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## **THE WAY TO INDEPENDENCE: THE POLITICAL EXPERIENCE OF LITHUANIA AND UKRAINE IN THE LATE 1980'S - EARLY 1990'S**

### **Summary**

Based on a comparative analysis, the article examines the political processes of gaining state independence in Lithuania and Ukraine, which began in the course of reforms of “perestroika” in the late 1980’s. The impetus for the awakening of civil position and national revival in Lithuania was the publication of secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which confirmed the fact of Soviet occupation of the Baltic States. The “Baltic Way” was an example of mass nonviolent resistance to the communist regime. Following this example, the population of Ukraine organized the “Living Chain”, which became a symbol of Ukraine’s unity and its desire for independence. Separation from the totalitarian communist ideology was the key to

active state processes in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Lithuania was the first of the union republics to fight for secession from the USSR, setting an example for Ukraine in the struggle for statehood.

**Keywords:** *Lithuania, Ukraine, Sąjūdis, the Movement, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the living chain, independence.*