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GEOPOLITICAL VIEWS OF STEPAN RUDNYTSKYI – ADVISOR TO THE WEST UKRAINIAN PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC

The article analyzes the geopolitical ideas of one of the ideologists of the West Ukrainian People’s Republic, the founder of Ukrainian political geography – Stepan Rudnytskyi.

Stepan Rudnytskyi, Dmytro Dontsov, Stepan Tomashivskyi, Mykhailo Hrushevskyi pointed to importance of accurate definition of geopolitical strategy of Ukraine which has to be directed to the European countries and to the geopolitical South–North line which is an axis of the Ukrainian lands.

It is noted that S. Rudnytskyi outlined the key ideas for the development of the Ukrainian national-state idea in his writings «Why Do We Want Independent Ukraine» and «The Ukrainian Case on the Political Geography». In these and other publications, the scientist initiated the political and geographical direction of Ukrainian historical thought.

Particularly relevant is the work of S. Rudnytskyi, «Why Do We Want Independent Ukraine?», which contains an analysis of geopolitical factors (Ukraine’s location regarding centers of political power, ways of communication, natural resources). The author sees Ukraine as a democratic republic with a strong central government, powerful communities, and lands. Stepan Rudnytsky covers his geopolitical ideas in the Short Geography of Ukraine, where he emphasizes the Black Sea orientation of Ukraine, supporting the concept of the Interseas, which envisages the formation of a powerful geopolitical union of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovenia, Czech Republic, etc.) to counter Bolshevik expansion.

They critically assessed the alliance with Russia and stressed the importance of weakening it’s geopolitical influence by all means.

Keywords: Stepan Rudnytskyi, West Ukrainian People’s Republic, Ukrainian statehood, geopolitical strategies, Interseas.

One of the founders of political geography and Ukrainian geopolitics was Stepan Rudnytskyi. He was born on December 3, 1877, in Przemysl. In 1891 his family moved to Lviv. His father taught in a gymnasium. S. Rudnytskyi became a student at Lviv University, simultaneously tutor to support the family.

Stepan Rudnytskyi studied at the Faculty of Philosophy of Lviv University and under the influence of Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who taught there, began specializing in history. In «Notes of Shevchenko Scientific Society» he printed articles on the history of the Cossacks and the Khmelnytsky Uprising, attended lectures on the literature of professor O. Kolessa.

On December 6, 1899, S. Rudnytskyi successfully graduated from university and was given the right to teach geography and history in Ukrainian, Polish, and German. To continue his studies, the young researcher went to Vienna to study geology, hydrography, geomorphology.

After his return, S. Rudnytskyi taught at Lviv and Ternopil gymnasiums. The scientist published his first book, «Today's Geography», in 1905, where he taught the basics of Ukrainian geography. Soon he was invited to teach at the Faculty of Geography, Lviv University. On November 1, 1918, the West Ukrainian People's Republic was proclaimed. The scientist became an advisor to the government on political and economic issues. He prepared official documents for the League of Nations, published articles on issues of Ukrainian statehood in the European press, and developed the basics of military geography.

In 1919 S. Rudnytskyi found out about the Polish authorities' intend for his prosecution. The reason was the appearance in Geneva of books of anti-Polish content without the author's name. After he had been fired from the university by the Polish authorities, in 1919, he was invited to the post of a professor at Kamianets-Podilskyi University. However, quite soon, he emigrated to Vienna, where he began teaching geography at the World Trade Academy in Vienna.

He worked as a professor of geography and the dean of the Faculty of Philosophy at the Drahomanov Higher Pedagogical Institute in Prague. After returning to Soviet Ukraine, he headed the Faculty of Topology and Cartography of Kharkiv Geodetic Institute. In the '30s of the 20th century was accused of spying, arrested, and executed by shooting.

S. Rudnytskyi was a quite successful scientist. His works have been published in many languages in Vienna, Budapest, Bucharest, and other European cities. The original concept of political geography S. Rudnytskyi presented in the works «Ukraine from a Political-Geographical Position», «Ukraine and the Great States», «The Ukrainian Case from the Position of Political Geography». Geopolitical views of the researcher were described in the works «Ukraine and Ukrainians», «Towards the Basics of Ukrainian Nationalism», «Halychyna and Unitary Ukraine». The concept of S. Rudnytskyi appeared at a time when the world wanted to know about Ukrainian issues. It emphasizes the central national, political, economic, and territorial interests of Ukraine, points to the benefits for the countries of Western Europe and the world from the creation of the Ukrainian state.

S. Rudnytskyi and other Ukrainian public figures, referring to the position and statements of W. Wilson on the self-determination of the enslaved by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, promoted the idea of Western Ukrainian statehood, which was allegedly realized in the context of its political agenda.

They stressed that the West Ukrainian People's Republic leadership (Ye. Petrushevych and K. Levytskyi) were seeking support from the Western countries, especially the United States. The activities of representatives of the Ukrainian elite was effective: some Western politicians, including F. D. Roosevelt, stated that Ukraine must gain independence, like Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland have already sought or gained.

Leading Ukrainian leaders also asked the Ukrainian diaspora for help. In their letters to foreign Ukrainians Ye. Petrushevych, M. Hrushevskyi and S. Petliura thanked for

their active support for the liberation efforts and called for further assistance. Thus, to help Ukrainians in the United States, a special Aid and Defense Fund for Halychyna's Ukraine was created, which was to raise about \$ 100,000.

The Canadian Ukrainians also provided active financial support to Ukraine in the fight for its independence. These measures helped the Halychanians to endure hard times of war and, at the same time, consolidated the overseas diaspora. Certain funds, including \$ 2,200 on October 12, 1921, and \$ 10,000 on December 22, 1921 – exile government received from the Financial and Trade Mission of the Halychyna's Republic in Washington¹.

Critical thoughts for the development of the Ukrainian nation-state idea S. Rudnytskyi outlined in his writings «Why Do We Want Independent Ukraine», 1914 and the «The Ukrainian Case from the Position of Political Geography», 1923. In these and other publications, the scientist initiated the political-geographical direction of Ukrainian geography².

The main features of this area were:

1) the process of emergence and development of a state as a political-geographical unit depends on the physical, economic and political-geographical position of its territory (for Ukraine, it is its transit position on the edge of Europe, between Europe and Asia, near the Black Sea);

2) the fundamental principle of formation is ethnonational, with due regard for the socio-cultural and political traditions of the nation state-maker (the ethnic boundaries of Ukrainians must determine the state borders of Ukraine);

3) the key factors of state formation are, first and foremost, the human and natural-geographic potential of the territory of its formation;

4) the specifics of the state's political structure are determined mainly by the historical and geographical traditions of the nation state-maker and the social order that existed at the time of its emergence (on this basis, the parliamentary democratic republic is most suitable for Ukraine);

5) the administrative division of the state is determined by the presence of historically-ethnographic provinces, which may form the basis of its federal structure (according to the researcher, Ukraine may be federal, though not necessarily if there is strong self-governance);

6) the best in terms of the socio-political system is a state with a «social economy», in which various forms of property are legally protected³.

S. Rudnytskyi's work «Why Do We Want Independent Ukraine» it also contains an analysis of geopolitical factors (Ukraine's location regarding centers of political power, ways of communication, natural resources). The author sees Ukraine as a democratic republic with a strong central government and powerful communities and lands (their size should not exceed 10 thousand square kilometers)⁴. The researcher argued that states should strive for independence, which would contribute to a high level of social development. He noted that the destruction of empires is only for the benefit of all states, including the

¹ Західно-Українська Народна Республіка 1918–1923: док. і мат. Івано-Франківськ, 2001. Т. 2. С. 599.

² Рудницький С. Українська справа зі становища політичної географії. Берлін, 1923. С. 24.

³ Там само.

⁴ Рудницький С. Чому ми хочемо самостійної України. Львів: Наука, 1994. С. 24.

former metropolitan areas. States should establish civilized democratic relations, which will contribute to the enhancement of peace and security of peoples, the progress of human civilization. Therefore, gaining independence for Ukraine is not only an internal affair of the Ukrainian people but a matter of the surrounding states, for which, in the opinion of S. Rudnytskyi, Ukraine will be of the greatest support. S. Rudnytskyi emphasized that an independent people or nation is a part of a humanity that has unique «specific features that unite all individuals in one uniqueness: 1) race (anthropological difference), 2) separate language (with literature, science, etc.), 3) historical traditions and religious beliefs, 4) cultural heritage and desire for its enrichment, 5) continuous national territory as the basis of the nation-state. The ethnic borders of the nation define the territory itself»⁵.

Considering the borders of Ukraine, its place among the European countries, S. Rudnytskyi emphasizes their high communication functions. Important geostrategic position, flat surface, easy border crossing will contribute to the development of the foreign economic activity. On the other hand, it also attracted external enemies who repeatedly invaded these territories. The scientist notes that none of the states, which covered the territories of Ukraine, cared about its liberation, its people, but wanted only to expand its borders. The researcher notes that the governments of the young Ukrainian state do not take into account natural and ethnographic factors in determining both the external and internal borders of Ukraine.

S. Rudnytskyi covers quite thoroughly geopolitical ideas in the «Short Geography of Ukraine», where he focuses on the Black Sea orientation of Ukraine, supporting the concept of the Mizhморія (Interseas), which envisages the formation of a powerful geopolitical union of the Central and Eastern European countries (Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovenia, Czech Republic, etc.) to counter Bolshevik expansion. In today's geopolitical situation, this could be an extremely valuable initiative. A strong alliance of independent states of Central and Eastern Europe would be an adequate response to the expansion of the aggressive Eurasian empire, which is dangerous for all European countries, but especially for Ukraine, as Russian geopoliticians try to deny the existence of an independent Ukrainian state. The researcher emphasizes the specificity of our country's geographical position, which has a wide outlet to the Black Sea, which, in turn, is connected by the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to the Mediterranean and further to Asia Minor and Africa⁶.

The researcher substantiated the importance of the Black Sea for the development of our country in the historical section and outlined possible plots for the development of Ukraine, anticipating the establishment of a connection through the shipping lanes between the Black, the Baltic and the Caspian Seas⁷.

Other Ukrainian researchers supported the ideas of the Mizhморія too. Thus, in his work «Ukraine's International Position and Russia», D. Dontsov raised the question of the need for reconstruction of the Central and Eastern European geopolitical space. D. Dontsov analyzes the possibility of Russia's collapse in the early 20th century after the First World War and predicts the restoration of the Ukrainian state. In his opinion, this will be facilitated by the establishment of ties between the Ukrainian political elite and the countries of

⁵ Рудницький С. Чому ми хочемо самостійної України. С. 25.

⁶ Рудницький С. Коротка географія України. Антропогеографія України. Львів, 1914. Ч. 2. С. 14.

⁷ Рудницький С. Чому ми хочемо самостійної України. С. 107.

the Triple Alliance – Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey, which were interested in the final collapse of the Russian Empire.

D. Dontsov considered the geopolitical prospects for the development of the Ukrainian state in his work «Ukrainian Political Thought and Europe». He believed that the creation of a strong Ukrainian state would be «an important factor in European equilibrium»⁸, because it would reduce Russia's advantage over Central Europe. The scientist believed that only in a strong alliance with neighboring Eastern European countries from Estonia to Georgia, from Poland to Romania, Ukraine would become a reliable basis for stability and geopolitical balance for the whole Europe. D. Dontsov explained why all the previous decline of Ukraine led to the destabilization of the whole Central and Eastern Europe, and how much Russia used it to strengthen its imperial aspirations and to destroy Europe.

The essence of the Ukrainian geopolitical idea D. Dontsov outlined in his work «The Foundations of Our Politics»: «In this eternal struggle against chaos in the East, in defense of our own statehood and culture – the whole culture of the West, it is the Ukrainian national idea that should be the basis of our entire political agenda. In fact, Ukraine's fate in this struggle depended on the victory of one of the two principles on the continent: European or Moscow...»⁹. The researcher also noted: «Only a nation that is conscious of the great tasks that must be fulfilled for the benefit of all humanity, only such a nation is given a special cell on the chessboard of world history. Only a clearly articulated national ideal makes the crystallization center of a particular national idea for individual and group wills within the nation, which without it seek other centers of gravity»¹⁰. According to D. Dontsov, Ukraine should fit its own national aspirations into the global geopolitical aspirations of its macro-region.

M. Hrushevskyi also actively supported and contributed to the development of the geopolitical project of the Baltic–Black Sea axis. In his work «At the doorstep of new Ukraine», he stated: «Historical living conditions have oriented Ukraine to the West, and geographic orientations and oriented to the South, to the Black Sea...». «The Black Sea did not divide but bound the coastal edges»¹¹. M. Hrushevskyi understood Ukraine's objective civilization affiliation with the West, urged to focus on Western countries. However, he wrote: «But when these countries of Western culture should be a school for us, the fields of our activity, our own creativity, should be the countries that, like Ukraine, have grown in the influences or connections of the Eastern culture – in the sphere of our Black Sea orientation, united by the Black Sea as a center of communication and dissimilar cultural and political relations». «The scientist argued that the geographical features of Ukraine, namely the waterways, “lead to the Black Sea communication center”, the ways of communication, “If they were built by us in the direction of our interests”»¹², they too should be directed to him.

Another researcher, S. Tomashivskyi, also noted in this context Ukraine's dependence on the Black Sea, which played a significant role in its history. Perceiving Ukraine as a geographical concept, he emphasized the historical consequences of its location in the

⁸ Донцов Д. Міжнародне положення України і Росія. *Український націоналізм: історія та ідеї*: наук. зб. / за ред. О. Багана. Дрогобич: Посвіт, 2009. Вип. 1. С. 383.

⁹ Донцов Д. Підстави нашої політики. Нью-Йорк: ООЧСУ, 1957. С. 28.

¹⁰ Там само. С. 95.

¹¹ Великий українець: Матеріали з життя та діяльності М. С. Грушевського. Київ: Веселка, 1992. С. 155.

¹² Західно-Українська Народна Республіка 1918–1923. С. 155.

center of Europe, which led to the constant struggle of other countries in its territory and its inseparable connection with the Black Sea. He wrote: «Only in a geographical sense can one speak of Ukraine as an individual invariable concept throughout history. Much of Ukraine, like some parts of Eastern Europe, was bound by its water net to the Black Sea and had to share its fate»¹³.

In summary, it should be noted that, like other Ukrainian researchers, S. Rudnytskyi emphasized the importance of Ukraine's geopolitical position. Based on an analysis of the political-geographical development and political life of Europe and the world, S. Rudnytskyi concludes that «only nation-states have a future. The national territory is the main foundation of a nation. Modern world policy must support the creation of exclusive nation-states. The experience of the last centuries teaches this»¹⁴. Concerning the Ukrainian perspective, S. Rudnytskyi stood on the position of the Ukrainian national statehood, considering it in a European context: «The formation of the Ukrainian nation-state within the ethnographic borders is the only way to prevent rebellions and conflicts in the southeastern corner of Europe, which is so important for the world economy and world policy. Without the nation-state of Ukraine, we will soon experience new grave military and revolutionary catastrophes. The Ukrainian nation-state should be formed in the context of geopolitical relations with other states and nations. Among these states and peoples, the greatest importance was given to Russia, Poland, and Germany»¹⁵.

Thus, the geopolitical purpose of Ukraine under S. Rudnytskyi's reasoning is:

- 1) formation of an independent Ukrainian state to counteract Russian expansion;
- 2) formation of Ukraine as a developed state of the world level not by aggressive or expansionary means, but by peaceful development of the space, which originally belongs to the Ukrainian nation;
- 3) the optimal economic model for the development of Ukraine is an agrarian state that is relevant in the context of increasing food problems;
- 4) use of Ukrainian communications in trade relations of the West and the East.

S. Rudnytskyi is not only a prominent theorist of the Black Sea–Baltic geopolitical vector but a prominent geopolitician of the time, most of whose ideas remain relevant to this day.

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¹⁴ Рудницький С. Чому ми хочемо самостійної України. С. 31.

¹⁵ Рудницький С. Українська справа зі становища політичної географії. С. 56.

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ГЕОПОЛІТИЧНІ ПОГЛЯДИ РАДНИКА ЗУНР СТЕПАНА РУДНИЦЬКОГО

Проаналізовано геополітичні ідеї одного з ідеологів ЗУНР (Західноукраїнської Народної Республіки), засновника української політичної географії Степана Рудницького. Зазначено, що він та інші провідні українські мислителі того часу – Дмитро Донцов, Михайло Грушевський, Степан Томашівський – наголошували на важливості чіткого визначення геополітичної стратегії України, яка має бути спрямованою на європейські країни й геополітичну лінію Південь–Північ, оскільки вона є віссю українських земель.

Вказано, що головні ідеї щодо розбудови української національно-державної ідеї С. Рудницький виклав у працях «Чому ми хочемо самостійної України» й «Українська справа зі становища політичної географії». Констатовано, що в цих й інших публікаціях учений започаткував політико-географічний напрям української історичної думки.

Стверджено, що досить актуальною залишається праця С. Рудницького «Чому ми хочемо самостійної України?», яка містить аналіз геополітичних чинників (розташування країни щодо центрів політичної сили, шляхів сполучення; природні багатства). Констатовано, що автор бачить Україну як демократичну республіку зі сильним центральним урядом, потужними громадами та землями. Зазначено, що досить ґрунтовно геополітичні ідеї він висвітлює у «Короткій географії України», де акцентує увагу на її чорноморській орієнтації, підтримуючи концепцію Міжмор'я, яка передбачає формування потужного геополітичного союзу країн Центральної та Східної Європи (Польща, Україна, Литва, Латвія, Естонія, Хорватія, Словенія, Болгарія, Румунія, Молдова, Угорщина, Словаччина, Чехія та ін.) для протидії більшовицькій експансії.

Вказано, що С. Рудницький та інші українські громадські діячі критично оцінювали можливий союз із Росією і наголошували на важливості всіма можливими засобами послаблювати її геополітичні впливи.

Ключові слова: Степан Рудницький, ЗУНР, українська державність, геополітичні стратегії, Міжмор'я.