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ЛЕМКІВСЬКА ЕМІГРАЦІЯ МІЖВОЄННОГО ЧАСУ У ДЗЕРКАЛІ «НАШОГО ЛЕМКА»

Анотація. *Мета* дослідження полягає у з'ясуванні особливостей висвітлення лемківської еміграції газетою «Наш лемко». У статті використано такі **методи та підходи**, як систематичний, порівняльний і критичний аналіз джерельної бази, представленої великими текстовими масивами. Здійснити коректну інтерпретацію різножанрової газетної інформації уможливило застосування методики контент-аналізу. **Наукова новизна** статті полягає у спробі комплексного аналізу еміграційного дискурсу газети «Наш лемко». **Висновки.** Як показало проведене дослідження, переселенська тематика була однією з домінуючих на шпальтах «Нашого лемка». Таку популярність зумовило першопланове місце еміграції й емігранта у житті русинської спільноти: можливість добрих заробітків у чужому краю відкривали перспективу в нерідко злиденних життєвих обставинах, а сам заробітчанин зазвичай був чи не останньою надією для виснаженого хронічними негараздами односельця. З огляду на це найбільше газета писала про причини та напрямки еміграції, а також висвітлювала життя лемківської діаспори в США, Канаді, Бразилії, Уругваї, Перу та ін. Особливо докладною була інформація

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про громадське і культурно-освітнє життя закордонних русинів: побудовані культурні установи, проведені концерти та виставки, організовані радіопередачі. Втім, у короткому часі еміграція як засіб економічної модернізації перетворилася на самоціль, ставши головною загрозою лемківській екзистенції на рідних землях. Тож вповні виправдано «Наш лемко» ініціював протиеміграційні настрої: замість пошуку нових «обіцяних» земель він закликав до їх побудови в рідних горах. Разом із прийняттям більшістю тогочасних країн протекціоністських законів, ця агітація помітно пригальмувала переселенські процеси. Як відомо, це не вберегло Лемківщину від винародовлення, адже переможці у Другій світовій війні визначили їй зовсім іншу долю.

Ключові слова: «Наш лемко»; українська еміграція; Друга Річ Посполита; культурно-просвітницька діяльність; господарське життя.

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LEMKO EMIGRATION DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD AS REFLECTED BY "NASH LEMKO"

Summary. *The purpose of the study is to find out the peculiarities of the coverage of Lemko emigration by the newspaper "Nash Lemko". The article uses the following **methods and approaches:** systematic, comparative and critical analysis of the source base represented by large text arrays. The application of the content analysis method made it possible to carry out the correct interpretation of various genres of*

newspaper information. **The scientific novelty** of the article is a comprehensive analysis of the emigration discourse of the newspaper "Nash Lemko". **Conclusions.** According to the study, the emigration theme was one of the dominant ones on the pages of "Nash Lemko". Such popularity was caused by the importance of emigration in the life of the Ruthenian community: the possibility of earning more money in a foreign land opened up prospects to change miserable life circumstances. Lemkos abroad were usually almost the last hope for exhausted by poverty fellow villagers. Therefore, the newspaper wrote mostly about the causes and destinations of emigration, as well as covered the life of the Lemko diaspora in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Uruguay, Peru and others. The newspaper provided detailed information about the social and cultural-educational life of foreign Ruthenians: cultural institutions, concerts, exhibitions and radio programs. However, in a short time, emigration as a means of economic modernization became the means for leaving the country completely, transforming into the main threat to Lemko's existence in their native lands. Therefore, "Nash Lemko" justifiably initiated anti-emigration sentiments: instead of searching for new "promised" lands, it called for their creation in their native mountains. Along with the adoption of protectionist laws by most countries at the time, this agitation significantly slowed down resettlement processes. This did not save Lemkivshchyna from denationalization because the winners of World War II determined its fate in a completely different way.

Key words: "Nash Lemko"; Ukrainian emigration; the Second Polish Republic; cultural and educational activities; economic life.

The statement of the problem. During the interwar period the problem of mass emigration was the most acute for the Second Polish Republic. It was caused by a significant agrarian overpopulation, which was especially dire in the Ukrainian voivodships. Therefore, emigration issue has been in the focus of many studies by historians, demographers and sociologists for a long time. They convincingly proved that Polish government kept emigration processes under special control, seeing them as almost the only way to reduce the surplus labour force, revive the country's economy, and gradually change the ethnic composition of Ukrainian territories in favour of Polish population.

At the same time, the regional aspect of Warsaw's emigration policy was almost completely overlooked by researchers. The reason for this is the lack of attention to the diverse local periodicals deposited

in few library collections. Instead, as we will try to show below on the example of "Nash Lemko", the study of emigration processes on the basis of periodicals in interwar Poland will make it possible to cover hitherto unnoticed topics. In particular, it is a question of nuanced character and intensity of emigration processes considering climatic and natural features of Lemkivshchyna. The problems of Ruthenian adaptation to new conditions, as well as the cultural and social life established by them in new places of residence, are also of considerable interest. It is interesting to analyse the purely Ruthenian view of the problem of emigration, which can be implemented only by studying the regional press. After all, Lemko newspapers, which were usually published by representatives of the Ruthenian intelligentsia, conducted an active epistolary dialogue with their readers, recording on the pages of edited newspapers the most significant problems of the community.

Analysis of previous research. Among the most significant works of recent decades we would like to mention the works of Polish researchers Anna Rechyńska, Edward Kolodej, Halyna Yanovska and their Ukrainian colleagues Stepan Makarchuk and Volodymyr Troshchynsky. Stepan Kacharaba devoted a monographic study to the problem of Ukrainian emigration from the western Ukrainian lands (Karachaba, 2003). Several of our publications are devoted to the phenomenon of the newspaper "Nash Lemko" as well (Nakonechnyi, 2019).

The purpose of the article is to find out the peculiarities of the coverage of Lemko emigration by the newspaper "Nash Lemko".

The statement of the main material. While contemplating about the reasons for emigration, Lemko publicists unanimously pointed out the scarcity of land and a natural desire to earn more in countries with higher wages. At the same time, the reasons were marked by purely Ruthenian specificity, which consisted in the rapid fragmentation of already small terrains and difficult agrarian conditions of poor mountainous soil. This circumstance was quite a popular reason for complaints on the pages of periodicals. The authors of the articles used numerous examples – in artistic, journalistic and essay forms – to show the perniciousness of land fragmentation in large Lemko families. The traditional peasant culture idealized the image of the landowner, which resulted in the constant division of usually small farms and neglect of opportunities for cooperation. As a result, most Ruthenian families barely survived, encouraging their children to seek sources of income

outside the usual circle of rural occupations. And since the Lemko territories were surrounded by mostly depressed economically regions, the only prospect for earning money was to go to foreign countries. Lemko writer O. Kostarevych described this situation as follows: "You [Lemkivshchyna] sent half of your sons overseas to seek their destiny, because life became difficult" (Kostarevych, 1934, p. 3).

Many Lemko newspapers also blamed poor soils and the harsh conditions of land cultivation in mountainous areas with a capricious climate. These troubles, which became chronic companions of Lemko life, gave rise to emigration sentiment in the Ruthenian environment immediately after the demolition of personal dependence of the peasants in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Therefore, because of the above-mentioned natural conditions, Lemkos were the first to initiate emigration processes among Ukrainians, paving the way for their brothers from Galicia, Volhynia and Transcarpathia. At first, it was seasonal work in other regions of the Habsburg Empire, and longer trips to richer European countries later. Finally, the Ruthenians discovered the countries of the other hemisphere as they favoured working conditions in the United States and Canada the most. Lemko newspapers with a certain complacency unanimously called the Ruthenians to be the first Eastern Slavs to establish settlements on American soil. Describing the emigration wanderings of the Ruthenians, "Nash Lemko" noted: "An unenviable fate told us to say goodbye to our native lands and go to distant lands to see a better life. So, our brothers travelled far across the sea to the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, and others to France, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere" ("Do bratv na chuzhyni", 1934, p. 5).

According to "Nash Lemko", during the second half of the XIX – early XX centuries half of the Lemko subethnic group left native lands. The effect of these first great waves of emigration for the Lemko region was invaluable. First of all, the emigrants managed to save their fellow villagers at home not only from extreme impoverishment, but from starvation as well. Another significant effect was the reduction of social tensions in the countryside and suspension of land fragmentation. Finally, Lemko newspapers emphasised the modernising effects of emigration on the Lemko village, as the emigrants often returned with new ideas, technologies and land cultivation practices. All Lemko publications, regardless of ideological orientations, were grateful and

appreciative to their emigrants. Thus, "Nash Lemko" wrote: "We [...] highly value our well-established Lemko emigration" ("Do Vas, Brattia Lemky", 1934, p. 4).

Regarding the positive effect of the emigration, the Ruthenians in 1920s and 1930s suffered from a true despair, when the whole world was engulfed in an unprecedented economic crisis. One of its consequences was the introduction of anti-immigration laws in many countries, designed to limit the influx of migrants, giving work to their own citizens. Moreover, some countries (e.g. France) began to forcibly evict unwanted emigrants, many of whom were Lemkos. Those emigrants who were lucky enough to stay, were mostly unable to help their small homeland due to the scarcity of earnings. The effect was immediately felt by their relatives in the economically devastated Poland.

In these circumstances, Lemko periodicals acted as guide for their readers who were looking for a better life abroad. Newspapers provided variety of information about the conditions of emigration, the cost of travel and its logistics, possible dangers and more. In addition, newspapers warned against various fraudsters that profited from Lemko's misfortune and lured the last funds from gullible peasants, promising them better conditions elsewhere. The articles with headlines like "Away from the Deceiver" or "Voice of Caution" appeared rather often at that time.

Lemko newspaper editors searched for new areas of emigration for their readers. They considered this problem to be one of the top priorities for the Polish state: "The number of unemployed peasants in villages is growing in a frightening way" ("Bezrobotny na seli", 1935, p. 1). "Nash Lemko" was in search of new emigration directions that would satisfy the interests of the Ruthenians: the newspaper often offered to go for seasonal work to Volyn and Podillya ("Ne emihruite do Slavonii!", 1934, p. 4).

In covering the life of the Lemko diaspora, "Nash Lemko" accurately recorded the settlement of the Lemkos in many countries of the world and urged to nurture native culture there as much as possible. Newspapers mostly reported about numerous American and Canadian settlements, emphasising with undisguised pride that "our Lemkos are the oldest Ukrainian emigrants in America". Newspapers even introduced independent thematic sections on the life of Ruthenians in North

America. It is important to mention that these columns were written by Lemko correspondents in exile, thus, the reader received first-hand information. In this way, the contributors could form a fairly complete picture of the richness of the cultural and social life of their fellows in the largest communities in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Winnipeg, Montreal, Toronto, and others.

Alongside with the mentioned countries, newspapers told about Lemko settlements in the South American countries – Brazil, Peru and Paraguay. The newspapers also published about the emigrants in the Old World, mainly in France, Germany, Britain, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, and Yugoslavia. Sometimes they published about distant Manchuria (Green Wedge) and Australia, which demonstrated the scale of Lemko's emigration. With such a scattering of the Lemko community around the globe, "Nash Lemko" even introduced the rubrics "Ukrainian life around the world" and "Ukrainian life in both hemispheres" that reported about the Ruthenian diaspora.

Lemko publicists unanimously praised the uniqueness of the adaptive abilities of the Ruthenians. While somewhat romanticising this trait, one of the Ruthenian publicists wrote: "Wherever our brother Lemko is, he gets used to all circumstances very quickly. [...] Lemko becomes a famous farmer during his hard work in Germany, Ugra and France. Canadians are fascinated by the entrepreneurship of our brothers, who are setting an example for them. Lemko is never afraid of a difficult task – once he faces it, his hands are already doing it. His mind works quickly. He goes underground to mine the American coal while singing, joyfully cries out at the forest works in Canada, wanders in the Brazilian wilds, fondly feeds cattle among the lush Argentine steppes. He does not dawdle. That is why he finds friends among strangers, earns their praises and gets a decent pay" ("Ukrainci lemky", 1935, p. 2). We deliberately provided a longer quote to show what traits of their character the Lemko emigrants considered the most needed in the labour market.

Such a persistent and proactive attitude to work gave noticeable results in a short time. Lemko newspapers willingly informed their readers about the cultural achievements of emigrants abroad: cultural institutions were built, concerts and performances were held, radio programs were organized, and so on. This news was often illustrated by photographs of cultural and educational centres and Lemko activists.

Lemko newspapers provided their readers with information about the institutionalization of Ukrainian life in exile. In particular, they fully covered the work of the First Congress of Lemkos, which took place in New York in August 1935. The most notable achievement of this forum was the creation of the "Lemko Defence Organization" ("Zizd lemktiv", 1935, p. 5). Such social maturity of the Lemkos was gradually turning the Ruthenian community into a prominent actor on the socio-political scene in the United States and Canada. According to the Lemko newspaper, representatives of local elites increasingly cooperated with the leaders of the Ruthenian movement to win the vote.

Along with the successes, Lemko's publications did not hide the difficulties of emigration life. It was pointed out that the most difficult thing for every immigrant was to lose touch with their homeland. Therefore, the Lviv newspaper served as a mediator between emigrants and their small homeland: "There is a spiritual connection between emigrants and the native land. In order for that connection to remain, «Nash Lemko» steps in to strengthen it. Lemko's emigration is a living part of our native lands" ("Do brativ na chuzhyni", 1934, p. 5). Thus, newspapers provided cultural updates for compatriots abroad. These included small works of art and journalistic articles, as well as numerous illustrations of outstanding natural and cultural monuments of the Lemko region.

The biggest problem, that was rooted in the emigration itself, was the significant atomization of the Lemkos abroad. Daily problems made it difficult to realize the need for national unity. Ideological contradictions, the roots of which dated back to the nineteenth century, came between different groups as well. However, the young generation of Lemkos in the 1920s and 1930s gradually overcame parental stereotypes, emphasising the need for solidarity to achieve the greatest possible results ("Oi, ne bude tak dobre", 1934, p. 3). These consolidation efforts were supported by the newspaper under research, trying to unite the Lemkos abroad with an understanding of emigration's mission. The main point of the mission was to assist everyone in their region, primarily financially, to help Lemkos develop their culture. The newspaper was constantly demonstrating the significance of the unity of the Lemko world: "The belief that our Brothers overseas do not forget the good of the native lands overcomes all difficulties" ("Zbirna zhertva", 1936, p. 7).

Along with the above-mentioned well-deserved appreciation, Ruthenian publicists noted the considerable threats posed by the long-term uninterrupted outflow of the most active population from Lemkivshchyna. Thus, even in the first letters from abroad, Ruthenian publicists saw those disturbing moments that later became a real threat to the very existence of the people. The initial departures from native lands had the sole purpose of earning money. The Lemkos emigrated in the hope of good earnings, which, upon return, were to intensify the traditional agriculture. However, the estimated length of staying abroad increased, and the workers themselves, feeling the benefits of the new life situation, were in no hurry to return to their homes. They saw a certain justification for themselves in the constant funding their relatives in the homeland. Those, in turn, quickly became accustomed to constant cash subsidies, replacing the activist attitude to life with consumer ones. Thus, a vicious circle was formed: the emigrants could not return because everyone was constantly waiting for their help at home, and their compatriots in Lemkivshchyna did not see the point in constant exhausting work, because it was possible to ask for new help and live exclusively from it.

This problem became even more acute in the post-war years, as the economic crisis significantly reduced the amount of financial help from abroad. Thus, once again, the most entrepreneurial and active part of the Lemkos, instead of looking for opportunities to improve their lives on the spot, chose the emigration route paved by previous generations. Unlike the first waves, this time it was obvious that global economic crisis and the need to settle in new lands forced the Ruthenian workers to leave their homeland for a long time and maybe forever. This, according to the Lemko newspaper, energetically weakened the Lemko region, making it an easy prey for colonisation by other peoples. "Nash Lemko" warned: "Mass emigration of Lemkos [...] would greatly harm our Lemko region. The most mobile, brave, capable and smart boys and girls would leave our land. The population of Lemkivshchyna would be very thin, and in the meantime, we would be very weak" ("Oi, ne bude tak dobre", 1934, p. 3).

Therefore, the Lemko newspaper launched a powerful anti-immigration propaganda campaign. First of all, it emphasized the need for conscious changes, this included the rejection of the established stereotype of the inevitability of the emigration. "Nash Lemko" actively

fought against another stereotypical belief in the exceptional unsuitability of Lemko lands for productive agricultural work. It was rightly emphasized that mastering the latest land cultivation techniques should eliminate this problem in general. Thus, the peasants must be actively engaged in education. "Nash Lemko" has repeatedly convinced its readers: "The Germans also have bad lands, in Switzerland there are even higher mountains than ours, in Finland they have only stones and swamps, but thanks to science people there do not suffer as we do" ("Vsiudy dobre", 1934, p. 4).

The Ruthenian publicists concentrated their efforts on instilling in the Lemkos an activist attitude to life and returning them the faith undermined by troubles. Many publications have pointed out that the energy and endurance that Lemkos usually demonstrate in the colonies are astonishing, but they are also capable of miraculously transforming their native mountains. Therefore, there is no need to look for the better place elsewhere, it is necessary to simply become the initiative and clever owner of their native territories. As the Lemko newspaper emphasises, the whole matter of emigration, should not be considered as the most important in people's lives, it cannot be perceived as something the whole Lemkivshchyna will perish without. By the same token, even finding new territories to settle will not be able to significantly improve the difficult situation in the countryside. "Nash Lemko", trying to convince its reader, asserted that "only through great work, consolidation, community of aspirations [...] we will discover America, the promised land, here, on our lands" ((-vych), 1935, p. 7).

Conclusions. According to the study, the emigration theme was one of the dominant ones on the pages of "Nash Lemko". Such popularity was caused by the importance of emigration in the life of the Ruthenian community: the possibility of earning more money in a foreign land opened up prospects to change miserable life circumstances. Those Lemkos abroad were almost the last hope for exhausted by poverty fellow villagers. However, in a short time, emigration as a means of economic modernization became the means for leaving the country completely, transforming into the main threat to Lemko's existence in their native lands. Therefore, "Nash Lemko" justifiably initiated anti-emigration sentiments: instead of searching for new "promised" lands, it called for their creation in their native mountains. Along with the adoption of protectionist laws by most countries at the time,

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