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FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 1600'S AND UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THE 2000'S THE ELITE OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE ALWAYS MADE A SUCH FREE CHOICE: TO FIGHT AGAINST ETHNICALLY CLOSE PEOPLE IN ALLIANCE WITH ETHNICALLY DISTANT PEOPLE

Abstract. The definition of ethnic affinity has been expanded. Describes how the elite of the Ukrainian people make free choices of military allies and opponents using four historical events as examples: a series of uprisings in the early and mid-1600s, the Great Northern War in the early 1700s, the Russian Civil War in the early 1900s, and the existence a completely independent Ukrainian state from 1991 to the present. It was revealed that the elite of the Ukrainian people in all four cases chose confrontation with an ethnically close people in an alliance with ethnically distant peoples.

Keywords: *elite, history of Ukraine, history of Russia*

Source data.

Ethnic proximity is the total size of differences in the system of racial, religious, cultural, behavioral and historical characteristics of two different peoples from each other [4, p. 918].

This definition should be expanded to emphasize the essential differences between an ethnic group and a people [3].

Definition. Ethnic proximity is the sum of the differences in the system of racial, religious, cultural, behavioral, and historical characteristics of two different ethnic groups or peoples from each other

The free choice of the elite of the Ukrainian people should be understood as such actions that were taken by it as a result of the free choice of the historical path. As a non-free choice of the elite of the Ukrainian people, we should recognize those periods of time when the Ukrainian people lived and fought together with the Poles in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or together with the Russians in Russia.

1. Uprisings of the Ukrainian people from 1591 to 1654.

The Ukrainian people were part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, that is, in the state of Poles and Lithuanians. Orthodoxy was the faith of the Ukrainian and Russian peoples, Catholicism was the main faith of the Poles, and the Crimean Tatars professed the Muslim faith.

Ethnically, the closest to the Ukrainian people were Russians, followed by Poles, and the most ethnically distant were the Crimean Tatars.

The main events of this period unfolded from 1648 to 1654, when the Ukrainians won many victories over the Poles in alliance with the Crimean Tatars. It is noteworthy that until that time, the Ukrainians did not have much success in the fight against the Poles, so *the help of the Crimean Tatars should be recognized as an essential factor in the combat successes of the Ukrainian people from 1648 to 1645.*

The elite of the Ukrainian people did not want to enter into an alliance with the Russian people until 1654, but after a heavy defeat in the Battle of Berestet in 1651, the Ukrainian people became part of the Russian Kingdom, which led to the Russo-Polish war of 1654-1667.

Conclusion №1. The elite of the Ukrainian people preferred peaceful coexistence with "their" Poles to a military alliance with "foreign" Crimean Tatars against "their" ones; and the Ukrainian people were forced to ally with ethnically "their" Russians.

2. The Great Northern War (1700-1721).

The Ukrainian people were part of the Russian Kingdom, that is, in the state of Russians. Orthodoxy was the faith of the Ukrainian and Russian peoples, Lutheranism was the faith of the Swedes, and the Crimean Tatars professed the Muslim faith.

The Ukrainian people were under the rule and in alliance with the Russian people, and the Crimean Tatars were in alliance with the Swedes.

Ethnically, the closest for the Ukrainian people were Russians, then-Swedes, and the most ethnically distant were the Crimean Tatars.

In 1708, the elite of the Ukrainian people went over to the side of the Swedes and began to fight against the Russians.

Conclusion №2. The elite of the Ukrainian people preferred a military alliance with "foreign" Swedes and Crimean Tatars against "their" Russians to military actions together with "their" Russians.

3. Civil War in Russia (1917-1922) [4, p. 903].

By 1917, the Ukrainian people were part of the Russian Empire, which had been at war with Germany, Austria-Hungary, and other countries since 1914 as part of the First World War.

The Ukrainian and Russian peoples were Orthodox, the Poles were Catholics, and the Germans and Austrians were Protestants.

Ethnically, the closest to the Ukrainian people were Russians, followed by Poles, and the most ethnically distant were Germans.

After the fall of the monarchy in Russia in 1917, the elite of the Ukrainian people in 1918 became an ally of the Germans against the Russians, and from 1920 entered into an alliance with the Poles also against the Russians.

Conclusion №3. The elite of the Ukrainian people preferred military actions together with "their" Russians to a military alliance with "foreign" Germans and Poles Tatars against "their" Russians.

4. The existence of a fully independent Ukrainian state (1991-2024) continues to the present day

In 1991, due to the secession of the outlying territories from Russia, expressed in the form of the collapse of the Soviet Union [3], Ukraine became an independent state.

The Ukrainian and Russian peoples were Orthodox, and the Americans, along with the British, French, Germans, and other peoples of Western Europe, were Protestants.

Ethnically, the closest to the Ukrainian people were the Russians; and ethnically distant were the Americans, the British, the French, the Germans, and other countries with mostly Protestant populations.

The transition from the friendly relations between Ukraine and Russia that existed in 1991 to today's hostile relations has been gradual.

Currently, in 2024, there is fighting of the fourth or high level of armed violence [5], where on the one hand there is Ukraine and its allies – the United States, Great Britain, Germany, France and other countries, and on the other hand – Russia is fighting [6].

Conclusion №4. The elite of the Ukrainian people chose to create a military alliance with "foreign" Americans, British, French, Germans and Poles, directed against "their" Russians, rather than an alliance with "their" Russians.

The general conclusion: from the beginning of the 1600s to the present, the elite of the Ukrainian people has always made the same free choice – to fight against an ethnically close people in an alliance with ethnically distant peoples, or, in other words, to fight against "their own" in an alliance with "strangers".

Remark. This study does not address the question of why the elite of the Ukrainian people behave in this way.

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