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**HETMAN PAVLO SKOROPADSKIY'S OFFICIAL VISIT
TO GERMANY IN THE CONTEXT
OF UKRAINIAN POLITICAL LIFE IN 1918**

Late summer of 1918 turned out to be tense both in domestic and external policy of the Ukrainian state. The calm inside the country was being undermined by radical socialist parties and Bolshevik terrorist groups. 450 thousand German and Austro-Hungarian troops asked for by the Tsentralna Rada (Central Council – Ukrainian government) were deployed on the territory of the country. The occupation authorities had a crucial influence on internal social, trade and economic as well as political situation in the country thus delaying the badly needed systemic reforms in practically all spheres of national economy, in social and political life.

September 2, 1918 Hetman of Ukraine Pavlo Skoropadskiy left Kyiv for Germany for an official personal meeting with Kaiser Wilhelm 11 at his invitation. It is quite interesting that nobody in the palace, in the government, in Hetman's personal headquarters and among the bodyguards was aware of his plans to visit Germany. Chief of Hetman's headquarters B. Stelletskiy, commandant of the palace K. Prisoskiy and Special department chief D. Buslo were unaware as well.

Hetman's meetings with the Emperor, German political elite, tycoons of trade and economy sounded like a message for Ukraine, with regard to its future, if it had been stable and the Hetman state had managed to stay afloat in the whirlwind of the world war and both European and Ukrainian socio-political cataclysms. In general, Hetman's visit to Germany and the outcome of his meeting with the Kaiser were successful. It was predicted to make use of the gains following the visit by the spring 1919. Therefore, Ukraine could have accepted the defeat of the Central states being more or less strong and reformed (Hetman believed Germany would stay undefeated in the war at least by January-February 1919).

Pavlo Skoropadskiy and his government failed to take advantage of the outcome of Hetman's September visit to the German Kaiser, because on December 1918 the Hetmanate was overthrown. It all was caused by many factors, among them the turmoil both in Ukraine and around it, the situation in a war-torn and post-war Europe. This situation was facilitated by both objective and subjective factors of a complex set of internal and external contradictions which, in the end, led to the fall of not only the Skoropadskiy's Hetmanate but eventually to the destruction of Ukrainian statehood with its various forms (Ukrainian State, Ukrainian People's Republic, Western Ukrainian People's Republic, Hutsul and Lemko republics) in the first quarter of the XX century and to the defeat of the Ukrainian national liberation struggle.