POLISH TEACHERS IN EASTERN GALICIA UNDER THE NAZI OCCUPATION (1941 – 1944)

The aim of the research is to analyze the social situation of Polish teachers in Eastern Galicia during the Nazi occupation (1941 – 1944). The research methodology is based on the principles of historicism, system-formation, scientific character, verification, the author’s objectivity, moderated narrative constructivism, and the use of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, generalization) and specially-historical (historical-genetic, historical-typological, historical-systemic, etc.) methods. The scientific novelty. The number of Polish teachers, their social and financial situation in Eastern Galicia during the years of Nazi occupation is being explored for the first time in this article. Conclusions. Thus, the number of Polish teachers in Eastern Galicia was inferior to the Ukrainian ones, however, some time even increased quantitatively, reaching peak numbers in late 1942. Subsequently, due to the closure of schools and difficult material conditions, its number decreased. The financial situation of the teacher was extremely unsatisfactory – his salary varied within 200 zł. that by that time, in the conditions of inflation, high cost and curtailment of trade, was absolutely insufficient to provide even basic human needs in food, clothing and housing. Despite difficult economic and political circumstances, Polish teachers took an active part in the activities of the Polish underground (in the system of «secret training»), the struggle against the Nazi regime, in particular saving the Galician Jews from genocide.

Key words: Polish teachers, Eastern Galicia, Nazi occupation, social status, «secret training», salvation of Jews.
Problem statement. The study of the position of the Polish population in Eastern Galicia during the years of German invasion requires the analysis of not only social strata (e.g. the intellectual class), but also of socio-professional groups, teachers in particular. It should be noted that, unlike their colleagues from the Polish lands, which were occupied by German troops in September 1939, the Polish teachers of Eastern Galicia were first influenced by Soviet educational, social, economic reforms, and also repressions in 1939 – 1941. Therefore, from the middle of 1941 they had to adapt to the Nazi «new order».

Analysis of the research. Considerable attention is paid to the history of the Polish school period of Nazi occupation by Polish scientists, in particular M. Walczak (Walczak, 1974), G. Hryciuk (Hryciuk, 1994), J. Krasuski (Krasuski, 1977), E. Król (Król, 1979), P. Majewski (Majewski, 2005), P. Matusak (Matusak, 1997), J. Świeboda (Świeboda, 1976) et al. In their works, the situation of Polish teaching during World War II is often considered in general – within the limits of the description of the entire education system in occupied Poland, without proper attention to the conditions of Eastern Galicia. Some aspects of the problem are disclosed in the works of the Ukrainian researchers N. Antoniuk (Antoniuk, 1997), M. Haliv (Haliv, 2010), H. Stefaniuk (Stefaniuk, 2004) et al. They focused on Ukrainian school and, accordingly, Ukrainian teaching. Therefore, the social situation of the Polish teachers in Eastern Galicia during the Nazi occupation was not the subject of a separate study.
The aim of the article is to analyze the social situation of Polish teachers in Eastern Galicia during the Nazi occupation (1941 – 1944).

The research methodology is based on the principles of historicism, system-formation, scientific character, verification, the author’s objectivity, moderated narrative constructivism, and the use of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, generalization) and specially-historical (historical-genetic, historical-typological, historical-systemic, etc.)

Presentation of the main material. Eastern Galicia was captured by German troops from 22 June to mid-July 1941. Despite the desire of Ukrainian political forces (first of all OUN – Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) to form their own state on these lands, the German government, headed by A. Hitler, decided to attach the mentioned territory to the General Province of Krakow (hereinafter – GP), which happened on August 1, 1941. On the territory of Eastern Galicia a separate district of «Galicia», which was divided into counties and the German civil administration (in particular, in the field of education) were formed. The latter determined the beginning of the first academic year on October 1, 1941 in the conditions of the German «new order» and restored the former Polish structure of the three-stage primary (general) schooling, which operated in the rest of the GP territory (Naperedodni, 1941: 1).

Local teachers were subject to the requirements of the GP. The German authorities needed a loyal teacher first of all. Anyone, who wished to remain a teacher or obtain a teaching position, was required to sign the oath: «I swear to the führer of the German Reich and the people, Adolf Hitler, to be faithful and obedient, to abide by the laws and faithfully perform my official duty, so help me God» (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 90. S. 86).

The problem of teaching staff at that time was quite acute. In the autumn of 1941 nearly 4,000 primary schools were opened in the district of «Galicia». For the education of children 7 thousand teachers were required at once. However, only about 5 thousand of them started to work. Such state, as noted by N. Antoniuk, was caused by the number of factors. First of all by the fact, that in Soviet times the school authorities filled teachers’ positions with people of different professions without pedagogical education, partly teachers from the Eastern lands, and the rest of the so-called «teachers» were prepared at short-term courses. The German school authorities did not recognize the pedagogical qualifications of such teachers. But, to open public schools, it is allowed to take anyone who graduated from at least the Polish gymnasium with the so-called «Mala matura» (six-classes gymnasium of the ancient type, the eighth class of the Soviet secondary school and more) or those who have completed three years of teachers’ training college (Teachers’ Seminary). All of them were considered as «accessory teachers» (Antoniuk, 1997: 41).

In the Galician district three groups of primary schools on the national basis were formed: Ukrainian, Polish and German. Jewish education ceased to exist because of the Nazi policy of «solving the Jewish question». Secondary education in Eastern Galicia was represented by ten Ukrainian high schools, which were maintained by the state (GP) and the public. The Polish population of the Galician district remained without secondary schools (Antoniuk, 1997: 43).

On October 1941 there were 720 Polish primary schools of different levels in district «Galicia». 102 606 students studied and 2079 teachers worked there (Król, 1979: 139). Therefore, there were 49 students per teacher in average. And if to consider that school attendance was not high (in Polish schools of Eastern Galicia 1941/1942 academic year – 78 % (Król, 1979: 139)), in fact, the teacher dealt with a much smaller number of students each day.
In general, such indices were typical for almost every suburb of the district «Galicia». For example, in October 1941 on the territory of Sambir county in 27 Polish schools there worked 109 teachers, they were teaching 5480 students (Shkoly, 1941: 3). Therefore, there were about 50 children per teacher. This state of facts lasted in the county until at least September 1943, where at that time 109 teachers (53 men and 56 women) worked in 28 schools (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 90. S. 59, 81) (the rate of students per 1 teacher has not changed). A similar situation was observed in the county of Stryi, where as of February 1942, 95 teachers taught about 5,000 children in 38 Polish schools, which means that there were 52 students per teacher (Narodnie shkilnytstvo, 1942: 3). The number of teachers in the Polish schools of Drohobych county remained significant. For example, on November 17, 1941 in 27 schools 85 teachers worked (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 3. S. 16–17). During the first academic year there was an increase in the teaching staff of Polish schools: on July 22, 1942 101 teachers worked there, teaching 4462 students (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 90. S. 91). Thus, there were 44 students per teacher.

We should note that in the Galician district the number of students per teacher in Polish schools was lower than in other regions of GP. So, at the end of 1942 in Polish primary schools of Radomsky, Warsaw, Krakow and Lublin districts this ratio made approximately 74 to one. This condition was associated with a significant decrease in the number of Polish teachers due to dismissals and targeted repressions. For example, in 1941/42 academic year 624 teachers were dismissed from the Polish primary schools of the Krakow district and 38 teachers were arrested (Król, 1979: 115, 134).

At the beginning of the next academic year (1942/1943) the number of Polish schools in the Galician district increased to 868, students – to 119 790, and teachers – to 2550 (Król, 1979: 139). As you can see the increase in the number of Polish teachers in primary schools in Eastern Galicia occurred even despite the dismissal of 442 Polish teachers from work and the arrest of five of them in 1941/1942 academic year (Król, 1979: 134). This rapid filling of teacher vacancies is probably due to the large number of unemployed Polish teachers, especially secondary school teachers, who have lost their jobs because of the prohibition by the Hitler authorities to open Polish gymnasiums and seminaries in the Galician district.

Some of the Polish teachers, especially those in rural schools, were involved in the training of students of the so-called compulsory one-or two-year agricultural schools. As of December 1942, in the Galician district, there were 175 Polish compulsory agricultural schools, where 760 teachers worked, teaching 10,300 students (Król, 1979: 152).

The German educational authorities, since 1943, gradually reduced the number of Polish schools. In particular, in Drohobych county they planned that in 1942/43 academic year, after the closure of the school in Neidorf, 93 teachers will work in Polish primary schools (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 90. S. 91). However, in fact, two schools were closed, and the number of teachers decreased to 87 people: 17 teachers worked at 15 schools of the I degree, 7 – at two schools of the II degree, 63 – at eight schools of the III degree (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 90. S. 87).

On March 27, 1943, 86 teachers worked in the Polish schools of Drohobych county (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 2. S. 51–55), 37 – in schools of Borislav, 22 – in Drohobych, 8 – in the village of Rykhtychi (together with Khatky). There were 4 teachers at school of Medenychi village, 2 teachers per each of Lypovets, Solonsko, Truskavets, 1 teacher per each of Voloshcha-Zady, Pidbuzh, Letnia, Skhidnytsia, Haii-Potik, Stebnyk, Maidan. They all possessed a full teaching qualification, so there weren’t «accessed teachers» in the county.
of Polish schools. Some schools have almost kept their teaching staff until the end of the occupation. For example, as of June 1944, 12 teachers worked in Drohobych school № 4 with the Polish language of education (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 2. S. 142).

We should note that not all teachers of Polish schools were Poles by nationality. In particular, such Ukrainian teachers as Olexander Rabii, Mykhailo Dvorian, Mykola Bairak, Olha Bilas, Mariia Dutsiak, Vasyl Ivenenko worked at three Polish seven-year primary schools of Drohobych (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 3. S. 16–17).

A part of teachers-poles took an active part in the system of «secret training» organized by the Polish underground activity which captured almost all counties of the Galician district, except for county of Zalishchyky, Kosiv, Sniatyn, Horodenka, Tlumach and Zhydachiv (Krasuski, 1977: 200). Considering the repression of the Hestapo, «secret training» in Eastern Galicia experienced a shortage of teaching staff. Yet, according to the Polish historian J. Krasuski, in the Galician district they attracted to the work of secret school «complements» around 260 teachers and 1,500 students in 1941/1942 academic year, 280 teachers and 2000 students in 1942/1943 academic year and 1,000 teachers and 6,000 pupils in 1943/1944 academic year (Krasuski, 1977: 202). The system of «secret training» of Polish children provided them with primary and secondary education at the level of gymnasium and lyceum. A great amount of teachers worked outside the clandestinely organized educational system, giving lessons to some students at home, and therefore, were not exposed to the danger as if to compare with teachers of secret «complements».

Some Polish teachers also worked in German schools, the development of which was especially taken care of by the occupation authorities. However, in these institutions, Polish teachers were employed only if they received the status of «volksdeutsch». In particular, two teachers: Carolina Vilinska and Wilhelmina Trylovska worked at the German school of Boryslav. They both alternately headed the school, until the autumn of 1942, when a German teacher from Stanislaw Hugo Heinz took the post of the head of the institution. By the way, according to the documents of Drohobych «schulamt» (school administration) on May 4, 1943, both teachers were notable for their pedagogical skills (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 90. S. 94).

To characterize the social status of Polish teachers in this period we should disclose its material support. The latter consisted of remuneration (money and food cards), provision of teachers with land plots (in villages) and apartments (in villages and cities), food and monetary assistance from the Polish benefits committees.

In determining wages, the German authorities primarily focused on the amount of wages that a particular teacher received by August 31, 1939. Considering this, Polish teachers were in a slightly better position than the Ukrainian ones, who in interwar Poland often could not even find a job, or worked at small rural schools, receiving low wages. On this occasion, the newspaper «Stryiski Visti» (February 19, 1942) wrote: «Also under the review of the size of payments Polish teachers have better position than the Ukrainian ones, because during the Poland times Ukrainian teachers were offended, and the German authorities recognize the payments up to 31.8.39 year» (Narodnie shkilnytstvo, 1942: 3). Thus, pre-war wages of public school teachers («etatovi» – staff teachers and «provizorychni» – teacher-trainees) according to position categories by the so-called system PBO (Polnische Besoldungordnung – Polish rules paid) were restored. According to it, teachers belonging to the lowest, XI-th group, could receive 100 zł. monthly., to the XI-th group – 170 zł., in the X-th group – 200 zł., to the IX-th group – 255 zł., to the VIII-th group – 315 zł., to the VII-th group – 380 zł., to the VI-th group – 500 zł. Belonging to the highest, V-th group, gave the right to receive
770 zł., but in all Galician district there weren’t officials of such group even among teachers-poles (Visnyk, 1943: 38; Król, 1979: 156–157). In district «Galicia» as of June 1942 among 2,149 teachers-poles to the V-th group belonged – 0, to the VI-th – 99, to the VII-th – 503, to the VIII-th – 391, to the IX-th – 700, to the X-th – 456, to the XI-th and the XII-th – 0 people (Król, 1979: 157). The PBO scale gave the right to the leaders of the folk schools of the II degree to apply for a monthly surcharge of 50 zł., heads of schools of the III degree – 70 zł. It also provided for «applications» to pay for the apartment – from 15 zł. 74 gr. up to 72 zł. per month (depending on the length of service, place of work and marital status of course) (Visnyk, 1943: 38–39).

Since many young teachers have not had experience in schools of interwar Poland (or had little one), by the German authorities was introduced the tarification scale – TO-I (Tarifordnung). It included six position groups. For example, the V-th group included teachers aged 19-40 years with education at the level of the teacher’s seminary, three years of teaching experience, one year of which was during the existence of Poland. This enabled them, depending on their age and the type of school in which they worked, to receive 229 – 315 zł. (Visnyk, 1943: 38).

In general, teachers received an average of 200 zł. So, 8 – 10 November 1941 teachers of Sambir county were paid for 200 zł. royalty-free salaries (almost 100 thousand zł. for all) (Persha platnia, 1941: 4). For comparison, the school inspectors earned 300 – 500 zł., teachers of German schools – 1000 zł., and the employees of school administration (including school counsellors) – 2000 zł. per month (Król, 1979: 156).

An interesting document came till our time – a statement on the remuneration of teachers of Polish schools in Drohobych county on November 17, 1941, the vast majority of teachers received salaries from 170 to 380 zł., only Mykola Bayrak from Drohobych earned 500 zł. So, 8 teachers received 170 zł., in particular, Bronisława Budziuliak, Joseph Budziuliak (Haii Vyzhni), Cornelia Dolska (Dobrohostiv), Mariia Dutsiak (Ulychne), Stephania Popel (Nahuievychi), Antonina Pototska (Lypovets). 18 teachers received the salaries of 380 zł., in particular Leokadiia Vinnytska (Luzhok Dolishnyi), Joseph Polianskyi (Boryslav), Honorata Vynnytska (Nahuievychi), Mykhailo Kovaliv (Bronytsia), Helena Korlatovych (Drohobych), etc. They were often paid for 200, 255, 315 zł. (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 3. S. 16–17). As of March 27, 1943, among 86 teachers of Polish schools of Drohobych county, only three belonged to the scale of TO-I (V-th group), while others received salaries under the system of PBO (the X-th group – 12, the IX-th – 23, the VIII-th – 12, the VII-th – 27, the VI-th – 9, the V-th – 0 people) (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 2. S. 51–54). Most, therefore, were classified as X-VIII-th groups, which made it possible to receive the same 200 – 315 zł.

The remuneration by grocery cards started in late 1941. For Example, in Drohobych it was introduced on December 1, 1941, a new card food system was introduced. Food rations were divided into two categories: basic and additional. The first were received by all employees of the city (including teachers), the second – by persons working in institutions A and B (important enterprises, institutions, governments, etc.). To receive appropriate products (bread, meat, sugar, coffee, etc.) the employed drohobythers had to show the form that certifies that they are registered in Labour Government (Hladylovych, 1941: 4; Oholoshennia, 1942: 4). Therefore, in December 1941, the residents of the city received the main food aisle, which consisted of 6 kg of bread, 800 grams of sugar, 400 grams of flour, 400 grams of meat and 80 grams of coffee (or coffee substitute) per person (Vydacha, 1941: 1). Gradually, the size of food rations decreased.
In rural areas, each teacher received an allotment of land, mainly from the piece of land that was assigned to school. So that the teacher could use the school grounds, he needed the permission of the German Land inspection of a particular neighbourhood. For example, the officials of Drohobych «schulamt» in July 1942 addressed to the Land Office in Drohobych with the request to allow teachers to use the garden and the field near the schools. Since there was no reaction, in September 1942 the second appeal was filed, to which 92 requests from teachers (the Ukrainians and the Poles) for land allotment were attached. However, only a small part of the proposals was taken into account (DALO. F. R-1926. D. 1. C. 90. S. 87). Since Polish teachers mostly held positions in urban schools, land plots were available only to their rural counterparts. However, this did not save them from poverty.

The real value of teachers’ ‘earnings», which were paid late and incomplete, systematically decreased. Increased inflation, together with the violation of the exchange «city-village» led to a sharp increase in prices, especially for the essentials. Since the system of card provision was not sufficient, and the German authorities constantly rejected requests for the additional portion of products, teachers were forced to resort to the services of the black market (Król, 1979: 158).

In such difficult conditions, many Polish teachers of Eastern Galicia took part in the activities of the Polish underground, as well as the salvation of the Jews from the Nazi genocide. Among them are teachers Antoniy Mitronga, Danuta Bazarnik, Yanina Levandovska (Lviv), Valeria Dubis (Boryslav), Yatsentii Miklashevskyi (Brody), Sofia Bednarska (Horodok), Mariia Strutynska (Drohobych), Vanda Chabay (Kolomyia), Iryna Tsepinska (Lelekhivka, Yavoriv county), Bronislava Hanska (Pidhaitsi), Leopold Piaseckyi (Khodoriv) (Pravednyky, 2016: 161, 165–166, 168, 171, 175, 179–180, 186, 213). Almost all of them survived the occupation times, with the exception of M. Strutynska, who in early 1944 was executed by the Nazis for harbouring the Jews (Budzyński, 2005: 215).

The conclusions. Thus, the number of Polish teachers in Eastern Galicia was inferior to the Ukrainian ones, however, some time even increased quantitatively, reaching peak numbers in late 1942. Subsequently, due to the closure of schools and difficult material conditions, its number decreased. The financial situation of the teacher was extremely unsatisfactory – his salary varied within 200 zł. that by that time, in the conditions of inflation, high cost and curtailment of trade, was absolutely insufficient to provide even basic human needs in food, clothing and housing. Despite difficult economic and political circumstances, Polish teachers took an active part in the activities of the Polish underground (in the system of «secret trainings»), the struggle against the Nazi regime, in particular saving the Galician Jews from genocide.

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