Друга польсько-українська війна 1942–1947* [The Second Polish-Ukrainian War 1942–1947]. Київ, 2011; Київ, 2012; Warsaw, 2013.

About the Author

Waldemar Rezmer (professor, PhD) specializes in military and modern history as well as security science. He works as a researcher and teacher at the Faculty of Political Science and Security Studies of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. The author of 405 – both Polish and foreign – publications, including 22 books on recent military history of Poland, the Baltic countries, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Romania. He is the organizer of the Polish-Ukrainian International Scientific Seminar “Poland–Ukraine: Difficult Questions. Polish-Ukrainian relations during World War II”. From 2015, he served as co chairman of the Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians. Since 2017, he has been a member of the Polish-Belarusian scientific seminar “Dialogue of history / Stories of dialogue. Difficult matters in the history of Belarus and Poland, their presentation in the historiography of both countries, and the prospects for rapprochement of their scientific positions”. He is also the editor in chief of the annual “Europa Orientalis. Studia z dziejów Europy Wschodniej i Państw Bałtyckich” [Europa Orientalis. Studies from history of Eastern Europe and Baltic States].