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БЕЛАРУСЬ В ИСТОРИЧЕСКОЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ ПОЛЬШИ (2005–2020)

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Политическое использование истории для утверждения доминирующих политических дискурсов, формирования системы лояльностей является неотъемлемой частью современной внутренней и внешней политики. Польша стала классическим примером инструментализации истории. Конфликты вокруг различных интерпретаций исторических событий представляют важную часть взаимоотношений Польши с Россией, Украиной, Германией и Литвой. Беларусь до последнего времени оставалась белым пятном в польской исторической политике. Цель работы – изучение белорусского направления польской исторической политики. В основу исследования положен институциональный подход. В статье раскрыто влияние внешнеполитического фактора на формирование польской исторической политики, проанализированы концептуальные основы и цели польской исторической политики по отношению к Беларуси, дана характеристика акторов, институтов и практик польской исторической политики. В заключении поставлен вопрос об оценке эффективности польской исторической политики в Беларуси.

Ключевые слова: историческая политика; политика памяти; Польша; Беларусь; Институт национальной памяти.

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БЕЛАРУСЬ У ГІСТАРЫЧНАЙ ПАЛІТЫЦЫ ПОЛЬШЧЫ (2005–2020)

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Палітычнае выкарыстанне гісторыі для зацвярджэння дамінуючых палітычных дыскурсаў, фарміравання сістэмы лаяльнасцей з'яўляецца неад'емнай часткай сучаснай унутранай і знешняй палітыкі. Польшча стала класічным прыкладам краіны, у якой адбываецца інструменталізацыя гісторыі. Канфлікты вакол розных інтэрпрэтацый гістарычных падзей – важная частка ўзаемаадносін Польшчы з Расіяй, Украінай, Германіяй і Літвой. Беларусь да апошняга часу заставалася белай плямай у польскай гістарычнай палітыцы. Мэта працы – вывучэнне беларускага напрамку польскай гістарычнай палітыкі. У аснову даследавання пакладзены інстытуцыйнальны падыход. У артыкуле раскрыты ўплыў знешнепалітычнага фактара на фарміраванне польскай гістарычнай палітыкі, прааналізаваны канцэптуальныя асновы і мэты польскай гістарычнай палітыкі ў адносінах да Беларусі, дадзена характарыстыка актараў, інстытутаў і практык гістарычнай палітыкі Польшчы. У заключэнні пастаўлена пытанне аб ацэнцы эфектыўнасці польскай гістарычнай палітыкі ў Беларусі.

Ключавыя словы: гістарычная палітыка; палітыка памяці; Польшча; Беларусь; Інстытут нацыянальнай памяці.

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BELARUS IN THE HISTORICAL POLITICS OF POLAND (2005–2020)

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The political use of history to affirm dominant political discourses and form a system of loyalty has become an integral part of modern domestic and foreign politics. Poland represents a classic example of the instrumentalisation of history. History has become the subject of controversy, and sometimes acute conflicts of Poland with Russia, Ukraine, Germany and Lithuania. Until recently, Belarus remained a blank spot in Polish historical politics. The aim of the research is to study the Belarusian direction of Polish historical politics. The research is based on an institutional approach. The article reveals the influence of the foreign factor on the formation of Polish historical politics. The conceptual foundations and goals of the Polish historical politics in relation to Belarus are analysed. The characteristics of actors, institutions and practices of Polish historical politics are given. In conclusion, we raise the question of assessing the effectiveness of Polish historical politics in Belarus.

Keywords: historical politics; politics of memory; Poland; Belarus; Institute of National Remembrance.

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Introduction

The political use of history to affirm dominant political discourses and form a system of loyalty has become an integral part of modern domestic and foreign politics. Active instrumentalisation of the past by politicians has contributed to the growing popularity of studies of historical politics or politics of memory.

The term «historical politics» first appeared in the 1930s in the aspect of party political use of history. The concept was also used by the American historian H. Zinn in his book «The politics of history». The title of historical politics, or *Geschichtspolitik* received the dispute of historians in Germany. In 1986 E. Nolte published an article in which the experience of Auschwitz called secondary after the Gulag [1, p. 47]. Then such approach caused a negative reaction. The intervention of politicians in the sphere of cultural memory and the manipulation of history in the opportunistic interests of the ruling groups was considered by proponents of left-liberal views as an unacceptable phenomenon that deserves condemnation.

However, since the mid-2000s a new stage in the «career» of historical politics begins. The demand for history in the political sphere in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe is due to several factors. Firstly, this is the collapse of the communist bloc, the beginning of transit and democratisation processes, the elimination of censorship restrictions that raised the question of revising the difficult past and Soviet authoritarian narrative. Secondly, after the initial successes and failures of the transition period, the construction of a formally democratic society and free market, accession to the EU, new winners and losers from the post-communist transformation arose. This led to frustration and disappointment in the changes for some. For others, new integration processes and su-

pranational projects in Europe have caused phobias of loss of sovereignty and erosion of national identity. The answer to new challenges for everyone was the history and the search for a golden age of nation and state in it. Thirdly, this is a crisis of big ideologies, which in the postmodern world have lost their attractiveness, in part due to the collapse of the Soviet project. Deligitimisation of ideologies raised the question of the search for new meanings and value bases for domestic and foreign politics. When there is no point in the future, it appears in the past. History becomes the main discipline¹. The rejection of large projects and narratives led to the return of the nation state values. The struggle for the sovereignty of the state and nation declared the highest value also raised the question of responsibility for the dark pages of the past, receiving material and moral compensation for the suffering.

These transformations, on the one hand, led to the return of the previously censored memory of particular social and ethnic groups, on the other hand, they contributed to the growth of conflicts of historical memories and historical policies. An appeal to history has become an important characteristic of modern populism, resuscitating old stereotypes based on the stigmatisation of political opponents, both within the country and outside. The history here also provides the most ample opportunities.

The British historian, associated with the Jagielloonian University in Krakow (Poland) N. Davis, noted that with the collapse of the USSR and the communist bloc, in the light of the archival revolution of the 1990s the revision of the Soviet narrative, first of all, of the World War II has begun [2, p. 470], which actualised the issues raised in Germany during the dispute of historians and the problem of historical politics. It was

¹The world is fixated on the past [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2018/12/22/the-world-is-fixated-on-the-past> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

Poland where a new approach considering historical politics as an integral part of domestic and foreign politics has prevailed. History has become the subject of controversy, and sometimes acute conflicts of Poland with Russia, Ukraine, Germany and Lithuania. Until recently, Belarus has remained a blank spot in Polish historical politics.

The aim of the research is to study the Belarusian direction of Polish foreign historical politics. Chronological framework: 2004/2005–2020, from the entry of Poland into the EU and the coming to power of the right-wing conservative party «Law and Justice» («Prawo i Spra-

wiedliwość», PiS) to the time of writing this article. We will examine how historical politics is conceptualised in the works of researchers from Poland, Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. Then we will determine the influence of the foreign factor on the formation of Polish historical politics. The next step is an analysis of the conceptual foundations and goals of the Poland's historical politics towards Belarus. Then we proceed to the description of the actors, institutions and practices of Polish historical politics. In conclusion, we raise the question of assessing the effectiveness of Belarusian direction of Polish foreign historical politics.

Historiography and method

Historical politics or politics of memory is a relatively new field of interdisciplinary studies, the conceptualisation of the apparatus of which is not yet finalised. This issue lies in the mainstream of memory studies, which, according to researchers, is experiencing the third stage of its development [3, p. 24–27]. There is a problem of the concepts correlation of historical politics and politics of memory. V. Titov offers a number of models of correlation of these concepts. The first considers historical politics as a broader concept and involves the construction of a holistic historical picture of the world. The politics of memory includes, first of all, the problems of preserving memory sites. The second model argues that the politics of memory is based on broad social foundations, while historical politics reflects an official, state, point of view. The third approach departs from vertical schemes by proposing as a criterion a method of policy implementation. The politics of memory is seen as a softer variant and is opposed to aggressive historical politics, as political technology and the desire to rewrite history with the implantation of correct assessments of the past [4, p. 44–46]. In the article we will use, first of all, the concept of historical politics.

Ukrainian researcher of the problems of the political use of history G. Kas'janov defines historical politics as one of the types of politics aimed at constructing and instrumentalisation of the historical memory and its representations, especially in professional historiography. Historical politics is a mean of ensuring the forms of loyalty of social groups, maintaining political and ideological control over them [5, p. 27]. The politics of memory serves as a narrower term that encompasses practices related to the formation of collective or historical memory and does not involve interference in the field of professional historiography or didactics of history. The utilitarian use of history and memory is the main

feature of historical politics, which is manifested in political, legislative practices, domestic and foreign politics. In his monograph, G. Kas'janov considers the conflict of historical policies of Ukraine with Poland and Russia.

Russian researcher O. Malinova speaks of several areas in which historical memory finds its manifestation in politics [6, p. 26–27]:

- 1) the formation and support of group identity;
- 2) legitimisation of political decisions;
- 3) the factor of political culture;
- 4) the factor of making foreign politics decisions;
- 5) an element of soft power in foreign politics.

In addition, one of the latest trends is the securitisation of historical politics, which finds its expression in the strategies of national and information security. Among the threats to state security, a biased review of history is highlighted. It also affirms the need for approval of the national version of the history and memory model within the country and, which is characteristic, abroad². The issues of memory and identity are thus considered within the framework of the ontological security of the nation and state, including in the context of international security [7, p. 15–30].

A more extensive historiography of historical politics or politics of memory arose in Poland, where large-scale research projects were carried out to study the influence of historical policies of states on the formation of a new political identity during the transition from authoritarian regimes to democracy³. The authors of this project compared historical policies in Poland, Chile, Spain, Georgia, South Africa and Estonia. Researchers were interested in the degree to which new narratives of memory were used during the period of systemic transformation and the models of historical politics that were used in the construction of identity in the process of democratisation [8]. A comprehensive view of historical

²For example, para 27 of the Concept of national security of the Republic of Belarus. See: Об утверждении Концепции национальной безопасности Республики Беларусь : Указ Президента Респ. Беларусь от 9 нояб. 2010 г. № 575 [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <http://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=P31000575> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020) ; Para 49 of the Concept of information security of the Republic of Belarus. See: О концепции информационной безопасности Республики Беларусь : постановление Совета безопасности Респ. Беларусь от 18 марта 2019 г. № 1 [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <http://mininform.gov.by/upload/medialibrary/6f8/6f80a36dcb2aac3bcaa330cda20ae733.pdf> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

³Polityka pamięci [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://www.politics-of-memory.umk.pl/projekt-pl.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

politics is provided by the work of R. Chwedoruk [9], which examines both the theoretical aspects of the problem and the implementation of historical politics in Germany, Poland and Russia. Discussions regarding the historical policies of Poland and other countries are examined in a number of monographs and collective work [10–12]. The aspect of Poland's foreign historical politics is revealed in work of B. Ociepka [13]. A special approach to the problem of historical politics is presented in a study by M. Łuczewski. The author suggests analysing the historical policies of Poland, Russia and Germany through the prism of the concept of moral capital. This concept refers to a narrative that gives moral status or moral value. History thus creates the moral foundation of identity through the support of heroic traditions in Russia, the memory of victims in Poland, or, as in the case of Germany, the decisive denial of the crimes of past regimes [14, p. 47]. It should also be noted that generalised studies focusing on the issues of political transformations and the construction of historical narrative in Belarus in the 20th–21st centuries have appeared in Poland [15].

In Belarusian historiography, the first steps have been taken to conceptualise historical politics in the Belarusian context [16]. This problem is reflected in the articles of V. Shadurski [17], V. Snapkouski [18]. V. Menkouski explores the issues of the relationship between historiography and historical politics, in particular the case of contemporary Russia [19]. The researcher also addresses the problem of the politics of memory of Stalinism in Russia and Belarus [20]. The focus of researchers is the Belarusian experience of historical politics in different periods, as well as the problems of historical memory of Belarusians [21; 22]. The image of Poland in Belarusian historical politics is presented by A. Tikhamirau [23]. Among the few works devoted to Polish historical politics towards Belarus, one can mention an article by V. Shadurski, in which some observations of the author about the work of the Polish-Belarusian

historical commission are presented [24] as well as the publication of D. Bukonkin [25]. The author considers historical politics as a mean of solving the internal problems of Poland, and the foreign aspect is described as secondary. The article describes a chronology of events that can be attributed to the historical politics of Poland towards Belarus. In our study, we proceed from the fact that it is an external factor that is the key in the formation and implementation of Polish historical politics regarding Belarus.

In Russia, the study of historical politics is connected with the activities of the Centre for the Study of Collective Memory and Symbolic Policy of the European Humanities University in Saint Petersburg under the scientific supervision of A. Miller. In the publication devoted to the politics of memory in Russia and Eastern Europe, the authors define the institutional approach to the study of historical politics as the most relevant [26, p. 14–15]. Institutions are understood as traditional institutions and forms, such as museums, memorials and textbooks, as well as new means of instrumentalisation of history: institutes of national remembrance, commissions to counter attempts to falsify history, etc. Institutionalisation also includes sustainable practices that are important for their participants as confirmation of their belonging to a particular group and affirmation of identity (ceremony of laying wreaths, reading the names of the repressed). As part of the third wave of memory research, attention is concentrated on narrative conflicts, on the struggle for museums and monuments. Among current trends, there is a need to talk not about memory, but about memories emphasising the process of creating identities and forming groups. The new identity politics is actively using the sphere of historical memory to articulate and assert the rights of groups that seek compensation for their historical traumatic experience, which emphasises the aspect of constructing groups using historical or memory politics.

New historical politics of Poland in the foreign politics context

The democratisation processes, although they took place differently in the countries of the former socialist camp, but in the field of history led to the construction of a new narrative, where the common features were the nationalisation of history, the accentuation of the traditions of independence and the glorification of the pantheon of martyrs and fighters for national sovereignty, criminalisation and victimisation of the nation's past. The formation of the identity and positioning of their country is carried out by contrasting historical opponents who perform the function of constituting the *Other*.

A classic example of the instrumentalisation of history is Poland, which over the past 20 years has passed from liberal critical patriotism to a new historical policy based on the values of romantic nationalism of the 19th century [27, p. 43–65]. In the early 2000s Poland

went through heated internal discussions about the problems of nationalism and anti-semitism, relations with the invaders during the World War II. An example was the issue of the participation of the Polish population in the extermination of Jews in the village of Edvabne. The victory of the political party «Law and Justice» in the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2005 was a turning point in the approach to historical politics. Year before in 2004 Poland had joined the EU and European institutions lost a significant amount of leverage based on the need to comply with a democratic inclusive model of memory politics. Since that time, Poland has gained a voice in the formation of European historical politics, especially in the construction of a narrative of World War II. Poland sought to use the experience of the victim of Nazism and communism as symbolic capital in relations with EU countries.

In addition to domestic discussions about the legacy of the Polish People's Republic (PPR) in modern Polish statehood, relations with Russia played a significant role in activating Poland's new historical politics. The confrontation with Russia regarding the recognition of the USSR crimes against Poland was a significant factor that led to a change in approaches in historical policy. In February 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation issued a statement regarding the decisions of the Yalta Conference of 1945, positively assessing its results for Poland. However, in Poland itself this was perceived as an attempt to rehabilitate Stalinist politics [28, p. 62]. In March 2005, the Chief Military Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation announced the termination of the Katyn case without charge and non-recognition of the «genocide of the Polish people»⁴, which also caused an extremely negative reaction in Poland.

The Polish national conservative forces could not fail to note the significance of the presence in May 2005 at commemorative events in Russia dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II more than 90 heads of state and government leaders, including the US president George W. Bush. The Russian historical narrative based on the rehabilitation of certain aspects of the Soviet past has since begun to actively advance in domestic and foreign politics [29, p. 137–156].

Conceptual foundations and goals of Polish foreign historical politics

The concept of historical politics was firmly established in Polish political discourse. The issues of its institutionalisation, goals and implementation methods are discussed at the level of the head of state. On 17 November 2015 with the participation of the president, a meeting was held that was supposed to begin the development of the Historical politics strategy of Poland. President A. Duda, then said that «the strong [countries] around us have a very intensive historical politics» and Poland should decide how to use historical politics to strengthen the state's potential⁹. The Belarusian aspect was also heard at the meeting. P. Żurawski vel Grajew-

Its anti-Polish character in Russia approved a new state holiday which is National Unity Day, celebrated since the 4 November 2005 in honour of the expulsion of Polish invaders from the Kremlin in 1612⁵.

At the moment the Russian-Polish «war of memories» has reached the stage of mutual accusations at the level of the top states officials⁶. However, historical events, which are the subject of a conflict of interpretations, largely occurred on the territories between Warsaw and Moscow.

Thus, it is the context of historical disputes with Russia that becomes crucial for understanding the essence of the Belarusian vector of historical politics in Poland. Belarus does not occupy a central place in Polish foreign historical politics, where Russian, Ukrainian and German directions dominate. The main discussions basically relate to events of Polish-Russian and Polish-Soviet relations, which took place rather over the head of Belarusians, although they directly affected their historical fate. In 2016 the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Polish Republic W. Waszczykowski also spoke in this spirit, he called for «not politicising history, reaching the truth and opening events that took place decades ago, for which Belarusians are not responsible»⁷ (hereinafter translated by A. Ts.). Belarusians and Poles in the Polish discourse of historical politics are considered as «victims of imperialism»⁸.

ski, who is the coordinator of the Security, Defense and Foreign Policy Section of the National Development Council in the Office of the President of Polish Republic, called for the active use of the heritage of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth «the largest community of free people in the era of the existence of this state», which represents significant political capital in relation to neighbours, especially Belarusians¹⁰. In 2016 Polish president A. Duda also emphasised the external aspect that neighbouring states pursue an offensive historical politics and Poland should go the same way to build an international image of the country¹¹.

⁴Россия отказалась признать факт «геноцида польского народа» в Катыни [Электронный ресурс]. URL: https://www.newsru.com/russia/11mar2005/ne_priznali.html (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

⁵День народного единства в России: история праздника [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://ria.ru/20121103/908875140.html> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

⁶Oświadczenie Prezesa Rady Ministrów Mateusza Morawieckiego [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.premier.gov.pl/wydarzenia/aktualnosci/oswiadczenie-prezesa-rady-ministrow-mateusza-morawieckiego-0.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020); Vladimir Putin: the real lessons of the 75th anniversary of World War II [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/vladimir-putin-real-lessons-75th-anniversary-world-war-ii-162982> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁷Szefowie MSZ Białorusi i Polski o historii, Polakach na Białorusi [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/szefowie-msz-bialorusi-i-polski-o-historii-polakach-na-bialorusi> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁸Białoruś: Waszczykowski rozmawiał z Łukaszenką m. in. o przejściach granicznych i historii [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/bialorus-waszczykowski-rozmawial-z-lukaszenka-min-o-przejsciach-granicznych-i-historii> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁹Polityka historyczna służy budowaniu potencjału państwa [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/art,67,musimy-ksztaltowac-postawy-obywatelskie-i-patriotyczne.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

¹⁰Zapis spotkania inaugurującego prace nad powstaniem Strategii polskiej polityki historycznej w Belwederze, 17 listopada 2015 roku [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.prezydent.pl/kancelaria/dzialalnosc-kancelarii/art,18,zapis-spotkania-dot-strategii-polskiej-polityki-historycznej.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

¹¹Prezydent: trzeba realizować «ofensywną» politykę historyczną [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://tvn24.pl/polska/prezydent-polska-powinna-prowadzic-ofensywna-polityke-historyczna-ra619783-3173381> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

At the moment there is no information on the results of the development of the Historical politics strategy of Poland. However historical politics issues are reflected in the key documents defining Poland's foreign politics: National security strategy and Foreign policy strategy. The National security strategy addresses historical issues in the context of protecting national identity and Poland's image abroad. Strengthening the positive image of Poland and its attractiveness in the field of culture and economy should be carried out through public and cultural diplomacy, taking into account the goals of historical politics¹².

According to the Foreign politics strategy for 2017–2021 the main goal of historical politics is to oppose Russia's actions in the Eastern and European directions, which, as it is claimed, seeks to foment historical disputes between nations in order to strengthen its influence. Thus, historical politics is based on the opposition of the Polish national and Russian-imperial or Soviet-nostalgic narratives. Belarus is given the role of a kind of buffer opposing influence from the East. In this regard, the desire to strengthen Belarus' ability to withstand internal and external challenges is declared in the long term¹³.

Significant, in our opinion, is the statement about the inadmissibility of a revival of geopolitical thinking, a new «concert of empires» in the world and a neo-imperial vision of history.

A crucial role in foreign historical politics is giving to supporting the Polish identity abroad, which is constituted by culture and history from which the tasks of custody of the Polish cultural and historical heritage and places of memory follow. The promotion of Polishness is seen as a platform for promoting the values inherent in the Polish nation. Their historical and civilisational basis is the Christian roots of the Western world, as well as the traditions of patriotism and independence¹⁴.

In Poland's Foreign politics strategy, a significant place is given directly to historical diplomacy, the

purpose of which is to demonstrate the Polish contribution to the development of European civilisation. The task of combating falsification of history universal for the discourse of historical politics is noted and the concept of defective memory codes (*wadliwe kody pamięci*) is introduced into the official discourse of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Polish Republic. They are understood as any deformations in the public discourse of the elements of a collective historical memory of events that are essential for Polish identity. Obviously, Polish historical politics is designed to correct these defects and should bring «the truth about the Polish contribution to the victory over Nazism and communism, as well as the asualties from two totalitarianisms»¹⁵. An important image-building task of Polish foreign politics is to break the widespread thesis about Polish, at least passive, responsibility for the Holocaust. In this regard Polish diplomacy should promote the statement that obligatory and necessary condition for the Holocaust was the partition of the Polish state by the Third German Reich and the USSR. The idea of equality of responsibility of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union for the suffering of the Polish nation in the 20th century is central to the historical politics of Poland.

Thus, the Polish historical narrative promoted abroad is based on two key points. First, Poland and Poles in history claim to be victims, but never perpetrators. For all crimes and conflicts are responsible neighbouring countries and nations with their totalitarian and imperial political systems and ideologies. Secondly, it is the exclusivity of Polish historical experience in the struggle for freedom and independence, the upholding of Christian values. Polish martyrology is the basis for supporting the national identity and loyalty of the diaspora to the mother country. Historical politics should contribute to the promotion of Polishness and the formation of a positive image of Poland.

Actors, institutions, practices

The main actors of historical politics in the Belarusian direction are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Polish Republic, diplomatic and consular institutions of Poland, the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN). Since 2016 the Council on Historical Diplomacy has been operating under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Polish Republic, which is engaged in the development of a Historical politics strategy and its implementation abroad¹⁶.

A certain role in the formation and implementation of historical politics is played by other state organisations in Poland, for example, the Polish Institute, the Centre for Polish-Russian dialogue and consent. Non-governmental organisations and think tanks, various organisations of combatants and veterans of the Armia Krajowa (AK), natives of Kresy, as well as the Union of Poles in Belarus. They can exert a kind of pressure from below and

¹² Strategia bezpieczeństwa narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 2020 [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dokumenty/Strategia_Bezpieczenstwa_Narodowego_RP_2020.pdf (date of access: 01.06.2020).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Zarządzenie nr 24 Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych 1 z dnia 11 lipca 2016 r. w sprawie Rady Dyplomacji Historycznej [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://sip.lex.pl/akty-prawne/dzienniki-resortowe/rada-dyplomacji-historycznej-35101239> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

influence on the Polish government in the implementation of the historical politics.

The situation with the Polish minority is more complicated due to the existence of actually two organisations, one of which is supported by Poland and more active in promotion of the Polish historical memory in Belarus. Forms of activity include cultural and educational work, public events (improvement of burial places, memorial events). One can find in the Polish minority media criticism of attempts by the Belarusian public or government agencies to memorialise events related to Belarusian-Polish relations in history. There are accusations of Belarusian depolonisation of Polish places of national memory¹⁷.

The Institute of National Remembrance – Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation plays a key role in the implementation of the Belarusian direction of historical politics. IPN is active primarily in the Hrodna region, where the majority of Belarusian Poles live. In 2006 an exhibition dedicated to the Warsaw Uprising was presented in Hrodna. About 1000 people visited it. The exhibition in Lida about W. Pilecki, the hero of Polish resistance during the World War II who lived near Lida in the interwar period, was of particular interest not only among the Polish minority but also among Belarusians. An exhibition about W. Pilecki with the assistance of the Polish Institute was also presented in Minsk at the National History Museum. As noted by J. Pawłowicz, director of the Museum of Cursed Soldiers and Political Prisoners of the PPR, it was Belarusians themselves, who helped in creating Polish places of memory by providing information about the burial places and graves of the AK¹⁸.

In 2010 due to the cooling of bilateral relations, the activities of IPN in Belarus encountered difficulties. In 2012 the visit of the delegation of the institute was limited to participation in the conference and meeting with representatives of the Polish minority¹⁹.

After the elections in Poland in 2015 an improvement in relations between Belarus and Poland took place, which makes it possible to talk about a new stage in the historical politics towards Belarus. A certain shift has occurred from value emphasis to pragmatism of relations. In response the Belarusian authorities began to demonstrate greater openness in the symbolic sphere and the possibilities of working with the Polish minority²⁰.

The nature and significance of historical politics for Poland was noted in 2017 by the deputy minister of foreign affairs of Polish Republic B. Cichocki, arguing that in Polish-Belarusian relations the historical issues are a priority and after streamlining them Poland will be ready to talk about the future²¹.

During the visit of the IPN delegation in January 2018 meetings were already held at the level of heads of departments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus. IPN Chairman J. Szarek proposed to establish a memorial plaque in honour of R. Lemkin, a native of Vaŭkavysk, the author of the concept of genocide and the draft Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948. At the same time, a meeting was held between the IPN delegation and the administration of Babrujsk, where the creation of a monument to Polish officers in the Babrujsk fortress was discussed²².

IPN implements educational and enlightenment projects on the Polish history «Przystanek Historia»²³. In 2017 as part of this project in Hrodna an exhibition dedicated to priest J. Popieluszko, who was killed by the security services of the PPR²⁴ was presented. IPN publishing products were presented at a book fair in Minsk in February 2020²⁵. Educational trips to Belarus are organised, for example, for the winners of the Polish nationwide educational project «Kresy – Polish Eastern lands in the 20th century», which reinforce an image of Belarus as Polish historical outskirts in the historical consciousness of young Poles²⁶.

¹⁷Prof. Winnicki o białoruskiej depolonizacji polskich miejsc pamięci narodowe [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://znadniemna.pl/32878/prof-winnicki-o-bialoruskiej-depolonizacji-polskich-miejsc-pamieci-narodowej/> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

¹⁸Polska polityka historyczna w międzynarodowym wymiarze: w poszukiwaniu źródła sukcesu: zapis konferencji inauguracyjnej działalności Fundacji im. Janusza Kurtyki. Warszawa; Kraków: Fundacja im. Janusza Kurtyki, 2017. P. 67–69.

¹⁹Prezes IPN w Mińsku – 19–20 października 2012 [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/dla-mediow/komunikaty/11399,Prezes-IPN-w-Minsku-19-20-pazdziernika-2012.html?search=78031143> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²⁰Mrozek K. Reset i kontynuacja. Polityka rządu PiS wobec Białorusi [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.batory.org.pl/upload/files/Programy%20operacyjne/Forum%20Idei/PL_Reset%20i%20kontynuacja_INTERNET.pdf (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²¹Wiceszef MSZ: u Białorusinów gotowość do uporządkowania zaległości w stosunkach z Polską [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/wiceszef-msz-u-bialorusinow-gotowosc-do-uporzadkowania-zaleglosci-w-stosunkach-z-polska> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²²Wizyta delegacji Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Mińsku (Białoruś) – 28–30 stycznia 2018 [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/upamietnianie/biezaca-dzialalnosc-biu/46815,Wizyta-delegacji-Instytutu-Pamieci-Narodowej-w-Minsku-Bialorus-2830-stycznia-2018.html?search=78031143> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²³Białoruś: wizyta szefa IPN i otwarcie «Przystanku Historia» w Mińsku [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/bialorus-wizyta-szefa-ipn-i-otwarcie-przystanku-historia-w-minsku> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²⁴W Grodnie «Przystanek Historia» poświęcony ks. Popieluszcze [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/w-grodnie-przystanek-historia-poswiecony-ks-popieluszcze> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²⁵IPN na Targach Książki w Mińsku (Białoruś) – 5–9 lutego 2020 [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/87456,IPN-na-Targach-Ksiazki-w-Minsku-Bialorus-5-9-lutego-2020.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²⁶Final ogólnopolskiego projektu edukacyjnego «Kresy – polskie ziemie wschodnie w XX wieku» [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/71917,Final-ogolnopolskiego-projektu-edukacyjnego-Kresy-polskie-ziemie-wschodnie-w-XX-.html?search=78031143> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

IPN actively uses new forms of representing history in the public sphere, especially in working with youth. The history of the Polish Kresy is popularised through comic books about the military odyssey of A. Srebrny. Among other things, there is an episode dedicated to the defense of Hrodna in September 1939 from Soviet troops²⁷.

On the territory of Belarus, search activities and creation and maintenance of places of memory are carried out. For instance the village of Pahost where in 1939 there was an outpost of the Polish Border Guard Corps and the soldiers died in battle²⁸. In 2019 a memorial plaque was opened in Miory to soldiers of the Anders Army²⁹. Polish diplomatic and consular institutions maintain records and custody of Polish places of national memory in Belarus³⁰. Polish cemeteries are being restored, for example, soldiers of the Polish-Soviet War³¹. Olympiads on history of Poland are organised for Belarusian schoolchildren whose laureates receive the right to enter Polish universities³². Polish museums record interviews with members of the AK and the post-war anti-communist underground³³. Commemorative events are held among the Polish minority with the support of Poland on the deportation of the population from Western Belarus in 1939–1940³⁴. The Institute of National Remembrance has established and awarded the «Witness of history» award for organisations and people who contribute to preserving the memory of Polish history³⁵. «Pro Patria» medal is awarded for custody of Polish places of memory in Belarus and achievements in cultivating the memory of the struggle for independence of Poland by the Office for Veterans and

Victims of Repression³⁶. In 2018, events dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the restoration of Polish statehood were held within the Union of Poles of Belarus³⁷. The warming in Polish-Belarusian relations did not lead to the disappearance of exacerbations in historical politics. Inside Poland, the Belarusian dimension of historical politics is connected with the history of Belarusians in Poland. The scene of the clash of various narratives is the figure of one of the «cursed soldiers» R. Rajs (nom de guerre Bury), commander of the Polish anti-communist underground in 1946, who burned 5 villages and killed several dozen of Orthodox Belarusians in the Podlaskie voivodeship. In 1949 R. Rajs was executed by a court order in Białystok, but in 1995 the authorities of the new Poland overturned the verdict, saying that he acted «in a state of emergency, which forced decisions that were not always ethically unambiguous»³⁸. However, as a result of the 2005 IPN investigation, R. Rajs's actions were classified as a crime with elements of genocide. Hajnówka, the center of Belarusian life in Poland, in recent years has become the venue for the march of Polish nationalist groups in honour of the «cursed soldiers» and R. Rajs. In 2016 there was information about the patronage of the march organised by the National Radical Camp on the part of president A. Duda³⁹, but he ultimately distanced himself from this event⁴⁰. The Belarusian authorities practically did not publicly react to events within Poland related to the Belarusian minority. The situation changed in February 2019 when during his visit to Poland, the head of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus M. Myasnikovich visited the village of Zaleshany

²⁷ IPNtv Warszawa: Antek Srebrny – Obrona Grodna 1939 r. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tsy03r5ro08> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²⁸ Biuro Poszukiwań i Identyfikacji IPN rozpoczęło prace na Białorusi [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/41583,Biuro-Poszukiwan-i-Identyfikacji-IPN-rozpoczelo-prace-na-Bialorusi.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

²⁹ Na Białorusi odsłonięto tablicę upamiętniającą żołnierzy Wojska Polskiego [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.polskieradio.pl/399/7978/Artykul/2362425,Na-Bialorusi-odslonieta-tablice-upamietniajaca-zolnierzy-Wojska-Polskiego> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³⁰ Miejsca pamięci narodowej [Electronic resource]. URL: http://www.minsk.msz.gov.pl/pl/informacje_konsularne/mpn/ (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³¹ W Dokszycach na Białorusi poświęcono cmentarz żołnierzy z wojny polsko-bolszewickiej [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/w-dokszycach-na-bialorusi-poswiecono-cmentarz-zolnierzy-z-wojny-polsko-bolszewickiej> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³² Olimpiada Historii Polski dla Polaków na Białorusi – etap okręgowy w Białymstoku [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.radio.bialystok.pl/wiadomosci/index/id/167630> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³³ Nowe notacje ze świadkami historii na Białorusi [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://muzeum1939.pl/nowe-notacje-ze-swiadkami-historii-na-bialorusi/aktualnosci/3.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³⁴ Obchody 79. Rocznicy wywózek Polaków na nieludzką ziemię w Lidzie [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://znadniemna.pl/36659/obchody-79-rocznicy-wywozek-polakow-nieludzka-ziemie-lidzie-zdjecia/> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³⁵ Weronika Sebastianowicz i Józef Porzecki laureatami nagrody «Świadek Historii» [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://znadniemna.pl/12832/weronika-sebastianowicz-i-jozef-porzecki-laureatami-nagrody-swiadek-historii/> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³⁶ Białorusi: wiceminister R. Szczęch wręczyła medale «Pro Patria» [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/bialorus-wiceminister-r-szczech-wreczyla-medale-pro-patria> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³⁷ Spotkanie z polską historią pod Mińskiem [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://znadniemna.pl/32706/spotkanie-polska-historia-minsk/> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³⁸ Informacja o ustaleniach końcowych śledztwa S 28/02/Zi w sprawie pozbawienia życia 79 osób – mieszkańców powiatu Bielski Podlaski w tym 30 osób tzw. furmanów w lesie koło Puchał Starych, dokonanych w okresie od dnia 29 stycznia 1946 r. do dnia 2 lutego 1946 [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/dla-mediow/komunikaty/9989,Informacja-o-ustaleniach-koncowych-sledztwa-S-2802Zi-w-sprawie-pozbawienia-zycia.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

³⁹ Prezydent Andrzej Duda zaprasza na marsz ONR-u. Do Hajnówki [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://bialystok.wyborcza.pl/bialystok/1,35241,19626420,prezydent-andrzej-duda-zaprasza-na-marsz-onr-u-do-hajnowki.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁴⁰ Prezydent wycofał poparcie dla marszu narodowców [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.newsweek.pl/polska/zolnierze-wykleci-uroczystosci-andrzej-duda-marsz-narodowcow/7bv16k9> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

honoured the memory of the inhabitants killed by R. Rajs with a bow of the knee which was interpreted as a signal of Minsk's opposition to the attempts to glorify Bury⁴¹. A month later the IPN issued an informational message stating that, based on new studies of the circumstances of the murder of Orthodox Belarusians in Podlasie, there was no reason for the 2005 decision⁴². The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus reacted by calling the Polish ambassador and demanding public official comments on attempts to re-evaluate R. Rajs's actions⁴³. It should be noted that not all actors of historical politics in Poland supported such methods of IPN to promote anti-communist narrative⁴⁴. The well-known Polish historian G. Motyka, who in 2011–2016 was a member of the IPN council, also criticised the book that glorifies R. Rajs⁴⁵.

Inside Poland, the Belarusian context of historical politics appeared in connection with the 2016 law on decommunisation, under which local governments had to change the names of streets associated with the communist past⁴⁶. It was planned to rename B. Tarashkevich Street in Bielsk Podlaski. A similar question about renaming was posed along the streets named after Jakub Kolas and Janka Kupala in Hajnówka⁴⁷. These intentions caused indignation in Belarus⁴⁸. The streets have retained their names.

The conflict between Belarus and Poland happened in 2017 over the installation of the monument to T. Kościuszko in Switzerland in the city of Solothurn. Initially, there should have been an inscription on the plaque: «To the famous son of Belarus from grateful compatriots». However, at the request of the Polish side all

references to Belarus disappeared. The conflict caused enough resonance in the Belarusian media, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus spoke on the issue. The Belarusian public began funding the installation of the monument to T. Kościuszko in Belarus. The conflict in Switzerland was eventually settled and on 17 October a monument was erected with the inscription «Tadeusz Kościuszko. 1746–1817. From the Belarusian Association in Switzerland»⁴⁹.

An attempt to institutionalise the Polish-Belarusian historical dialogue was the idea of creating a historical commission. The desire to intensify the dialogue led to the fact that such commissions on the subject of history with different statuses appeared more than once. It is characteristic that the parties apparently perceived the nature of these meetings in different ways. In Belarusian publications the historical commission created on the initiative of Warsaw in 2014 is mentioned [24, p. 78]. One of the meetings of Polish and Belarusian historians and archivists took place in July 2016. There the secretary of the Polish Council for the Protection of Struggle and Martyrdom Sites A. Kunert spoke about the historical commission as the future institution, and so far the format of its possible work had been discussed⁵⁰. Polish minister of foreign affairs W. Waszczykowski in February 2017 also spoke about the preparations for the creation of such a commission⁵¹. At the same time, a series of meetings of historians entitled «Polish-Belarusian dialogue of historians on complex issues» took place⁵². Meetings are also held by the Polish-Belarusian advisory commission on cultural heritage issues⁵³. In 2017 the

⁴¹ Wizyta przewodniczącego Rady Republiki Zgromadzenia Narodowego Republiki Białoruś w Polsce [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://poland.mfa.gov.by/pl/embassy/news/b493254504ee76d9.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁴² Komunikat dotyczący informacji zawartych w ustaleniach końcowych śledztwa S 28/02/Zi w sprawie pozbawienia życia 79 osób – mieszkańców powiatu Bielsk Podlaski, w tym 30 osób tzw. furmanów w lesie koło Puchał Starych, dokonanych w okresie od dnia 29 stycznia 1946 r. do dnia 2 lutego 1946 r. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/71917,Final-ogolnopolskiego-projektu-edukacyjnego-Kresy-polskie-ziemie-wschodnie-w-XX-.html?search=78031143> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁴³ В МИД Беларуси вызван посол Польши для пояснений о пересмотре оценок деяний Ромуальда Райса [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://www.belta.by/politics/view/v-mid-belarusi-vyzvan-posol-polshi-dlja-pojasnenij-o-peresmotre-otsenok-dejanij-romualda-rajasa-339702-2019/> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

⁴⁴ Adamski L. Opfer verleihen Moralkapital [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://zeitung.faz.net/faz/feuilleton/2020-03-12/d3097f56e3ec53fd731cc2d9fbd924af/?GEP=s5> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁴⁵ Ustawa z dnia 1 kwietnia 2016 r. o zakazie propagowania komunizmu lub innego ustroju totalitarnego przez nazwy jednostek organizacyjnych, jednostek pomocniczych gminy, budowli, obiektów i urządzeń użyteczności publicznej oraz pomniki [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20160000744> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁴⁶ Motyka G. Książce IPN o «Bury» bliżej do «Trylogii» Sienkiewicza niż do pracy naukowej [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://wyborcza.pl/alehistoria/7,162654,24567164,ksiazce-ipn-o-burym-blizej-do-trylogii-sienkiewicza-niz-do.html?disableRedirects=true> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁴⁷ Polska dekomunizacja oburza Białorusinów. I władze, i opozycję [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://wyborcza.pl/7,75399,22666081,polska-dekomunizacja-oburza-bialorusinow-i-wladze-i-opozycje.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁴⁸ У Польшчы хочуць перайменаваць вуліцу Браніслава Тарашкевіча [Электронны рэсурс]. URL: <https://nn.by/?c=ar&i=200444> (дата звароту: 01.06.2020).

⁴⁹ В Швейцарии открыли памятник Тадеушу Костюшко [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://news.tut.by/culture/565635.html> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

⁵⁰ Polsko-białoruskie spotkanie historyków w Mińsku [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/polsko-bialoruskie-spotkanie-historykow-w-minsku> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁵¹ Polsko-białoruska komisja historyczna. Obawy, ale i nadzieje [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://bialystok.wyborcza.pl/bialystok/7,35241,21360818,polsko-bialoruska-komisja-historyczna-obawy-ale-i-nadzieje.html?disableRedirects=true> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁵² Polscy i białoruscy historycy już po raz czwarty debatowali o sprawach trudnych [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://uwb.edu.pl/nawosci/aktualnosci/polscy-i-bialoruscy-historycy-juz-po-raz-czwarty-debatowali-o-sprawach-trudnych/93f86a75> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁵³ 19 posiedzenie Polsko-Białoruskiej Komisji Konsultacyjnej ds. Dziedzictwa Kulturalnego [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/pages/posts/19.-posiedzenie-polsko-bialoruskiej-komisji-konsultacyjnej-ds.-dziedzictwa-kulturalnego-9418.php> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

first meeting of the commission of experts on clarifying the content of school history textbooks was held⁵⁴.

The main subjects of Polish historical politics towards Belarus cover primarily the problems of World War II and the history of the 20th century. Much attention is paid to the events of 1939–1941, discussions continue regarding the Belarusian Katyn list. In Poland they insist on the need to search for the Belarusian part and memorialise Kurapaty as a likely place of the execution of Poles⁵⁵. Belarusian textbooks are criticised (edited by E. K. Novik), which states that there are no documents confirming the responsibility of the USSR authorities for the execution of Poles in Katyn⁵⁶. The transfer of documents on the Katyn case by the Belarusian KGB in November 2015 was perceived as a sign of goodwill in Poland⁵⁷, although this document has long been known to experts and was published back in 1998 in a collection of documents on Western Belarus 1939–1941 [30, p. 129–130].

A characteristic feature is the consideration of historical issues in the legal terms. The Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation is investigating the probable killing of 20 000 Poles in Minsk prisons in 1939–1941⁵⁸. The problems of relations between the Polish and Soviet partisan movements during the years of Nazi occupation are being raised. In relation to certain conflicting episodes between AK and the Soviet partisans, the IPN carries out investigative and procedural actions⁵⁹.

Discontent in Poland was caused by the initial refusal of the Belarusian authorities to assist in the investigation and localisation of the graves of the victims of the «Augustow roundup»⁶⁰. In 2017 during a visit to Poland by Belarusian minister of foreign affairs V. Makei documents were transferred from the Belarusian archives

regarding people who were possibly killed in the summer of 1945 in the outskirts of Augustow⁶¹, which had a positive response.

Poland is sensitive to how the country appears in the public sphere in Belarus. So the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Polish Republic protested against the TV series «Talaś» based on the reanimation of the Soviet anti-Polish narrative⁶². A negative response in Poland was met by the replacement of the Polish language with English on the memorial plaque of the Kabyliackaja Hara in Orsha, dedicated to mass repressions in the 1930s, which was perceived as intentional erasing of the traces of the dead Poles⁶³.

The historical issues of Polish-Belarusian relations are widely discussed in the Polish media which form public opinion, set the tone for mutual contacts and the historical agenda. Domestic contradictions in Poland are also reflected in the media discourse on Belarusian issues. Without aiming to review the Polish press on a historical topic, it can be noted that, for example, the liberal-centrist press is critical to the historical politics of PiS. Conservative publications advocate tougher historical politics. Newspaper «Rzeczpospolita» raises questions about the possibility of receiving reparations from Russia during the occupation of 1939–1945. It is alleged that citizens of Belarus – former citizens of Poland or their descendants – could join similar lawsuits against Russia⁶⁴. This makes the owners and applicants for the Pole's card another potential target group of Polish historical politics.

At the same time in Poland the historical politics of PiS towards Belarus is criticised. On the part of think tanks, it is indicated that the Polish authorities, along with pragmatism, have ceased to pay attention to the

⁵⁴ Беларусь – Польша: приоритеты сотрудничества в сфере образования [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://edu.gov.by/news/belarus-polsha-prioritety-sotrudnichestva-v-sfere-obrazovaniya/> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

⁵⁵ Ofiary NKWD. Na tropie białoruskiej listy katyńskiej [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.rp.pl/Zbrodnia-katynska/200329150-Ofiary-NKWD-Na-tropie-bialoruskiej-listy-katynskiej.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020) ; Gdzie są groby 3870 Polaków? «Lista białoruska» to jedna z nieodkrytych tajemnic zbrodni katyńskiej [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://wyborcza.pl/alehistoria/7,121681,25838769,gdzie-sa-roby-3870-polakow-lista-bialoruska-to-jedna-z.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁵⁶ «Rz»: Białoruskie podręczniki historii zakłamuja sowieckie zbrodnie [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://dorzeczy.pl/kraj/96487/Rz-Bialoruskie-podreczniki-historii-zaklamuja-sowieckie-zbrodnie.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁵⁷ Białoruskie KGB przekazało Polsce unikalny dokument dotyczący zbrodni katyńskiej [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://tvn24.pl/polska/przelom-w-relacjach-polski-i-bialorusi-przekazano-dokument-ws-katynia-ra592450-3317426> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁵⁸ Apel o kontakt w związku ze śledztwem w sprawie zamordowania przez NKWD w Mińsku (Białoruś) w okresie 17.09.1939 – 30.06.1941 ok. 20 tys. obywateli polskich [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/dla-mediow/komunikaty/10675-Apel-o-kontakt-w-zwiazku-ze-sledztwem-w-sprawie-zamordowania-przez-NKWD-w-Minsku.html?search=78031143> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁵⁹ Śledztwo w sprawie zbrodni popełnionych przez partyzantów sowieckich na żołnierzach Armii Krajowej i ludności cywilnej na terenie powiatów Stołpce i Wołożyn woj. nowogródzkie (S 17.2001.Zk) [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/sledztwa/sledztwa/oddzialowa-komisja-w-lo/31487,Sledztwa-w-toku.html?search=78031143> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁶⁰ Podlaskie: w Gibach uczczono ofiary obławy augustowskiej [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/dla-mediow/media-o-ipn/41037,PRZEGLAD-MEDIOW-15-17-lipca-2017.html?search=78031143> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁶¹ Białoruś przekazała IPN listę 21 ofiar represji stalinowskich [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/dla-mediow/media-o-ipn/39136,PRZEGLAD-MEDIOW-8-marca-2017.html?search=78031143> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁶² Talaś i polityka historyczna Białorusi – Zychowicz [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.rp.pl/arttykul/807125-Talas-i-polityka-historyczna-Bialorusi---Zychowicz.html> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁶³ Władze Orszy zacierają ślady Polaków mordowanych przez NKWD [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://kresy24.pl/wladze-orszy-zacieraja-slady-polakow-mordowanych-przez-nkwd/> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁶⁴ Czy Polska powinna otrzymać reparacje od Rosji? [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.rp.pl/Publicystyka/190919456-Czy-Polska-powinna-otrzymac-reparacje-od-Rosji.html?preview=1&remainingPreview=4&grantedBy=preview&&cid> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

anti-Polish accents of Belarusian historical politics. The Stefan Batoria Foundation speaks of the need for a more principled line with regard to Belarus in clarifying issues such as the Polish operation of the NKVD, the Augustow roundup or the Belarusian Katyn list. Even positive statements by the director of the IPN on the Belarusian Museum of the Great Patriotic War made during a visit in January 2018 are considered unacceptable⁶⁵. The instrumentalisation of history leads to paradoxical results. Poland promotes an anti-communist narrative in foreign historical politics. At the same time, the goals of Polish politics regarding Belarus require positive rhetoric from historical politics actors in relation to Belarusian memory institutions which largely preserve the Soviet narrative.

Thus, the Polish historical politics towards Belarus went through several stages. The first is from 2004–2005 until 2010. Due to weak contacts with the Belarusian authorities the IPN acted actively with the support of Polish diplomatic and consular structures in Belarus. First of all, the activity was launched on the territory of the Hrodna region, where the majority of the Polish minority lives. The second stage (2010–2015) is characterised by a cooling of Belarusian-Polish relations

as a whole, which reflected on the possibilities of implementation and historical politics. The third stage began in 2015. Its distinctive feature was the pragmatism of relations with Belarus. In exchange for expanding contacts in the economic sphere the Belarusian side made certain concessions in the field of symbolic politics. Since that time, we can talk about intensifying the historical dialogue. Poland also gained more opportunities to work with the Polish minority and promote Polish history. Characteristically, pragmatism did not lead to a convergence of views on complex issues in history. We are still talking about the competition between two exclusive narratives of memory: the Polish national and Soviet-nostalgic with elements of the national narrative in Belarus. Single symbolic gestures of a conciliatory character like the transfer of documents or the opening of commemorative signs are interspersed with mutual notes of protest regarding unsatisfactory interpretations of history. It should also be noted that the Polish historical politics towards Belarus is exclusively offensive. Declarative statements about the need for historical dialogue in practice are expressed in promoting their truth.

Conclusion

How to evaluate the effectiveness of foreign historical politics? Today, this methodological issue has not been adequately covered in historical politics studies. We can talk about the number of conferences, exhibitions and other events, the number of visitors, published books, etc. The main problem is the perception of the message of historical politics in the target group. At present Belarus does not have sociological surveys showing the dynamics of the perception of Polish historical politics in the Belarusian society as a whole and in particular social groups⁶⁶. Almost the only one is the study of the historical memory of the Belarusian Poles, conducted in 2008 and described in the article by A. Lastovsky [31]. The history of Poland, as a common ethnic narrative, is an important symbol for this social group to which interest is shown. The open question is the impact of «interest» on real social practices. The key role here is played by the communicative memory preserved in families. Polish historical politics, which actualises the Polish national narrative, refers to it.

As noted by professor V. Shadurski, the Belarusian nation remains poorly consolidated, divided into several

large identity groups [17, p. 22]. One of these is the Polish minority. Polish historical politics in Belarus is aimed at destroying the Soviet-nostalgic narrative, opposing the spread of the Russian-imperial vision of history and strengthening Polish identity and the formation of loyalty among the Polish minority to Poland. The solution to this task is carried out through the popularisation of Polish history and culture, primarily among the Polish minority. The historical politics of Poland addresses topics and issues crowded out to the periphery of the Belarusian official historical discourse.

One of the goals of historical politics is to create a positive image of Poland and strengthen Polish identity abroad. In this regard, the question about the degree of influence of historical politics, along with economic attractiveness and other factors, on the desire to get a Pole's card or the desire to immigrate to Poland is open. More than 137 thousand of Pole's cards were issued in Belarus since 2008⁶⁷. As of April 2019, Belarusians represented the second group of foreign citizens (more than 21 000) who received a residence permit in Poland, most of which are with a Pole's

⁶⁵Mrozek K. Reset i kontynuacja. Polityka rządu PiS wobec Białorusi [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.batory.org.pl/upload/files/Programy%20operacyjne/Forum%20Idei/PL_Reset%20i%20kontynuacja_INTERNET.pdf (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁶⁶An interesting example of studying the perception of historical propaganda and the formation of the country's image on the example of Polish-Russian historical disputes is the research of the Center for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Reconciliation. See: Obraz Polaków w Rosji przez pryzmat sporów historycznych [Electronic resource]. URL: http://cprdip.pl/assets/media/Wydawnictwa/Raporty/Wojna_informacyjna_i_propaganda_historyczna_raport_z_badan_2020.pdf; Obraz Polaków w Rosji przez pryzmat sporów historycznych (date of access: 01.06.2020); Raport z badania opinii publicznej. Wojna informacyjna i propaganda historyczna [Electronic resource]. URL: http://cprdip.pl/wydawnictwo,raporty,668,obraz_polski_w_rosji.html (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁶⁷За 11 лет более 137 тысяч граждан Беларуси получили карту поляка [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://belsat.eu/ru/news/bolee-137-tysyach-belorusov-poluchili-kartu-polyaka> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

card⁶⁸. A similar question can be posed about the influence of the promoted image of the country's history on the choice of a place of study at the university. In 2018–2019, 3686 Belarusians entered the first year of Polish universities, and in total 7485 students from Belarus studied there in 2018⁶⁹.

In Poland the current historical politics of PiS is criticised as insufficiently principled. There are accusations that in a historical dialogue with Belarus one can speak not of striving for a common understanding of the past, but of a rapprochement between the Polish and Belarusian ways of thinking about the methods of implementing historical politics – a selection of beneficial facts and their arbitrary interpretation to construct the desired narrative⁷⁰. This criticism raises the question of the possible radicalisation of the Polish national narrative of memory in relation to Belarus into an openly nationalist one, as was already in the R. Rajs's case.

In Polish foreign politics history is used as a tool for forming the right media agenda, strengthening a political position, as an argument for developing cooperation or gaining profit. History is positioned as the moral and value basis of politics, an instrument of emotional influence, when from the position of historical victim restoration of justice and perpetuation of memory is required. History has long become part of the diplomatic protocol in the form of laying wreaths, the opening of monuments, etc.

In our opinion, Polish historical politics does not always calculate whether the proposed images and ideas will be properly perceived abroad. The Polish national narrative promoted in Belarus comes into conflict not only with the official «large» Belarusian narrative, which is combining elements of the Soviet and national, but also with the memory of particular groups of the population of Belarus. Particularly in Babrujsk, where the IPN wants to erect a monument to Polish soldiers, the image

of the Poles in local history and memory is more likely connected with the brutal Jewish pogroms of 1919–1920⁷¹. Presentist approach to history based on an exclusive model of memory, ethnocentrism and the glorification of the Polish presence in the East unwittingly contributes not only to the propaganda of Polish history but also to the revival of anti-Polish phobias and stereotypes.

The image of Belarus in Polish historical politics is still the Kresy, a sphere of Polish cultural and historical influence, part of the imaginary geography of Polish nationalism. This approach, in a sense, devalues the statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Polish Republic about the inadmissibility of a revival of imperial thinking. The Jagiellonian idea only for Poland has nothing to do with imperialism. In Belarus, like in the other Eastern neighbours of Poland, a view of the East through the prism of Kresy is perceived as a manifestation of Polish traditional imperialism and nationalism, as J. Mieroszewski wrote about [32, p. 7].

Another problem could be a possible Belarusian response to Polish historical politics. There may be several strategies. The first is the resuscitation of the Soviet-nostalgic narrative, possibly interspersed with the Belarusian national, if the latter does not contradict the former. In case of increasing confrontation of history interpretations and the radicalisation of the Polish national memory narrative, this approach will inevitably lead to the rehabilitation of Stalinism and the justification of any actions of the Soviet authorities. This in principle makes historical dialogue impossible. The second option may be an emphasis on the Belarusian national model of memory, which is also exclusive and aimed at cultural and political homogenisation, although to a lesser extent it may be in conflict with Polish historical politics. And the third option is an asymmetric response, the promotion of an inclusive model combining various versions of historical memory.

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⁶⁸Białorusini drugą najliczniejszą grupą cudzoziemców w Polsce [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://udsc.gov.pl/bialorusini-druga-najliczniejsza-grupa-cudzoziemcow-w-polsce/> (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁶⁹Сколько белорусских студентов уезжают учиться в Россию и Польшу [Электронный ресурс]. URL: from: <https://news.tut.by/society/648038.html> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

⁷⁰Mrozek K. Reset i kontynuacja. Polityka rządu PiS wobec Białorusi [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.batory.org.pl/upload/files/Programy%20operacyjne/Forum%20Idei/PL_Reset%20i%20kontynuacja_INTERNET.pdf (date of access: 01.06.2020).

⁷¹Акулич М. Бобруйск и евреи: история, холокост, наши дни. [Б. м.] : Изд. решения, 2017 ; Антигерои Бобруйщины. Сто лет назад это были ее польские захватчики [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <http://www.bobrlife.by/news/antigeroi-bobrujshhiny-stolet-nazad-eto-byli-ee-polskie-zahvatchiki> (дата обращения: 01.06.2020).

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