

## **THE BELARUSIAN-UKRAINIAN SOCIO-CULTURAL RELATIONS IN THE SECOND HALF OF XIX<sup>TH</sup> – EARLY XX<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Mutual rapprochement of peoples at all stages of historical development depends on the intensity of their constant and diverse communication. Cultural exchange plays an important role in the spectrum of various contacts as a means of cognition of the world and spiritual development.

This period is quite important in the development of relations between two Slavic peoples, as since the XIX<sup>th</sup> century a new concept of common language and culture has begun to emerge. In their history it was one of the most interesting and creative. It should be taken into account that the Ukrainian-Belarusian relations were established and developed in the conditions of stateless existence of the two peoples in the monarchies of the Romanovs and Habsburgs, where their lands were at different times and under different circumstances. The conditions for cultural development were also different, and this influenced the processes of national and cultural revival of Ukrainians and Belarusians. With the development of national self-consciousness in all areas of cultural interaction, there have been qualitative changes that have led to the mutual enrichment of the cultures of the two peoples. Their traditional communication has become an important part of the nation-building process.

During the periods of national revival the national idea was developed most actively. In addition, public attention was drawn to the origins of national statehood, to historical events and personalities who played this or that role in it.

In recent decades, the issues of national and cultural self-identification of Belarusians have become the most acute. The political and philosophical heritage of the Belarusian people can serve as a basis for the development of the ideological sphere of the Belarusian state, formed throughout the

history of public thought of the Belarusian people. Public opinion is a part of the spiritual life of society, spiritual production and public consciousness, which in their content and form have a historical character<sup>1</sup>.

The exchange of universal human values has become a catalyst for national cultural growth. Through them the political tasks were also set. The introduction of broad ranges of readers, viewers and listeners to the treasure of the Slavic cultures has enabled a deeper understanding of the world around us. It can be considered that it was one of the ways of intellectual and aesthetic elevation of the Slavs.

The general Slavic thought generated by internal needs of development of separate people, has shaded the common features of their cultures and provided specifics to them. Under such conditions, Ukrainian-Belarusian relations in the public sphere have acquired new content.

Numerous bans by the tsarist regime of the Ukrainian printed word automatically affected the Belarusian press, as the officials of that time were afraid that with the appearance of works in the Belarusian language there was no tendency “except for the “little Russian” to create “Belarusian” literature and thus weaken the literary and national unity, and consequently the political power of the Russian people<sup>2</sup>.

Organizational registration of the Belarusian national liberation movement fell to the turning point of XIX<sup>th</sup> – XX<sup>th</sup> century. By the social composition and orientation, this movement included two currents (liberal and revolutionary). This is largely due to the diversity of social sources of forming the Belarusian national intelligentsia – the basis of the ideological and organizational core of the national liberation movement. Their activities were particularly important during this period, as the ruling circles of the Russian Empire carried out a policy of consistent Russification on the Belarusian lands. Their main goal was not the welfare of the people, but the preservation of the existing political system – the guarantor of perpetuating the system of human exploitation, social and national oppression of peoples. This could not but narrow the sphere of cultural influence of Belarusian national culture on the great mass of the

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<sup>1</sup> Токць С. Беларускі нацыянальны рух XIX – пачатку XX ст. у кантэксце нацыянальных рухаў народаў Цэнтральна-Усходняй Еўропы. Нацыянальныя пытанні : матэрыялы III Міжнароднага кангрэса беларусістаў. Мн., 2001. С. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Філякоў У. *Беларуска-ўкраінскія сувязі ў кантэксце нацыянальнага адраджэння ў пачатку XX ст.* // Беларусь-Україна: гістарычны вопыт узаемаадносін. Мн., 2004. С. 190.

population of the region. That is why the expansion of social and ethnic consciousness among the masses was slow<sup>3</sup>.

Changes in the cultural sphere, which took place in the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, contributed to the development of the national educational movement, the organizers were writers, publicists, historians, organizers of circles for the study of Belarusian-Ukrainian national problems and finding ways to overcome them. In the absence of Belarusians' statehood, independent forms of political and economic life, culture was the most important unifying factor. It ensured the preservation of ethnic identity, led to the awakening and maturation of national self-consciousness.

### **1. Belarusian National Movement in the Perception of Ukrainian Public-cultural Figures**

Ukrainian public men have always been interested in the destiny of the Belarusian people. For example, many warm words about Belarus, its people, history, culture and language were said by a prominent figure of the populist movement and a scientist of the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841–1895). One of the greatest achievements was the recognition of the equality of all peoples, including Belarusians, whose rights to independent development were defended by M. Drahomanov.

The Ukrainian Democrat did not consider the absence of the Belarusian national movement as a sign of its hibernation and passivity. Only Democrats could raise the masses of the Belarusian people to broad liberation activity. M. Drahomanov called on the ideologists of populism, who carried out extensive propaganda work in the 70s, to address the Belarusian people in their native language, to tell them about the causes of poverty, to point to the enemies and to raise the fight for social justice<sup>4</sup>. He convinced “homans”<sup>5</sup> that Belarusians can be guaranteed the equality and self-government only in the Federal building for a future state.

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<sup>3</sup> Карев Д. В. Белорусская и украинская историография конца XVIII – начала 20-х гг. XX в. в процессе генезиса и развития национального исторического сознания белорусов и украинцев. Вильнюс, 2007. С. 171–172.

<sup>4</sup> Злупко С. М. Драгоманов пра Беларусь і беларусаў. *Матэрыялы першай навуковай канферэнцыі па вывучэнню беларуска-ўкраінскіх літаратурных і фальклорных сув'язей*. Гомель, 1969. С. 46.

<sup>5</sup> “Homans” were the first in Belarus, who announced the existence of the Belarusian nation. Belarusian question was openly put and theoretically justified by the populists magazine “Homan” for the first time (1884).

In June 1885 in Lviv, under the influence of M. Drahomanov, the Ukrainian public figures M. Pavlyk and I. Franko made the project of activity of “Ukrainian-Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian brotherhood” and “Publishing Union”, according to which each nation had equal rights. This was the first project of the democratic program, according to which the Belarusian people were given an equal place with other neighbouring Nations. This was the main merit of M. Drahomanov, who always defended the historical rights of the Belarusian people, exposed falsifiers of history, culture and public views of the Belarusian native masses<sup>6</sup>. Scientific heritage and practical activities of M. Drahomanov testifies that Belarus and the Belarusian people had him as a sincere defender, fighter for social equality, political freedom and national independence.

An interesting page in the history of Ukrainian-Belarusian public relations is a correspondence between Voinislav Savych Zabolotskyi (1850 – after 1893) and M. Drahomanov, Lesya Ukrainka’s uncle.

In letters to M. Drahomanov from the second half of the 80-ies of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century written in Belarusian, V. Savych Zabolotskyi recalled some moments of his life, expressed the thought of Belarusian and Ukrainian cultures and languages, the destiny of the Slavic peoples. The writer appears in letters to M. Drahomanov as an ardent supporter of the idea of Slavic unity. As for the situation of Belarusians in the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, he stated: “We, the primeval Rus, are now driven by God into peasantry”<sup>7</sup>. In a letter dated November 19, 1886 Belarusian figure said: “Your Ukrainian literature is very original, has a lot of interest for everyone. I have never seen such complete realism and public opinion as in your narrative and poetry”<sup>8</sup>. Letters to M. Drahomanov are represented by V. Savych-Zabolotskyi as a citizen and patriot concerned about the fate of his native land.

The official activity of F. Bohushevych in Ukraine was marked by civil adherence to principles, honesty, attention to ordinary people, in particular to the poor part of the peasantry. In the post-reform period, especially often, there were land conflicts between landowners and peasants. Archival documents affirm that he was a conscious defender of

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<sup>6</sup> Злупко С. М. Драгоманов пра Беларусь і беларусаў *Матэрыялы першай навуковай канферэнцыі на вывучэнню беларуска-ўкраінскіх літаратурных і фальклорных сув’язей*. Гомель, 1969. С. 46–47.

<sup>7</sup> Нацыянальная бібліятэка Беларусі. Адазвел рукапісаў, старадрукаваных і рэдкіх выданняў. Ф. 178. Оп. 1. Спр. 381. Арк. 8.

<sup>8</sup> The same source. Арк. 11.

the interests of Ukrainian peasants<sup>9</sup>. The struggle of F. Bohushevych against the national oppression of Belarusians by tsarism, for their national freedom was progressive, because it was a competition for democracy, native language and politic freedom of the Belarusian people.

F. Bohushevych was one of the outstanding representatives of the advanced public thought in Belarus of the last quarter of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. His worldview was formed under the powerful ideological influence of democratic Ukrainian culture. Most of his works hold the idea that autocracy is a heavy chain of oppression and the shackles that delay the progressive development of citizenship. The poet believed that the whole system of tsarism is lawlessness and wild wilfulness, bureaucracy, oppression and enslavement of workers. F. Bohushevych's assessment of autocracy is clearly and fully formulated in the works "The Dark Kingdom", "How to seek the truth", etc.<sup>10</sup>

In F. Bohushevych's interpretation, Belarusian nationalism is primarily a cultural nationalism based on concern "for our primeval native language" as the foundation of national culture.

Here, for example, are the words that one of the Ukrainian intellectuals, D. Doroshenko, whose house in Vilna he often visited, told about the poet: "In the spring of 1898 I got acquainted with Frantishek Bohushevych. One day, having returned from an official trip near Minsk, my father enthusiastically told me about a very interesting acquaintance... He went to Bohushevych with a visit to invite him to us... I showed the guest "The Dawn" (a journal of liberal direction, which was published in Ukrainian in Lviv); it was probably known to the guest, and he realized what the fact of getting a banned journal by a small grammar-school student in Vilna meant. He kissed my head and said that every person should love his people, respect his language and do the work of his land. These were the first words I heard in my life... from an adult, "solid" person about the national duty, and these words have forever engraved in my memory. Our guest started talking about the Belarusian people.... about the hard life of this people, about the decline of education and culture. He read us one poem – it was his famous "Truth"... My father and I were deeply impressed and sat in silence for several hours. Only then we

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<sup>9</sup> ДАЧО. Ф. 806. Оп. 1. Спр. 164. 29 арк.

<sup>10</sup> Лушчыцкі І. Грамадска-палітычныя і філасофскія ідэі твораў Ф. Багушэвіча. Польшча. 1955. № 8. С. 132–133.

understood the beauty of the Belarusian language...”<sup>11</sup> “I hide this bright image of F. Bohushevych in my soul as one of the dearest memories: I am grateful to Bohushevych for the fact that he supported in my soul the impulse to work for the benefit of the native Ukrainian people, and since that time the fate of the Belarusian national revival has become no less expensive for me, as the fate of the Ukrainian revival”<sup>12</sup>.

Creativity and life of Aloiza Pashkevych (also known under the pseudonym Tsotka) is a vivid example of serving the people, the cause of their release from national and social oppression. The Tsotka’s patriotism was based on boundless love for her Motherland and deep respect for other nationalities.

In the poem “To Neighbours in Captivity”, developing Taras Shevchenko’s views on the Slavic issue, she called on the Ukrainian people to fight together against social and national oppression. To Ukrainians she addressed, as to her own brothers who should lend a helping hand to Belarusians<sup>13</sup>.

The Tsotka’s works, full of revolutionary pathos, could not but affect those who got acquainted with them. And these, first of all, were Lviv writers and scientists, individual employees of the “Literary and Scientific Bulletin” (LSB) and “Shevchenko Scientific Society” of that time. Founded on the occasion of the century of national revival, “LSB” promoted the idea of originality of the Ukrainian people, Ukrainian statehood, inclusion in the circle of European Nations, because, as it was noted in his program, “for our intelligent community that range of ideas, in which the cultural world lives now, the issues that interest advanced people, their competition and interests remain largely alien and unknown... The magazine will be interesting for us”<sup>14</sup>. As I. Svetsitsky remembered, Tsotka “always brought a special public pathos and direction of thought into circles in which she appeared... she performed everywhere as an ardent revolutionary against all oppression, and all untruth”. The poetess “in conversations with friends uttered her national views”<sup>15</sup>. Tsotka, together with Lviv social democrats of that time brought to the minds of the workers the idea of a revolutionary renewal of life.

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<sup>11</sup> Дорошенко Д. З Віленських вражень. *Рада*. 1909. № 114. С. 8–13.

<sup>12</sup> Дарашэнка Д. *Старонка з маіх успамінаў. Запісы Беларускага навуковага таварыства. Вільня*, 1938. Сшыток I. С. 33.

<sup>13</sup> Арабей Л. У вигнанні. *Малодосць*. 1976. № 7. С. 169.

<sup>14</sup> Шаповал Ю. “Літературно-Науковий Вістник” (1898 – 1932 рр.) : Творення державницької ідеології українства. Л., 2000. С. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Свенціцький І. Розквіт культурно-національного життя Східної Білорусі. Л., 1928. С. 21–22.

Ukrainians, like Belarusians, led the revival of national consciousness in line with the mighty general democratic movement, which covered all the peoples of Russia. The pathos of appeals with which the intelligentsia appealed to the people, depended on how much the authors were really connected with the workers, personified their aspirations, revealed their vital interests<sup>16</sup>. The process of forming the Ukrainian and Belarusian nations pronounced the greatest impact only in the early twentieth century and passed at the time when international relations within the multinational Russian Empire were no less important than intra-ethnic communication.

The first Belarusian party called the Belarusian revolutionary community was founded in 1902 in St. Petersburg on the initiative and active participation of the Lutskevych Brothers (Anton and Ivan). Since the time of study in Vilna gymnasium, they were close friends of D. Doroshenko, closely associated with the Belarusian movement. A. Lutskevich wrote: “These were our two friends, who played a particularly prominent role among the student youth in general, and whose names for certain reasons are not given here: so they have left the region since 1904”<sup>17</sup>. He meant Dmitro Doroshenko and his friend Ivan Kraskovskyi (1880–1955), a well-known figure of the Belarusian movement.

It is interesting, that Chernihiv Belarusians gave out more illegal literature than Belarusian parties on the territory of the very Belarus<sup>18</sup>. This active publishing activity was possible thanks to the help of the Revolutionary Ukrainian party.

At the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> century, with the emergence of more or less permanent political organizations, book publishing and periodicals, the Belarusian national movement really turns into a socially significant movement, that is, a progressive, continuous process<sup>19</sup>. As a result of the revolutionary events of 1905–1907, Russian tsarism made certain concessions to Belarusians: the national press, printing, the activities of cultural and educational societies were allowed.

Since the first years of their existence, close ties have been established between individual Ukrainian and Belarusian publications.

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<sup>16</sup> Кабржыцкая Т. В., Рагойша В. П. Карані дружбы. Мн., 1976. С. 46.

<sup>17</sup> Луцкевіч А. За дваццаць пяць гадоў (1903 – 1928). Мн., 1991. С. 10.

<sup>18</sup> Ільїн О. Білоруська соціал-демократична громада Чернігівщини. *Сіверянський літопис*. 2012. № 1–2. С. 63.

<sup>19</sup> Терешкович П. В. Этническая история Беларуси XIX – начала XX в.: в контексте Центрально-Восточной Европы. Мн., 2004. С. 181.

On September 1, 1906 the first (official) Belarusian newspaper “Nasha dolia” (“Our destiny”) appeared. No sooner had the second issue of “Nasha dolia” come out-of-print, as the Ukrainian Kyiv newspaper “Rada” (19 September) informed the readers: “On September 1st the newspaper “Nasha dolia” came out in Vilna... The direction of the newspaper is clearly indicated by the following: the first issue was confiscated by the Governor’s order.... 5,000 copies were sold, 5,000 were banned by the police”.

“Nasha dolia” came out in extremely difficult conditions: four of the five issued numbers were confiscated. For “calling for an armed uprising to change the state system”, the court decided to “ban the publication of the newspaper “Our destiny” forever”, and to put the editor of the newspaper Olexandr Vlasav (1874–1941) into prison for one year. In November, in hot pursuit of events, “Rada” prints the information about the publication of a new Belarusian newspaper. Since then, between these two newspapers a close contact has established.

Analysing the cultural life of the Belarusian people, the Kyiv newspaper “Rada” in 1907 noted that “Belarusians came to the path that will lead them into a loose, wide world between the cultural peoples, and Ukrainians, who are doing the same thing among their people, can only congratulate the educational activities of the Belarusian intelligentsia and wish success. Good luck!”. Lviv edition “Ruslan” reprinted on its pages the materials of “ukrainics” from “Nasha niva” (“Our field”) (Author’s note: “ukrainics” is a notion which means the totality of anything that relates to history, economy, culture of Ukraine etc.). In particular, in 1910, in “Ruslan” an article “Closer to Ukrainians” appeared, which was about friendly relations of Belarusians and Ukrainians since dateless antiquity<sup>20</sup>.

Such close attention to Belarus and its people was peculiar to many publications brought out in Kyiv and Lviv. The newspapers “Ukrainska Khata” (“Ukrainian house”), “Ridnyi kraj” (“Native land”), (“Dniprovi khvyli” (“Dnipro waves”) actively offered the Belarusian topic to its readers.

A significant role in the cultural unity of Belarusians with the Ukrainian people was played by the materials of the daily public-political, scientific and educational literary and artistic newspaper “Nasha Niva” (1906–1915).

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<sup>20</sup> Філякоў У. Беларуска-ўкраінскія сувязі ў кантэксце нацыянальнага адраджэння ў пачатаку ХХ ст. // Беларусь-Україна: гістарычны вопыт узаемаадносін. Мн., 2004. С. 192.



From the very first issue, the weekly newspaper announced its main goal: “To all Belarusians, who do not know who they are, to understand that they are Belarusians and people, to know their right and help us in our work... And now we call on everyone who understands our ideas, feels what we hear, and wants to help us: support us in our work!”<sup>21</sup>.

“Nasha Niva” celebrated all most important events in the cultural and public life of Belarus. Thus, in the issue of November 10, 1906, it is reported that the newspaper will serve “all the Belarusian offended people” regardless of class. And two weeks later, the editors called their audience “are not the landlords and factory owners, but working people”<sup>22</sup>. “Nasha Niva” has set itself the goal to awaken the self-consciousness of Belarusians, and in this sense it has done a lot<sup>23</sup>.

The Belarusian national idea developed on the pages of “Nasha Niva” helped the intelligentsia to master the categories of the modern nation, contributed to the expansion of its social activity. The immediate result of the publication of the newspaper was that it was much more difficult for the opponents to deny the recognition of the rights to independence of the Belarusian nation, language, literature and culture<sup>24</sup>.

The main result of this cultural and educational activity is the formation of a modern understanding of the Belarusian nation.

## 2. Belarusian Public About Ukrainians

Belarusians, taking the example of Ukrainians, followed them in the same basic ways in the creation of new Belarusian literature and literary language on a national basis, in the struggle for the national printed word, in the formation of the national professional theatre, etc.

In the information sections of “Nasha Niva” often appeared Ukrainian materials, and they were selected, as a rule, from a democratic position. Local censorship let them pass only because they were not directly related to Belarus. This shows that Belarusian intellectuals were influenced by the events that took place in Ukraine. The advanced Belarusian intelligentsia in protection for an independent place of their language in the family of

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<sup>21</sup> Исторические корни дружбы и единения белорусского и украинского народов. К., 1978. С. 115.

<sup>22</sup> Унучак А. “Наша Ніва” і ідэйнае выхаванне беларускай інтэлігенцыі. *Беларускі гістарычны часопіс*. 2005. № 4. С. 20.

<sup>23</sup> Цуба М. Беларускі нацыянальны рух на пачатку XX ст. *Беларускі гістарычны часопіс*. 1996. № 1. С. 189.

<sup>24</sup> Унучак А. “Нашаніўства” і “заходнерусізм”: да пытання ідэйнай барацьбы за беларускую інтэлігенцыю на пачатку 20 ст.. *Гістарычны альманах*. 2006. Т. 12. С. 118–119.

other Slavic languages consolidated with progressive forces of the Ukrainian people.

“Nasha Niva”, widely using Ukrainian materials, introduced the society to social life in the country in general. In every issue they gave the information on tsarist repressions, printed messages from Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, Poltava and other Ukrainian cities. For example, in one of the issues of 1910 there was information that in Odessa by order of the Minister of education Kaso many students, who organized protests at the University, will be sent to the Northern provinces, several students from Kharkov will be evicted to Turukhansk region<sup>25</sup>. Often these facts were submitted without any comments. Sometimes the newspaper was looking for a suitable literary form so that the necessary information reached the understanding of the peasant-Belarusian as quickly as possible. Such messages from different places of Ukraine were published much. They forced Belarusians to take a closer look at their own lives, the same bitter and deprived of rights, called for a fight for a better life. The newspaper called on the Belarusian intelligentsia “to work sincerely for the future of their people. You have a task to arrange Belarusian reading circles, to organize parties, to invite peasant youth to them, to teach them good, to show all the beauty of their native land”<sup>26</sup>.

S. Poluian, who at that time was receiving higher education in Ukraine, joined the Ukrainian movement, thanks to the University student Joseph Hermaize, around whom the patriotic students Victor Romanovskiy, Mykola Zerov, Petro Horetskyi, etc were grouped. In particular M. Zerov is a well-known Ukrainian poet and linguist, V. Romanovsky, J. Hermaize are Ukrainian historians, students of the Belarusian historian M. Dovnar-Zapolskyi. V. Romanovskiy was born in Hlukhiv. That might be because of him that S. Poluian maintained contacts with Y. Zhurba and Hlukhivskiy circle<sup>27</sup>. In their “Letters from Ukraine” they constantly informed Belarusians about the socio-political and cultural life, the interest of Ukrainians in Belarusian literature and tried to influence the formation of public opinion.

“Letters from Ukraine” full of rich factual material, filled with the spirit of warm attitude to Ukraine and its people, a sense of gratitude for

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<sup>25</sup> Аб беларускім нацыянальным адраджэнні. *Наша ніва*. 1910. № 46. С. 668.

<sup>26</sup> Пятрок з Вярхоўя. Да нашых беларускіх інтэлегентаў. *Наша ніва*. 1914. № 1. С. 3.

<sup>27</sup> Лы́н А., Гарбачык М. Нацыянальнае адраджэнне пачатку XX ст. : беларуска-ўкраінскія повязі. *Спадчына*. 2000. № 2. С. 42.

understanding and help. The first of the “letters” about “The unity between Belarusians and Ukrainians” was, in fact, a brief historical overview of Ukrainian-Belarusian unity from the XIV century and until the beginning of XX<sup>th</sup> century. The poet Y. Zhurba noted that Belarusians and Ukrainians have much in common in the national affair of two peoples. The only difference is that the Ukrainian national affair is much ahead of the Belarusian one. The Belarusian intelligentsia aspired to eliminate this difference. An example for them for some time was the work of Ukrainians on the development of their culture and literature and national affair, “from whom we have a lot to learn” . Y. Zhurba finished his letter with the words of M. Hrushevskiy: “In close friendship, in the community of ideas of freedom and progress, let the strength of these peoples increase. After different woes and losses let their ancient eagle youth be reborn, and cover with its the wings the desperate people, suppressed by poverty!”<sup>28</sup> .

Living in Ukraine, the writer could directly cooperate with the figures of the Ukrainian literary movement. Everything important that he noticed in the public life of the Ukrainian people, right there popularized among Belarusians. Largely thanks to Y. Zhurba Belarusians are familiar with the fact, what happened in Ukraine in the early XX<sup>th</sup> century.

Having a broad understanding of the problems of the national liberation movement, S. Poluian has never been a supporter of the narrow national struggle, limiting work only to his own, specifically Belarusian national interests. For him, the national cause was international. He was a supporter of all the oppressed peoples, all his thoughts and aspirations were directed at them. In 1909 S. Poluian noted that at that time it was difficult to exist without sincere supporters between other nations. And for this purpose it is necessary for each people to get acquainted with the life and position of the national affairs of others. In the same letter, the researcher said that the magazine “Ukrainska Khata” established the Belarusian section for Belarusian authors on its pages<sup>29</sup>. S. Poluian in his messages from Ukraine appealed to the Belarusian and Ukrainian youth to join forces to help the people get out of the darkness, get light and a happy future.

At the same time, while living in Kyiv, S. Poluian studied the development of the national Ukrainian literature and the press, trying to

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<sup>28</sup> Журба Я. Аб еднасьці меж біларусамі і украінцамі. *Наша ніва*. 1909. № 13–14. С. 202.

<sup>29</sup> Палуян С. *Лісты ў будучыню*. Мн., 1986. С. 101–102.

influence the formation of public opinion. The letter from Ukraine (VI) describes the atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and support that existed between the advanced Ukrainian and Belarusian youth. Thus, in 1909, professor of Kharkiv university O. Pohodin organized for a group of students a trip along Russia and Austria-Hungary to acquaint them with the life and culture of different Slavic peoples. In Kyiv, the progressive Ukrainian public organized an evening of friendship between Belarusians and Ukrainians in the Ukrainian club, where the composer M. Lysenko performed. He was the person, who stressed that these first steps to the rapprochement of peoples and knowledge of each other are of great cultural importance. In all the speeches, including professor O. Pohodin, Belarusian critic O. Bulba, the key concept was the idea of the living force of the revival of the people, that it was the time for the peoples, forgetting their grievances of national pressure, reconciled<sup>30</sup>.

Progressive Ukrainian intelligentsia has done a lot to convey the printed word to the labour masses, who were deprived, in fact, of education, light and vision. Recalling the works of Ukrainians, Belarusian writers and journalists urged the countrymen to follow the example of their good initiatives. So, Belarusians learned that 14 new libraries, 20 separate “zemstvo” bookstores were opened in Poltava “zemstvo”, that Kharkiv workers built a house at their own expenses (114 thousand rubles), which housed a theatre, a library, a crafts workshop and primary school. (Author’s note: “zemstvo” was the local government, very limited in the rights, established in pre-revolutionary Russia and Ukraine according to the Zemstvo reform in 1864). Other information related to Ukrainian “Prosvita”, which has 140 thousand members, has 74 departments in different places, 2468 people’s reading rooms etc. In particular, in 1887 the Society acquired 50 books of Belarusian editions “O Skorine” and “Molytvenik dlia detei” (“Prayer for children”), 10 books “Hungarian Rus”<sup>31</sup>.

The Belarusian Newspapers quite often provided information about various Ukrainian publications. In particular, that Kyiv has 7 Ukrainian magazines, including 1 daily newspaper “Rada”, 2 weekly ones “Slovo” (“Word”) and “Ridnyi kraj” (“Native land”), 2 monthly literary and public magazines “Literaturno-Naukovyi Visnyk” (“Literary and Scientific Bulletin”) and “Ukrainska Khata” (“Ukrainian house”), which was less

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<sup>30</sup> Журба Я. Лісты з України VII. *Наша ніва*. 1909. № 16. С. 229–230.

<sup>31</sup> Выказь руху книжок, котрі Товариство закупило або даром достало. *Просвіта* 1886. Л. : Зь друкарнь Товариство ім. Шевченка, 1887. С. 15–16.

accessible to everyone<sup>32</sup>. This was done in order to show Belarusians that the neighbours, who were depressed no less, than them, but the cause of their spiritual revival was much better.

In one of the issues of 1909 “Nasha Niva” placed photos on the entire newspaper page. It gave readers the opportunity to see all of the Ukrainian literary journals published throughout 1905 – 1909. The photo, placed in the newspaper, served as a kind of index of addresses, where you could easily find the best samples of Ukrainian writing. So, it pointed to individual works of I. Franko, Lesia Ukrainka, M. Kotsiubynskyi, A. Krymskyi, V. Stefanyk, who took the main places in the “Literary and Scientific Bulletin”. “Nasha Niva” also directed the reader to the newspaper “Ukrainska dumka” (“Ukrainian thought”), one of the most active employees of which was B. Hrinchenko. “Ukrainian thought” aroused wide interest in the Ukrainian printed word, was one of the first weekly newspapers, which quite fully reflected the revolutionary rise in Russia and Ukraine, the struggle of workers against social and national oppression. “Nasha Niva” drew attention to the magazine “Ukraine”<sup>33</sup>, in which during 1907 important problems of social and cultural life, various scientific issues were raised, and fundamental works on the development of the Ukrainian language and literature were published.

“Nasha Niva” suggests the Belarusian literary and scientific forces to use the call of one of the Kyiv magazines and to start cooperating with the Ukrainian editions. S. Poluian with a feeling of boundless gratitude to Ukrainians for their support claims that such a step should be of great benefit to both peoples<sup>34</sup>. In particular, Ukrainians will have the opportunity not only to receive news from Belarusian life, but also get acquainted with the aspirations and needs of the Belarusian people.

“Nasha Niva” highlights the thoughts and hopes of Belarusians for a better fate, the fact that Belarus will be at the very stage of development, which the neighbouring countries stepped up, to which Ukrainians, Czechs, Poles and other peoples have risen<sup>35</sup>. In order for Belarusians to become a strong nation, to be able to win universal human rights, Y. Zhurba noted two conditions: “We need to give as much light to Belarusians as possible, because darkness is the main reason for our plight; and also we have to

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<sup>32</sup> Журба Я. Лісты з Украйны VII. *Наша ніва*. 1909. № 16. С. 229.

<sup>33</sup> До чытачоў. *Наша ніва*. 1910. № 27. С. 401–403.

<sup>34</sup> Журба Я. Лісты з Украйны VIII. *Наша ніва*. 1909. № 33. С. 480.

<sup>35</sup> The same source.

raise the national consciousness of Belarusians, to wake their sleepy minds, so that they were not as darkened as before, so that the difficult living conditions changed for the better. Only then the dead Belarus will start life again, having been reborn anew”<sup>36</sup>.

Since that time, the ties with each month have intensified and spread, Ukrainians also began to show interest in the national Belarusian Revival. February 23, 1909 the library of Shevchenko Scientific Society in Lviv asked the editors of “Nasha Niva” to send the newspaper files for 1908–1909. Later, on 3 April 1909, Lviv newspaper of the national direction named “Dilo” (“Business”) asked the editors of “Nasha Niva” to share the subscription to 1909. On 25 April 1909, V. Burachenko, the bookseller of “Prosvita” publisher in Odessa, asked to send him the newspaper and books the publishing “Nasha Niva”. Just before Christmas of 1909, a letter with a similar request was received by the editorial office of “Nasha Niva” from the Kharkiv public library<sup>37</sup>.

“Nasha Niva” was trying to promote only the best, progressive that was in the activities of the Ukrainian association “Prosvita”. After all, the activities of the public cultural and educational society “Prosvita” in Halychyna, founded by the best representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in 1868, was one of the most significant phenomena of the national history in the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> – first half of the XX<sup>th</sup> century. The society contributed to the spread of the best achievements of the Ukrainian and world culture, initiated various events, celebrations that were of national importance. This is, in particular, the annual celebration of the day since the death of T. Shevchenko, which was of great importance for the formation of the national consciousness of Halychany (Halychyna inhabitants). His name was deeply revered by the fighters for noble, high ideas in many national literatures, including the young Belarusian writing.

Thus, the reader through “Nasha Niva” formed a certain image of Ukrainians as a people who gradually woke up to national consciousness, although before it was the same as Belarusians, and the Ukrainian language, which was previously considered a peasant one, has already sounded in University classrooms. The authors of the newspaper forced Belarusians to look closely at their own lives, called for a fight for a better

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<sup>36</sup> Цішка Гартны. Думкі бела руса. *Наша ніва*. 1909. № 33. С. 481.

<sup>37</sup> Журба Я. Беларуская нацыянальная хэўра. *Наша ніва*. 1908. № 7. С. 4.

life. "...We know that the people's Belarusian weekly newspaper "Nasha Niva" now produces a great mission – the awakening of the national consciousness of Belarusians and has a success. ... for the Revival is a struggle for the freedom of creativity, for the freedom to identify themselves in life". Such thoughts brings brochure by A. Novyna (A. Lutskevych), giving a variety of information about the cultural revival of Belarusians<sup>38</sup>. The result of the cultural and educational work of the Belarusian democratic intelligentsia in national and cultural Revival was the awareness of the population of Belarus and the educated part of Russian society of the fact, that the Belarusian people are not the "cattle", but an independent national value, a living cultural and social force"<sup>39</sup>.

Therefore, for "Nasha Niva" the Ukrainian theme was one of the most appropriate and winning. It thereby revealed the beauty and poetry of the native language to the readers, asserted its equality among other languages, and at the same time contributed to the strengthening of friendship between the Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples.

The whole range of cultural life of Belarus and Ukraine of the specified period testified that a steady interest in the language, history, ethnography, folklore of the Belarusian and Ukrainian peoples is born among the intelligentsia, the foundation of written literature in the Ukrainian and Belarusian languages is formed. All these are undoubted signs of ageing of a new stage of ethnic self-consciousness of Ukrainians and Belarusians – national identity. New forms of cultural life of the Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples also testified to the rapid development of their national culture. The participation of the general population in the activities of cultural and educational societies has intensified the growth of national consciousness and creative initiative of the two peoples.

## CONCLUSIONS

The presence of Ukrainian and Belarusian ethnic lands in the Russian and Austro-Hungarian monarchies influenced not only their socio-economic, but also cultural and educational development, the nature of relations. The impact was different (through public policy, through personal relationships, etc.) and not the same. It was widely and

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<sup>38</sup> Шаповал М. Антонь Новина. Белоруссы. *Українська хата*. 1909. № 1. С. 560.

<sup>39</sup> Нордберг М., Кузю Т. Построение наций и государств. Историческое наследие и национальное самосознание в Белоруссии и Украине (сравнительный анализ) // Белоруссия и Россия: общества и государства. М., 1998. С. 132.

comprehensively manifested in the sphere of culture, primarily in education, science and social life.

It was through culture that the Slavs declared themselves as original peoples. Of course, this reflected on the content and forms of their relationship, increased interest in the history and culture of their neighbours. Language affinities, common tasks of social and political development were the basis of their unity. The search for ways and forms of their rapprochement and cooperation led to the emergence of concepts of Slavic community and programs of the Slavs unity. During this period, some Ukrainian socio-cultural figures tried to support Belarusians in their struggle for their national identity. Educated officials, many of whom showed themselves as writers, scientists, teachers and other workers in the field of culture, maintained lively contacts with their colleagues in various territories of the Empire. Their relationship contributed not only to scientific researches, but also to the mutual influence and enrichment with progressive ideas, and was the impetus for the development of drastic actions.

The attitude to the national issue in Belarus and Ukraine took an important place in bilateral relations. Drastic manifestations took place mainly in the field of journalism and distribution of brochures of revolutionary content. The events of 1863, the activities of the organization of Belarusian populists “Homan”, the appearance of the program “Ukrainian-Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian brotherhood” and “Publishing Union” of M. Pavlyk and I. Franko, journalism of M. Drahomanov and S. Podolynskyi, revolutionary-agitation activity of A. Hurynovych were vivid evidence of this. Under the national oppression of tsarism, the scientific and educational activities of Belarusians remained a private affair of many Belarusian public and political associations. It had a close connection with the national liberation movement, acquired the character of self-defence against Russification and Polonization.

It seems obvious that on the verge of XIX<sup>th</sup> – beginning of XX<sup>th</sup> century the Ukrainian movement largely served as the model of the Belarusian national movement. However, there is no doubt that, despite all the troubles, the formation of the Belarusian nation and the emergence of an independent Belarus is a historically objective and inevitable process.



## SUMMARY

The article shows the importance of the idea of Slavic reciprocity in its various manifestations in the development of cultural and social contacts. It is emphasized that the formation of the Belarusian national idea was the basis of the national-state self-consciousness of Belarusians. The support of Ukrainians in the struggle of Belarusians for their national identity, Ukrainian influence on the processes of national and cultural revival of Belarus and the participation of Belarusian leaders in the Ukrainian social and cultural life is highlighted.

Ukrainian materials of the newspaper “Nasha Niva” show that Belarusian intellectuals were influenced by the events that took place in Ukraine. It affirmed the equality of the Belarusian language among the Slavic languages, and at the same time contributed to the strengthening of friendship between the Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples.

Through the prism of relations a number of components of the problem of national revival of the two Slavic peoples in the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> – early XX<sup>th</sup> century was revealed.

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