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Several documents on German and Georgian cooperation during the interwar period and World War II are kept in the Polish archives in London — Part I¹

There are three Polish archives in London. These are: the archive of the Józef Piłsudski Institute (238-246 King Street, London W6 0RF), archive of the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum (20 Prince's Gate, London, SW7 1PT), and archive of the Polish Underground Movement Study Trust (11 Leopold Road, London W5 3PB). Their collections include mainly documents on the participation of the Polish army in the Second World War as well as materials related to the Polish government-in-exile and the Polish political emigrants who decided to stay in the United Kingdom due to the geopolitical changes after 1945. Some materials from the archives directly concern the Caucasus. They contain some telegrams, mainly analyses of the situation in the Caucasus, sent in the 1920s and 1930s from the Polish Consulate General in Tiflis² to the Polish Embassy in London (because of its importance, the Embassy in London was one of the centres where the reports from Polish diplomatic missions across the world were often sent to), documents related to the activities of the Promethean movement after the Second World War, as well as materials concerning the officers from the Caucasus serving in the Polish Army.

This article focuses on the documents on the Georgian and German cooperation before and during the Second World War kept in the Polish archives in the UK. There are two documents of this kind, they present the

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²The first Polish consulate was founded in Tiflis in 1920 based on the transformed pre-existing consular agency and after the recognition of the independence of Georgia by Poland. After the occupation of Transcaucasia by the Red Army, Poland for the second time established the consulate in Tiflis in 1926. It functioned until 1937.

cooperation mentioned above through the prism of the Georgians staying in Poland, mostly those who served in the Polish army.

People from the Caucasus were accepted into the Polish army as early as at the beginning of the 1920s. It took place within the cooperation between Poland and the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union, which was expressed in the idea of the Promethean movement. Józef Piłsudski, a Polish independence activist, is believed to have developed this concept. As early as 1904, as a representative of the Polish Socialist Party, he prepared a memorandum to the Japanese government in Tokyo, in which he indicated that the objective of the Polish national movement was, among others, the collapse of the Russian empire and the independence of the nations incorporated to it by force³. Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski⁴, an army historian whose ideas were close to Piłsudski's, believed that the aim of the Polish politician was to dismember Russia and develop the Moscow country from the 16th century.⁵

In the first period following Poland's independence in 1918, two concepts to provide national security in the east were developed. The first one was created by Roman Dmowski and his party, National Democracy. It denied Ukrainians and Belarusians the right of separate nations, not considering them as such. Therefore his concept did not provide the existence of countries such as Ukraine or Belarus. Dmowski's concept was called "incorporative" because it included the occupation of as big area as possible by the Polish army in the East. It was supposed to be limited only by the range of Polish settlement. According to R. Dmowski, Poland should incorporate only the areas where Poles predominated, or cover such a number of East Slavic people who could be assimilated. On the other hand, the Polish government should give up its claims to other areas. It was assumed that such activities would limit the number of non-Polish groups in rebuilt Poland, which would prevent from creating national conflicts weakening the state both internally and externally. Piłsudski's concept, called „federal”, was the opposite of Dmowski's concept. It assumed that independent countries should be developed between Poland and Russia (Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine). Poland would enter into a close alliance with them. Such countries would be a buffer protecting Poland against Russia.

³ 1939. 1 marca, Warszawa. Referat polityczny o stosunkach polsko-prometeuszowskich dla marszałka Edwarda Rydza Śmigłego (IV redakcja), L.dz. 3881/II/2/38, [in:] *II Rzeczpospolita wobec ruchu prometejskiego*, Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe im. mjr. Bolesława Waligóry, Tetragon, Warszawa 2013, pp. 475-476.

⁴ Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski lived from 1899 to 1962. In the 20s of the XX century he worked among others in Military Historical Bureau, and from 1931 he was head of the Department of History and Science in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁵ S. Mikulicz, *Prometeizm w polityce II Rzeczpospolitej*, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1971, p. 15.

After the First World War Piłsudski's federal concept failed because of the Polish-Bolshevik War and, as a result, the signing of the Treaty of Riga in 1921, which determined, among others, the borders between the fighting parties. Due to such activities it was not possible to form independent Belarus or Ukraine. Leading to closer relations between Poland and Lithuania failed as well. In this case a serious obstacle preventing from achieving this objective was, among others, the conflict over Vilnius.

However, the principles of the federative concept were continued in the Promethean movement, which was translated into reality at the beginning of the 1920s. It was directed against the Soviet Union and it aimed at weakening its international position because, according to the Polish government, it was the main threat for the national security. In this case it was not limited to cooperation with the nations which theoretically could form countries in the immediate vicinity of Poland but which also had an opportunity to encircle Russia with a security cordon from other sides, such as the Finno-Ugric people from Karelia, the nations of the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Tatars from the Volga Region. The most limited cooperation within the Promethean movement was with the Cossacks, although some part of their representatives intended to initiate cooperation. In this case the animosity between the Cossacks and Ukrainians stood in the way because both parties made territorial claims to the same area. The fact that in many Polish circles the historically determined reluctance to the Cossacks as an armed tool of the empire in conducting the Russian imperial policy existed was also significant.

One of the most important signs of Prometheism in Polish policy was accepting people from national minorities of the Soviet Union into the army as contract officers⁶. Under favourable geopolitical circumstances they were to come back to their independent homelands and become a bond of their military alliance with Poland. Georgians were one of the most represented nations of the Soviet Union in the Polish army. Their first group arrived in Poland a few months after the occupation of the Democratic Republic of Georgia by the Red Army and the introduction of communism there. In 1922 there was a group of more than ninety soldiers of Georgian origin (officers and cadets) in Poland. They were enlisted into the Polish Army based on

⁶ As regards the enlisting of Georgian soldiers into the Polish Army, this did not concern cooperation within the Promethean movement only. Part of Polish politicians and military men thought that the Georgian government-in-exile should be repaid for the fact that in 1918 the Georgian authorities partially financed and enabled to form Polish troops in the Caucasus, which consisted of former soldiers from the Tsar's army. See: 1926, 22 marca, Warszawa. P.o. szefa Sztabu Generalnego, gen. bryg. Edmunda Kesslera, do Ministra Skarbu, Jerzego Zdziechowskiego, w sprawie oficerów gruzińskich, nr 893/II/Inf.O.T.O, [in] *II Rzeczpospolita wobec ruchu prometejskiego*, p. 133.

individual contracts. At the same time, the Georgian government-in-exile kept the organisational control over them through their national superior Aleksander Zakhariadze⁷, the chief of staff of the Georgian army, who decided on all matters related to the corps⁸. Georgians arrived from Turkey because at the beginning of the 1920s the Polish diplomatic representation in Constantinople was the main centre of contacts between the Polish and Caucasian military men. Col. Leon Bobicki, who served as military attaché, was their coordinator. One of his most important tasks was to assist in accepting cadets and Georgians officers into military schools in Poland⁹.

The biggest number of the source documents on the participation of foreign contract officers in the Polish Army was collected in the Archives of New Records (Hankiewicza st. 1, 02-103 Warsaw) as well as in the Central Military Archives (Czerwonych Beretów st. bl. 124, 00-910 Warsaw). Many interesting materials concerning the Promethean movement stored in these archives, was collected by Paweł Libera and published in Warsaw in 2013 in the collection of documents titled *II Rzeczpospolita wobec ruchu prometejskiego* [*Second Polish Republic about the Promethean movement*].

The first of the discussed documents relating to the Georgian-German cooperation is in the archive of the Józef Piłsudski Institute in London. It is kept as a part of collection 27 entitled „World War II”. The document is a note drawn up by Lt. Col. Edmund Charaszkiwicz¹⁰, who at that time was the chief of the Information Department of the Inspectorate of Polish Military Headquarters. It was addressed to the chief of the Intelligence Department of the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief¹¹. The document dated 16 July 1945 is

⁷ Alexander Zakhariadze was the chief of the General Staff of the Georgian army during the Soviet-Georgian war in 1921. In 1922 he arrived from Constantinople to Poland, where, after completing the training has been contracted in the Polish Army as a General Major. However, Zakhariadze did not receive the assignment to any department. The Polish archival documents show that there was a conflict between Zakhariadze and a large group of Georgian officers serving in the Polish Army. Officers blamed him for incompetence and wasted command abilities that led to the rapid defeat of Georgian troops during the war in 1921.

⁸ S. Mikulicz, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁹ P. Libera, *Wstęp*, [in:] *II Rzeczpospolita wobec ruchu prometejskiego*, p. 41.

¹⁰ Edmund Charaszkiwicz was born in 1895. Since 1924 he worked in the Second Department of Polish General Staff, which dealt with, among others, military intelligence, counterintelligence and analysis of foreign forces. After World War II E. Charaszkiwicz lived in exile in Great Britain, where he continued his pre-war activity in the Promethean movement. He died in 1975 in London.

¹¹ General Stanisław Kopański at that time was Chief of Staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces in the West. He took over this function in 1943 after the crash in Gibraltar, when Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, Gen. Władysław Sikorski,

E. Charaszkiwicz's reply for the report by Konrad (Kote) Imnadze¹², a former president of the Georgian Committee in Poland. The document written by Imnadze, which unfortunately could not be found in the archive, concerned the Georgians living in the interwar period in Poland and spying for Germany.

E. Charaszkiwicz points out in his letter that the report by Maj. Imnadze was quite chaotic. As for the merits, the Pole raises the following issues. Firstly, he claims that revealing many Georgian people who were agents of the German Gestapo both from military and civil spheres was not surprising for him at all. He stresses that the names mentioned by Imnadze in his report concerned the same people whom he, being the chief of the Second Department of Polish General Staff¹³ for many years, had given a negative opinion and described as individuals predisposed to spying who are in the obscene opposition to the legal Georgian government¹⁴. In his opinion the attitude of those people was not politically credible, instead it was characterised by typical zeal for using foreign spy networks. That phenomenon was very common and typical for each political emigration.

E. Charaszkiwicz points out in his letter that the main leader of the said spy group in Poland was Alshibaia, a doctor. He had been working as a doctor for many years in the interwar period in Grodno¹⁵ and at that time had made friends with the commander of the corps, Gen. Litwinowicz¹⁶. Then the author says that despite the fact that Alshibaia fully used the Polish welfare, his son studied in Germany. However, when the most prominent Georgian activist (according to the Pole), Poland's reliable and good political friend, minister

died. Staff of the Commander-in-Chief during World War II was located in London, and Polish armed forces in the West were subjected to it.

¹² Kote (also known as Konrad) Imnadze during the existence of independent Georgia was the secretary of Noe Zhordania. After the occupation of Georgia he arrived in Poland, where he became a contract officer (he reached the rank of Major). Imnadze was one of the leaders of the Georgian community in Poland and an active participant in the Promethean movement. He died in 1957 in England.

¹³ Section 2 of Second Department of Polish General Staff dealt with intelligence and was divided into two sub-sections: 2a, which dealt with the East, while 2b dealt with the West.

¹⁴ It is about the government of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, which since March 1921 was in exile. Noe Zhordania was the chairman of it.

¹⁵ Grodno currently is in western Belarus. In the interwar period the city belonged to Poland and was inhabited by 60% of Poles and 37% by the Jews. On September 20, 1939 Grodno was occupied by the Red Army, then, under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, it was incorporated into the Byelorussian SSR.

¹⁶ It is about Gen. Alexander Litwinowicz, since 1927 until 1935 he was the commander of the Corps District No III in Grodno. However, since 1936 until 1939 he held the position of Vice-minister for military affairs. He died in 1948 in Szczecin.

Noe Ramishvili, was murdered on the Soviet order¹⁷ in 1930, Alshibaia was exposed as one of the most active activists from the opposition for which Ramishvili was murdered. Based on the evidence collected, E. Charaszkiwicz requested, as he claims, to terminate his right for asylum as an emigrant and to expel him from Poland. That referred to the 1930s. However, as the author admits, his efforts failed because of external protections which the Georgian had. As he admits, Alshibaia's right for asylum was not terminated, however, at the request of Gen. Litwinowicz¹⁸, the chief of the Army Administration of that time, he and his family obtained Polish citizenship and settled in Warsaw.

E. Charaszkiwicz explains in his document that in 1931 he successfully removed many contract officers from the Polish army, including Gen. Koniashvili¹⁹, Col. Kandelaki²⁰ or Capt. Indze²¹, who were involved in the activities mentioned above. However, he points out that he failed to expel all of them, which was related to their external protection that reached high state positions. E. Charaszkiwicz listed Maj. Shalikashvili²², Cavalry Capt. Kobiashvili²³ and Capt. Lagidze²⁴.

¹⁷ Noe Ramishvili was one of the leaders of the Menshevik wing of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party and one of the creators of independent Georgia in 1918. After the announcement of its independence, on May 26, 1918, he became prime minister. After the occupation of the country by the Red Army in 1921 he moved to France. In exile Ramishvili was active in the Promethean movement, created and funded largely by Poland. Ramishvili was killed in 1930 by an agent of the OGPU (Объединённое государственное политическое управление — Joint State Political Directorate). His son, Akaki, arrived in Poland in 1936, where he started his studies at the Medical Department of the University of Warsaw. See: P. Libera, *Stypendyści z narodów „prometejskich” w latach 1928–1939: próba portrety zbiorowego*, „Nowy Prometeusz” issue 7, 2015, p. 161.

¹⁸ Alexander Litwinowicz was the head of the Administration of the Army in 1936-1939, at the same period when he was Vice-minister of military affairs.

¹⁹ It's about Gen. Alexander Koniashvili. He died in 1955 in Argentina.

²⁰ It's about Col. Nikoloz Kandelaki, who died in exile in Great Britain after World War II.

²¹ It's about Cpt. Bazyl (Vasili) Injia.

²² It's about Major Dmitry Shalikashvili, who served in the 1st Regiment of Cavalry named after J. Piłsudski. He was the father of John Shalikashvili, who was born in Poland in 1936 and in the 90s of XX century occupied the highest position in the structure of the US Army - he was the Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the US Army.

²³ Simon (in Poland he used the name Szymon) Kobiashvili in 1935 graduated from the Military Academy in Warsaw and in 1939 he was the chief of staff of the Pomeranian Cavalry Brigade of the Polish Army. During World War II he was one of the Georgian officers who collaborated with the Germans. Kobiashvili died in the US in 1976.

²⁴ In the archival documents it can be found three persons with the surname Lagidze who served in the Polish Army — Lado, Dmitry and David (Dmitry can be excluded because he left Poland in 1927).

The author of the note states at the same time that the Georgian officers who in critical moments (E. Charaszkievicz means the period just before the outbreak of World War II and the occupation of Poland by Germany) showed the right character and during the hardships of wartime expressed the proper political attitude to Poland included Gen. Zakhariadze, Col. Tevzadze²⁵, Maj. Imnadze, Col. Bagriatiani²⁶, Magister Bagriatiani²⁷, general secretary of the Georgian socialist party Menagarishvili²⁸, Capt. Teriashvili²⁹, Maj. Aronishidze³⁰, Capt. Matikashvili³¹, Cavalry Capt. Ugrekhelidze³², Capt. Khundadze³³, Capt. Abashidze³⁴. According to the author, those listed above cooperated loyally with Poles, supported the rightful Georgian government which did not waver in their political relations with Poland in any political period.

²⁵ Valerian (Valiko) Tevzadze was born in 1894 in Georgia. After the occupation of Georgia by the Soviet Army he arrived to Poland, where as contract officer he studied at the Military Academy in Warsaw. After graduating Tevzadze worked at the Military Geographical Institute. In September, 1939 he commanded a section of the defense of Warsaw, for what he was awarded the Order of Virtuti Militari of fifth grade. Tevzadze during the occupation of Poland by Germany belonged to the Home Army as a result, in 1945 he changed his name and did not reveal his identity for fear of reprisals by the Soviet and Polish (Communist) special services. He died in 1985.

²⁶ It's about col. Alexander Bargationi, who served in the armies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

²⁷ It concerns Mikołaj (Nikolay) Bagrationi, Aleksander's son. He was a secretary of the Georgian Committee, a vice-president of the Association of Caucasian Students in Poland, a member of the Oriental Club of Young People and a grant holder of the Eastern Institute.

²⁸ It's about Sardion Menagarishvili (Menagari), who was one of the leaders of Georgian Social-Democrats. Since 1925 he lived in exile, mostly in Paris. Menagarishvili within the Promethean movement closely cooperated with the Polish intelligence.

²⁹ It's about Major Constantine Teriashvili, who died in September 1939 during the defense of Warsaw.

³⁰ It's about Major Artem Aronishidze. In September, 1939 he commanded one of the troops defending Warsaw, for which he was awarded the Order of Virtuti Militari, later he served in the Home Army.

³¹ It's about Major Mikolaj (Nikoloz) Matikashvili, who participated in the Polish defensive war in 1939 and then he worked in the Home Army. He died in 1993.

³² It's about Vitaly Ugrekhelidze, who served in the 19th Volyn Uhlans Regiment stationed in Ostrog in the eastern Poland. During the war he worked in the Home Army and then served in the 2nd Polish Corps who participated in the fighting in Italy.

³³ It's about Geno (Gedemon) Khundadze, who was a captain in the 44 Infantry Regiment. During the occupation of Poland, he served in the Home Army. He was killed by the Germans.

³⁴ It's about Cpt. Vakhtang Abashidze, who in September 1939 participated in the defense of Modlin near Warsaw. During the occupation of Poland he served in the Home Army.

Finally, E. Charaszkiwicz adds that Imnadze should become a major in the Polish Army unless the political situation stood in the way.

The second document is also in the archive of the Józef Piłsudski Institute in London, in the folder entitled *Zarys przyczyn współpracy niemiecko-gruzińskiej* [Eng. *The outline of the reasons of the German and Georgian cooperation*], reference number 709/27/118. This is a report entitled *Zarys przyczyn, które zmusiły emigrację gruzińską do współpracy z Niemcami w wojnie 1941–1945* [Eng. *The outline of the reasons why the Georgian emigrants had to cooperated with Germany during the war between 1941 and 1945*] by Simon Kobiashvili, who lived in Munich. It was drawn up for Gen. Franciszek Dindorf-Ankowicz staying in Ingolstadt in Germany³⁵. A covering letter was attached to the report dated on 28 September 1946, in which S. Kobiashvili informed F. Dindorf-Ankowicz about sending the mentioned report. He also informed that if the general thought it was right, this report should be given to Col. Bąkiewicz³⁶.

The report does not include any specific date, it only says „September 1946”. It starts with a historical background, where S. Kobiashvili points out that after the First World War and the Russian revolution Georgia separated from Russia and on 26 May 1918 declared its independence³⁷. At first it was recognised *de facto*, and next *de iure* by nearly all European countries and the general committee of the allies³⁸. The author relates that it took place after more than a hundred years of various battles between Georgians and the Russian occupant. He adds that, as we know, from 1801, i.e. from the beginning of the occupation of Georgia, the Georgian people made nine big

³⁵ Franciszek Dindorf-Ankowicz was a Brigade General in Polish Army. In September, 1939 he commanded one of the Group Operations in central Poland, and then he was captured by Germans. By the end of the war he was in Oflag VII A Murnau located in Bavaria. Dindorf-Ankowicz died in 1963 in the UK.

³⁶ Most likely it is about Col. Wincent Bąkiewicz. From the 20s XX century he was associated with Polish intelligence, and in the 30s he was head of the Independent Department „Russia” in the Department of Studies of the Second Department of Polish General Staff. Since 1942 he was the head of Polish intelligence in the Polish Army in the East. It is suggested that after the war he worked for the United States. He died in 1974.

³⁷ Georgia declared its independence on May 26, 1918, thereby causing the disintegration of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic. This was due to Turkish aggression and the necessity to ask Germany for help.

³⁸ The Supreme Council of the Triple Entente *de facto* recognized the independence of Georgia on 12 January 1920, which was associated with the defeat of the army of Gen. A. Denikin and the approach of the Bolshevik troops to the Caucasus. The *de jure* recognition of the independence of Georgia by the Entente countries took place on 27 January 1921. In addition, it should be noted, that also Soviet Russia *de jure* recognized the independence of Georgia, which took place on 7 May 1920.

and about twenty smaller uprisings against Russia. An important argument for S. Kobiashvili's next arguments is the fact that he quotes that the independence of Georgia was recognised by Soviet Russia, which on 7 May 1920 concluded a non-aggression pact. He cited the first two points:

1. Russia recognises without any objections the independence and sovereignty of Georgia and voluntarily renounces all its rights to the Georgian nation and territory.
2. According to the paragraph above, Russia does not have any rights for any intervention related to Georgian issues.

Then, as the author says, eight months after signing that pact, Soviet Russia, without the declaration of war, attacked Georgia and after a short but fierce war, took control of it. As a result, communism was introduced and Georgia was incorporated into the Soviet Union. S. Kobiashvili states in his report that the war and the occupation of Georgia raised outrage and protests across Europe. He explains that Georgian nation did not accept that situation. The Georgian government, most members of the parliament and the leading representatives of the army and society emigrated abroad to gain support from European nations in the fight against the Soviet Union. The author points out that the fight from the beginning had the form of a fierce underground movement and terror. Some parts of the fight, such as the uprising in Khevsureti³⁹ and in Svaneti⁴⁰, the uprising in 1923⁴¹, as well as the general uprising in 1924⁴², are known in Europe. Further, the author notes that the European press of that time had written about the Georgian issues in details and had not hidden their sympathy for the Georgian nation. For S. Kobiashvili, it was significant that the Georgian uprisings had been extremely bloody and they had been crushed by ruthless methods. As a result, the Georgian nation lost almost all its educated young people. He provides the example of Metechi⁴³, the prison in Tiflis, where three thousand people were executed on 25 August 1924. Keeping in mind that the total population of Georgia was three million, that was a significant loss for the society. He

³⁹ The uprising in Khevsureti took place in late August and early September 1923.

⁴⁰ The uprising in Svaneti took place in August and September 1921.

⁴¹ Fight against „counter-revolutionary armed groups” was continued in Georgia during 1923. It was arrested and executed dozens senior Georgian officers, which was suspected of preparing the uprising.

⁴² The uprising lasted from late August to early September. During it approx. three thousand people died.

⁴³ Metechi prison was in the castle, which was broken in 1959.

reminds that the uprisings became a pretext for strong protests by various countries and international organisations such as the League of Nations, the Second International⁴⁴, English labour unions, etc. They demanded in their resolutions to remove Russian troops from Georgia and hold a referendum. Then S. Kobiashvili got to the core of his explanations of the reasons of the Georgian and German cooperation during World War II. He states that those resolutions did not save Georgia and resulted in bigger terror. The Georgian nation drew a single logical conclusion from that. It was not possible to remove the Russian troops from Georgia without the help of foreign armies because the Soviet Union, despite its internal crises, was getting stronger and stronger and was unbreakable from the inside. It had been hoped that Soviet Russia, being in a constant opposition to the rest of the world, would sooner or later, due to historical and ideological reasons, be forced to embroil in an armed conflict with one or even several countries. That, on the other hand, as it was assumed, should unavoidably cause the collapse of the Soviet Union and its division into smaller countries.

To support his opinion, S. Kobiashvili uses the argument that the predictions mentioned above turned out to be right, which is proven by the first period of World War II. Then the nations of the Soviet Union, in his opinion, including the Russian nation, would not have fought for the existing communist regime and a war would have been pointless for them. The author of the report states that this explains why the soviet soldiers went over to the opponent side in large numbers. Most of them were the representatives of smaller nations. He provides the example of operations on the Crimea and Kerch, when approx. 30 000 soldiers from the Caucasus went over to the German side almost peacefully in May 1942. S. Kobiashvili points out that those were mainly peasants who stated that they would not have fought for Soviet Russia. In his opinion the collapse of the Red Army, which started in 1941, would have led inevitably to the logical end, i.e. the collapse of the Soviet Union if it had not been for the suicidal policy of Germany which they pursued in the East. The Georgian notes that the deeper into Russia Germans moved, the clearer their political objectives were, and the resistance of the Soviet Union nations was getting stronger and stronger. In his opinion the stupidity of Germans concerning the understanding and assessment of the Soviet reality, the aims of the Soviet Union, the reasons why the Red Army had won so easily was unbelievable. In his view the invaders did not go into details about the situation, and they had primitive explanations for the facts they observed. According to the Georgian if it had

⁴⁴ The Second International was established in 1889 in Paris, which, however, ceased to function because of the outbreak of the World War I. In this case, it's about the revived Second International, which took place in Geneva in 1920.

not been for the Germans who pursued national policy, solved the agrarian issue and officially introduced the right for the inherited property, despite other mistakes they made, nothing and nobody could have saved Russia. S. Kobiashvili sums up the part about the confrontation between Russia and Germany with a thought that it was impossible to predict that Germans would turn out to have been such a politically immature nation.

In the second part of his report he outlined the views and the history of Georgian emigrants in Poland. He starts his argument with the fact that since 1925 the Georgian nation together with its emigrants had pinned all the hope for liberation in the future war. While waiting for that moment, Georgian emigrants acted actively in the countries where they lived in. S. Kobiashvili states that anti-Soviet and even anti-Russian attitudes were never hidden or concealed by the representatives of Georgian emigrants. No matter in which country they were, they were supposed to say, and in comprehensive emigrant literature they stated openly, that they had been waiting for the right moment to act actively against Soviet Russia. The author points out that in some countries the value of individual emigrants or groups of emigrants was assessed depending on their level of activity and hostility to Soviet Russia.

As for the Georgians staying in Poland, S. Kobiashvili stresses that they were there as contract officers. One of the conditions concerning their military service was that they were not allowed to acquire Polish citizenship. Next he explains that the reason of such an abnormal situation was clear. It was about the legal relationship of the officers to the country and the Polish Army since it should not have been an obstacle to use them in the right place⁴⁵. He adds that another argument was likely to be important. The Polish authorities were probably afraid that the normalisation of legal situation may have caused polonization of the Georgian officers to too great extent and drawing them away from their basic tasks for which they had been accepted for the service, i.e. for the needs of their own country. S. Kobiashvili adds that the fear was not unfounded, as it turned out later. At the end of that report he stresses that Georgian emigrants were a political asset against Soviet Russia.

The next part of the report was devoted to the position of Georgian emigrants on the Second World War. Firstly, S. Kobiashvili points out that Georgian emigrants took the side of democracy in the conflict between fascism and democracy. To prove his opinion, he gives the information that the party of Georgian fascists never had more than fifteen members. The

⁴⁵ In accordance with Polish politicians, the Georgian officers residing in the Polish Army in favorable geo-political circumstances had to return to the independent Georgia.

author claims that the position taken by the whole emigrant press and two declarations of the national Georgian government and the key representatives of emigrants issued at the very beginning of the war support his opinion. He adds that a practical token of sympathy of the emigrants was shown by saving more than three hundred Jews and all the Caucasian Marxists from German repressions as well as the help, if possible, to all those who were persecuted by Germans. S. Kobiashvili stresses that at the beginning of the war, i.e. until the outbreak of the war between Germany and Russia, there were no Georgian emigrants on the German side and there were no Georgians in the German army, despite the fact that there were many Georgian immigrants in Germany. The author states in this part of his report that in the Polish, French or Belgian army, unlike the German army, there were tens of Georgian officers and soldiers who did their military duty for their adopted homelands honestly and to the end.

According to S. Kobiashvili, the fact that Germany started war against Soviet Russia on 22 June 1941 caused a stir among Georgian emigrants because they realised how important that war for the Georgian nation was. The key question for them was „What to do?“, and it was particularly important for the Georgian emigrants in Poland. The author thinks that the answer for that was extremely difficult. This may have resulted from the fact that the Georgian emigrants in Poland, mainly officers, were strongly attached to Polish society and many of them married Polish women. The Georgian states that Poland was the second homeland for all of them. They really loved the Polish nation, faced adversity related to the war together with Polish people. S. Kobiashvili presented the dilemmas of the emigrants, on the one hand they had their duties as Polish Army officers, feelings to Poland, they cared for their opinion among Polish society, had Polish wives and Polish close families. They had a personal aversion to Germans, on the other hand there was the main duty to their homeland. The emigrants had to justify their absence in their country and prove that they did not lose the main objective, the liberation of Georgia, when living yet a comfortable and safe life. Thus they had to prove that they are still Georgians and want to be them.

S. Kobiashvili concludes that the close relationships and personal duties that connected individual Georgian emigrants with Polish society affected the decision to great extent. Those Georgians who had Polish wives struggled with the decision to cooperate with Germans. The author of the report emphasises that other reasons were not important. Many people after the war, i.e. *post factum*, tried to explain they dodged the military service in the Georgian Legions in Wehrmacht (in total, about 21,000 Georgians served in the legions and support units of German military forces during World War II⁴⁶) because

⁴⁶ J. Thorwald, *Iluzja. Żołnierze radziecy w armii Hitlera*, trans. to Polish W. Sawicki, Warszawa 1994, pp. 303-304.

of ideological and political reasons. S. Kobiashvili clearly claims that it did not happen. He ensures his readers that many Georgians, soldiers — Georgians from the Red Army (Georgian soldiers serving in the Red Army who were captured by Germans — P. A.), all Georgian emigrants in France and Germany together with the members of the former Georgian government, gave in to the historical necessity and took the side against Soviets and, willingly or not, cooperated with Germans.

Then the author relates that in France almost all the men able to carry a gun (approx. two hundred people between 17 and 55) in a week after the outbreak of the war⁴⁷ voluntarily joined Wehrmacht, forming special units „Tamar I” and „Tamar II”. According to S. Kobiashvili their line of thinking was as follows: the war between Germany and Russia was the only chance to liberate Georgia from Russia. It was believed that it would have resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was assumed that other options, such as World War III, would not have created similar geopolitical conditions for Georgia. The constant role of Turkey in the history of Georgia was taken into account. The author claims it was significant that there were some sympathies for Germans among the Georgian nation because they did not forget that in 1918 Germans had saved Georgia from the Turkish occupation and they even had fought the Turkish because of that. Supported and persuaded by Germany, the Georgian National Committee of that time declared the independence of Georgia⁴⁸.

S. Kobiashvili points out that the fierce German nationalism and the example of Poland serving as a warning should have been taken into account during the war. The German plans concerning Ukraine were not a secret as well. The author of the report concludes that there were no illusions about Germany, and the Georgian emigrants were not sure whether they would have got what they wanted. However, it had been hoped that as a result of the war against Russia, Russia’s vast lands, and in particular the surprises caused by fighting the war on two fronts by Germany, most clumsiness and dynamism in politics and methods would have decreased or even disappeared. The Georgian points out that the geopolitical localisation of Georgia and the importance of the Caucasus for both fighting parties played a big role in the assessment of the relationships with Germany. However, he says that the most important argument was the fact that Soviet Russia was believed to be the main enemy among the Georgian emigrants. Soviet Russia had to be defeated at all costs and had to collapse. Thus, future relationships with

⁴⁷ I.e. it is about start of German-Russian war on June 22, 1941.

⁴⁸ Georgia declared independence on May 26, 1918 as a result of aggression of the Ottoman Empire. Germany guaranteed protection of Georgia against an invader, if it declare independence and sign the relevant agreements. German expeditionary force landed in Georgia on the basis of an agreement signed on 28 May 1918.

Germany depended on the military and political situation that would have occurred after the defeat of Russia. The author states that Georgians needed Germans to defeat Russia. They believed that only Germans may have caused the collapse of the Soviet empire.

The reasons mentioned above were, according to S. Kobiashvili, elementary. The Georgian emigrants relied on them when they started to cooperate with Germans against Soviet Russia. He notices that only some Georgians living in Poland rejected it due to personal and emotional reasons.

The author states in his report that while Georgian emigrants cooperated with Germans because of cool calculation and political benefits, the Georgians living in Georgia thought that issue was much simpler. For them, everybody who was an enemy of Soviet Russia, in particular the Soviet regime, became automatically an ally of the Georgian nation. To support his opinion, S. Kobiashvili provides his information about the situation on Georgia from the autumn of 1941 to the spring of 1945. According to the information everybody expected to be liberated from the Bolsheviks. An uprising was only a matter of time, they only needed a signal. In his opinion, the feeling in Georgia and across the Caucasian can be described as „it does not matter who, but not the Soviet people”. To support his opinion, he quoted the words of the commander of the division stationing in Kutaisi. In his view the divisions stationing in the Caucasus moved in the region of their barracks using secured marching routes. Furthermore, the units were constantly on full alert in the barracks and the forests were full of deserters whose parties went openly to villages and recruited people to guerrilla units. S. Kobiashvili reports that local authorities in their official reports to Moscow assessed the political situation in the country as completely hopeless, admitting that they did not control the situation at the moment. Here, he refers to the information obtained from one of the officers who worked in “gosudarstvennoj bezopastnosi” during the war. He also provides the information that there were questions from the country about instructions on how to establish national authorities or the positions which should be held towards Turkey, etc. S. Kobiashvili added regarding the feeling in Georgia and the Caucasus in the winter of 1941/1942 and during the whole 1942, the accusations of the Georgian emigrants concerning „German orientation” or talks about placing a bet on the wrong horse, etc. seem to be pointless.

S. Kobiashvili sums up this part of his report saying that his compatriots and in general all the Caucasian inhabitants turned out to be Stalin’s least loyal allies. The commanders of the Red Army were of the same opinions. The author thinks that in fact Georgians hardly ever fought in the Soviet army and the divisions formed in the Caucasus from local people in the winter of

1941/1942 which took part in the operations on the Crimea and Kerch⁴⁹, went over to the German side, almost peacefully. S. Kobiashvili says that later the majority of people imprisoned by Germans served in the Wehrmacht voluntary units. He provides the data which indicate that there were approx. 100 000 people from the Caucasus in total who fought for Germany (he specifies that it concerned people registered in the forming centres) and there were about 25 000 Georgians. As for the latter, the author points out that it did not include those who did not participate in the forming centres but were conscripted into fighting units or various support units, labour units, transport columns, etc., directly by commanders at the front.

In the next part of his report, S. Kobiashvili describes how the Georgian Legion in Wehrmacht was formed. It started in February 1942 and in May the first battalion was formed⁵⁰. On 26 May, during the Georgian national holiday⁵¹, the Georgian flag was solemnly raised over the legion's barracks for the first time. S. Kobiashvili notes in his report that the official order of O.K.H.⁵² says that from that day (i.e. 26 May 1942) the Georgian soldiers under their banner started to fight for the freedom of Georgia. The Georgian adds that the legions were formed by Germans without any earlier agreement or notifying the emigrants about it. Apart from that, he believes that the general attitude of Germans to emigrants, in particular to the Georgian emigrants in Poland, was clearly negative. He says that the Georgian officers who served before the war in the Polish Army, were not welcomed by Germans and most colleagues from Soviet army at first. Germans did not trust them because they felt their aversion and were afraid of unfavourable influence of those officers to other legionnaires. On the other hand, the Georgian officers perceived the Georgians from the Polish Army as dangerous rivals for the command positions and people with completely different opinions and views on the military service, education and morale of officers. According to S. Kobiashvili, considering the relationships mentioned above, the decision of the Georgian officers from the Polish Army about joining the Legion was

⁴⁹ It is about Battle of the Kerch Peninsula, which began in December 1941 and was aimed at the liberation of Crimea occupied by the German-Romanian forces. The operation ended in May 1942 when German troops invaded both the Crimean peninsula and Kerch Peninsula.

⁵⁰ Georgian Legion was created by the Germans in Radom in occupied Poland. Most senior in rank Georgian who served in it was col. Shalva Maghlakelidze. However, the Legion had no real control over their battalions, which were assigned to different units of the Wehrmacht. The first Georgian unit was formed was 795 Georgian Infantry Battalion.

⁵¹ In Georgia the Independence Day is celebrated on May 26 to commemorate the proclamation of independence in 1918.

⁵² It is an abbreviation of Oberkommando des Heeres, i.e. the Supreme High Command of the German Army, which existed from 1936 until 1945.

a sacrifice and an ideological issue to a great extent because the conditions provided by the German commanders at first seemed to be unbearable. Next, the author describes that they were regular private legionnaires and served as regular privates in very hard conditions for the first three months. According to S. Kobiashvili, at the same time there were unsuccessful attempts to discredit them in the eyes of the legionnaires and ex-officers from the Red Army, causing disputes and hostile relationships between them. Apart from that problem, the other ones they had to face included the lack of financial support for their families.

S. Kobiashvili says in his document that ignoring the obstacles mentioned above, the Georgian officers from the Polish Army managed to change completely the relationships and conditions in the legion in a short time, which at first were an affront to military service. They also handled legal issues concerning the soldiers who served in the legion. Quoting the opinion of German commanders, S. Kobiashvili claims that the Georgian officers from the Polish Army proved that they were much better than the German officers and Soviet ex-officers in every aspect. Thanks to their professionalism and activities they gained trust and even sympathies and attachment of the legionnaires and most Soviet ex-officers. As a result, all the command positions in the Legion and battalions were held by Georgians, according to S. Kobiashvili, whereas in other Legions⁵³ even the positions of company commanders were held by Germans⁵⁴. In his opinion the most important fact was that the issue of the Georgian legion from the point of the German army was moved to the point of the separate Georgian army.

The next paragraph of the report contains the information that due to the efforts of the Georgian officers from the Polish Army, the commanders of the voluntary army promised that the Georgian troops would not have been used to eliminate Polish partisans. As a result of this promise, there had been no Georgian battalions in Poland⁵⁵ since 1 February 1943. All of them were

⁵³The author meant other so-called Ostlegionen (Eastern Legions) created by the Germans. Besides the Georgian Legion five other such entities existed: Turkestan Legion, Caucasian Muslim Legion, Azerbaijani Legion, Armenian Legion and the Volga-Tatar Legion.

⁵⁴The author of the report exaggerates by claiming that all command positions in the Legion and individual battalions were manned by Georgians. At the head of the Legion there was actually Georgian - Shalva Maghlakelidze, but his supremacy over individual battalions were purely formal. A part of battalions (there were eight) was commanded by Georgians, but the majority was commanded by Germany.

⁵⁵S. Kobiashvili is not accurate disclose such information that supposedly from 1 February 1943 within Polish territory they were not Georgian battalions. 795 Georgian Infantry Battalion was moved from Poland to Kerch Peninsula in February 1943. However, it was returned in April of the same year. In the summer of 1943 the battalion used to protect the railway infrastructure in the vicinity of Radzyń in central Poland. At that time, there were

to be moved deeper into Germany or to the West. S. Kobiashvili states that he quotes this information to prove the rumours about the Georgians who captured or shot dead Polish partisans were wrong.

At the end of the document S. Kobiashvili says that the Georgian officers from the Polish Army played a big role in the history of the Georgian army in exile. Besides, it was not about the benefits, personal honours, sympathy to Germans. It was about a deep sense of duty, understanding of the situation, loyalty to ten thousands of their lonely compatriots whose financial and moral situation was difficult, loyalty to their nation in the country was the cause of their actions. At the end he notes that it cannot be ignored that the officers who together with the Georgian Legion fought for Germans went separated ways than the nation and the Polish Army. However, the love and gratitude for the nation and the army that took them in, brought them up, trained and were a substitute of their homeland, would be living forever in the hearts of the Georgian officers.

As far as two presented documents are concerned, the first one is particularly interesting. The letter of E. Charaszkiwicz proves that in the interwar period Germans developed their spy network in Poland, for example by using the Georgian emigrants. This is an unknown issue, not discussed by historians, despite the fact that in Poland the pre-war Promethean movement and the issue of accepting contract officers from the nations which were part of the Soviet Union were described in details. However, the important issue concerning infiltration of this group by German intelligence agencies is omitted.

In order to interpret correctly the events about which E. Charaszkiwicz wrote in his document, one needs to pay attention to the division among Georgian officers contracted in the Polish Army. The division resulted from the fact that Georgian parties in exile were in conflict, in particular social democrats and national democrats, and this clearly was reflected in that discussed note. Learning about the events related to the death of Noe Ramishvili that led to discharging some contracted Georgian officers from the Polish Army in 1931 is a particularly important issue.

Divisions among the Georgian soldiers who stayed in Poland already appeared by the mid-1920s. In 1925 Kakutsa Cholokashvili, leader of the anti-Bolshevik rebellion of 1924 in Georgia, arrived in Warsaw⁵⁶. He met the

several skirmishes with the Polish partisans. In mid-October the battalion was transferred to northern France. Besides that, at the spring of 1944 within Polish territory, near Lviv, 824 Infantry Georgian Battalion fought with the Red Army.

⁵⁶ Probably the first contacts between a representative of the Polish government and K. Cholokashvili had already been established by 1924. In the same year Tadeusz Hołowko arrived in Istanbul, he was at that time a representative of the Second Department of the Polish General Staff. He was to find the causes of failure of the rebellion in Georgia. In the

leading representatives of the political and military elite, including J. Piłsudski and W. Sikorski. He talked with them about the settling of Georgian insurgents in Poland. In the end that did not happen. A Georgian historian, Razhden Chikhorია, thinks that General A. Zakhariadze was particularly interested in this matter. K. Cholokashvili disapproved of Georgian social democrats, he blamed them for the failure of the rebellion and because of that he was a right-wing sympathizer⁵⁷. Thus, if his supporters had settled in Poland, A. Zakhariadze's authority and influences would have declined⁵⁸. A. Zakhariadze also accused his political opponents — K. Cholokashvili's supporters — of acting against J. Piłsudski during the May coup in 1926⁵⁹. After the May coup contacts between Polish authorities and Georgian social democrats became much closer.

Przemysław Adamczewski

Several Documents on German and Georgian Cooperation during the Interwar Period and World War II are Kept in the Polish Archives in London — Part I

Abstract

The paper presents documents on the German and Georgian cooperation during the interwar period and World War II kept in the Polish archives in London. One of the documents, written by Edmund Charaszkiewicz, can be treated as a potential clue in the thesis that individual Georgian military men might have been agents of the German intelligence service, which also used Georgian emigrants with right-wing views who lived in Poland for its purposes. Another document, written by Simon Kobiaszwili, is dedicated to the explanation of what caused that some of the Georgian emigrants who stayed in Europe developed collaboration with the Germans during World War II. To a great extent, the paper also discusses the conflict in the community of Georgian emigrants in the interwar period and the policy of the Polish authorities toward the Georgian government in exile established by socialists.

Keywords: German and Georgian cooperation during World War II, Polish archives in London.

Turkish capital T. Hołówko met members of the Georgian National-Democratic Party, and those members helped him contact K. Cholokashvili. See: R. Chikhorია, *Pułkownik Kakuca Czolokaszwili, gruzińska prawica oraz władze polskie*, „Nowy Prometeusz” issue 7, 2015, p. 201.

⁵⁷ R. Chikhorია, *Pułkownik Kakuca Czolokaszwili, gruzińska prawica oraz władze polskie*, „Nowy Prometeusz” nr 7, 2015, s. 201.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 202-203.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 203.