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MYTHOLOGEMES “HERO”, “ENEMY”, “VICTIM” IN THE CONTEXT OF UKRAINIAN-POLISH HISTORY OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20th CENTURY

Abstract. *The purpose of the study* consists in understanding of the mythologemes “hero”, “enemy”, “victim” functioning in the context of the Ukrainian-Polish history of the first half of the 20th century. The principles of objectivity and historicism are **the methodological basis**. To achieve the goal and objectives there have been used general scientific (analysis, synthesis, analysis) and special historical (historiographical, terminological, textological analyses, comparative and historical) methods. **The scientific novelty** consists in outlining of formation, content mechanisms of the mythologemes “hero”, “enemy”, “victims” based on the experience of the Ukrainian-Polish history of the first half of the 20th century, determining historians’ influence of both countries on these processes. **The Conclusion.** Based on the results of the research, we can state that the Ukrainian-Polish relations with their centuries-long common history are a vivid example of stereotyped ideas and mythologemes compilation that originated as early as the 10th – 13th centuries, continued to form and influence the Ukrainian and Polish peoples’ consciousness in the 19th century, consolidated and replenished in the 20th century. Since World War I, due to the national liberation struggle of both peoples, the experience of existence within the Second Republic, and ending with the events of World War II, the mythologemes “hero”, “enemy” or “victim” acquired a new content. At the same time, the evaluative judgment and classification of historical figures and events depends, first of all, on political views. Politicians, historians, artists of both states supported negative historical myths, which are deeply rooted in the national consciousness, played a significant role in the national historical consciousness formation of the Ukrainians and the Poles. Even today, overcoming the national stereotypes and mythologemes that function in both societies is a difficult task for historians and intellectuals.

Key words: Ukraine, Poland, mythologeme, “hero”, “enemy”, “victim”, World War I, World War II, Symon Petliura, Stepan Bandera.

МІФОЛОГЕМИ “ГЕРОЯ”, “ВОРОГА”, “ЖЕРТВИ” У КОНТЕКСТІ УКРАЇНСЬКО-ПОЛЬСЬКОЇ ІСТОРІЇ ПЕРШОЇ ПОЛОВИНИ ХХ ст.

Abstract. *The purpose of the study* полягає в осмисленні функціонування міфологем “героя”, “ворога”, “жертви” в контексті українсько-польської історії першої половини ХХ ст. **The methodological basis** є принципи об’єктивності й історизму. Для реалізації поставлених мети і завдань використані загальнонаукові (аналізу, синтезу, узагальнення) та спеціальні історичні (історіографічного, термінологічного, текстологічного аналізу, порівняльно-історичний) методи. **The scientific novelty** визначає окреслення механізмів формування та наповнення міфологем “героя”, “ворога”, “жертви” на досвіді українсько-польської історії першої половини ХХ ст., визначення впливу на ці процеси істориків обох країн. **The Conclusions.** За результатами дослідження можемо ствердити, що українсько-польські відносини з їхньою багатовіковою спільною історією є яскравим прикладом складання стереотипних уявлень та міфологем, які зароджувалися ще в Х – ХІІІ ст., продовжували формуватися та впливати на свідомість українського та польського народів у ХІХ ст. і закріпилися та поповнилися у ХХ ст. Від Першої світової війни, через національно-визвольні змагання обох народів, досвід існування в межах Другої Речіпосполитої та завершивши подіями Другої світової війни, міфологеми “героя”, “ворога” чи “жертви” отримали нове наповнення. Причому оцінне судження та віднесення історичних постатей та подій залежить насамперед від політичних поглядів. Політики, історики, митці обох держав підтримували негативні історичні міфи, які глибоко вкорінені в національну свідомість, відігравали суттєву роль у формуванні національної історичної свідомості українців та поляків. Навіть нині подолання національних стереотипів і міфологем, які функціонують у обох суспільствах, є складним завданням для істориків та інтелектуалів.

Key words: *Україна, Польща, міфологема, “герой”, “ворог”, “жертва”, Перша світова війна, Друга світова війна, Симон Петлюра, Степан Бандера.*

The Problem Statement. History, as a science that studies antiquity, is based on synthesis and analysis of facts. Credibility, objectivity, confirmed by sources, is a fundamental feature of professional historical studies. At the same time, the knowledge produced by scholars is a necessary, but not the only, condition for the creation of historical consciousness. It should be understood that the idea of the past, the “history” we know can be a balance of facts and myth (fiction). Historical myths are a component of national historiography, are included in the mythological system of the people, and are the basis of people’s worldview. According to experts, the main function of mythodesign is the value matrix formation of the past (Marutian). At the intersection, we can consider examples when representatives of historical science are involved in the production, formation and dissemination of historical national myths. After all, the conclusions made by scholars become the basis of political propaganda.

The Analysis of Sources and Research. In the 20th century the issues of mythologising and mythologeme content found themselves in the focus of interests of humanitarianism various directions representatives. These are philosophy of myth (A. Tykholaz), and the issues of the mutual influence of myth and science (V. Budenkova, A. Stavutskyi, V. Komarov, O. Udod), and the general theory of political mythology (M. Holovaty, N. Probiyholova), and mythologizing of political relations (Valentyn Bushanskyi, Yu. Shaihorodskyi). The studies on historical myth (Viktor Brehunencko, Leonid Zashkilniak, Oleksandra Karapuz, Edward Keenan, Jerzy Topolsky, Barbara Shatska) and historical myth design (Marutian, 2019) took their rightful place. Separately, we would like to point out the study on the mythologemes “war” and “hero” (Zubrytska, 2016). Mykola Lytvyn and Liubomyr Khakhula analysed the events of the Ukrainian-Polish history functioning of the first half of the 20th century (Lytvyn & Khakhula: 2019; Lytvyn & Khakhula, 2020), Lyudmila Strilchuk and Oleksandr

Dobrzhanskyi – in the academic and social space (Strilchuk & Dobrzhanskyi, 2021). In this context, the studies of the following scientists are important: I. Hyrych and Yu. Shapoval (Hyrych & Shapoval, 2010), I. Kostiuk (Kostiuk, 2011), O. Ruda (Ruda, 2012), L. Nahorna (Nahorna, 2014), Z. Koval (Koval, 2014), R. Demchuk (Demchuk, 2017), O. Sieverova and O. Bykov (Sieverova & Bykov, 2019), V. Savchuk (Savchuk, 2019), O. Salata and Yu. Kovbasenko (Salata & Kovbasenko, 2019), L. Pidkuimukha (Pidkuimukha, 2019), B. Piętko (Piętko, 2020), R. J. Czarnowski (Czarnowski, 2022).

The Purpose of the Research. The main goal of the research is to understand the functioning of the mythologemes “hero”, “enemy”, “victim” in the context of the Ukrainian-Polish history of the first half of the 20th century and clarifying the peculiarities of their reflection and actualization in national historiographies.

The Results of the Research. J. Frazer stood at the origin of the concept “mythologeme”. José Ortega y Gasset defined this term as follows: “Mythologeme – a concrete and figurative symbolic way of reflecting reality – becomes a kind of formula not only for a human reception of the environment in all its dimensions, but also the formula of a communicative symbolic means of establishing a connection with universal values encoded in myth-making acts, a means of harmonizing a human being and nature, a way of understanding myth as a key to interpretation of other cultural phenomena” (Ortega-i-Hasset, 1994, p. 83).

According to Olena Levchenko: “one of the forms of addressing ideology to society is mythologemes – stories, interpretations, given as life examples or social guidelines. Their connection with mythology is obvious, and this makes mythologemes vulnerable to critical thinking” (Niva, Popovych & Horskyi, 1998, p. 67). It is necessary to point out the remark of Ihor Hyrychy and Yuriy Shapoval about the need to consider a historical myth, mythologemes formation inseparable from the historical and spiritual existence of people. That is why, the researchers insist that the mythologeme is conditioned by national specificity, interpret them as “compressed linguistic ethnocodes, which, in the course of deciphering, go through the process of creative reproduction of embedded cultural information and reconstruct complementary paradigms that reflect and model universal and unique meanings” (Vyshnytska, 2016, p. 52).

In the view of researchers, a historical myth is a national community’s reception of its past, formed and implemented with the use of state mechanisms and/or the participation of political intellectuals. The legal norms adopted by the Republic of Poland are an attempt to legislate the mythologizing of the Ukrainian-Polish history: “whitening” the actions of the Polish side and “blackening” the actions of the Ukrainian side in the first half of the 20th century, attempted to influence the Ukrainian state, to delegitimize and devalue the citizenship of Ukraine and can be used as a legal basis for the further occupation of part of the Ukrainian territory.

In the context of historical myths construction, mythologemes functioning in societies, it is worth mentioning the set of heroes and anti-heroes, which is made according to a certain narrative and which are its important component of national consciousness. Mythological logic does not recognize the possibility of existence of an impersonal, objective cause of event or phenomenon, it requires the personification of ideas, the archetype of “hero”. They are either role models or examples of a negative behaviour that, according to those who share mythology, should be condemned and avoided. As a result, the community develops a certain pattern of ideas about the events of the past and historical characters – positive and negative.

The experience of the Ukrainians and the Poles vividly expresses the thesis that “hero” of one nation can often be an abuser or even an executioner for another. At the same time,

it is precisely from the side of intellectuals that there is an understanding of the mutually exclusive / mutually balanced heroization of the antipodes of the Ukrainian and Polish nations. In particular, Ivan Patryliak says: “Both Poles and Ukrainians have the full right to call those whom they see fit as heroes, regardless of emotions of the other side, political situation or geopolitical considerations” (Patryliak, 2016, p. 26).

We will not be mistaken if we say that the most vivid example of an (anti)hero for the Ukrainians and the Poles is Stepan Bandera in recent history. If in the Ukrainian national narrative he is a hero, a tireless fighter for state independence (although, for the sake of justice, it should be mentioned that, for example, in the textbook “Political History of Ukraine of the 20th Century” Stepan Bandera is mentioned in connection with the split of the OUN and the activation of anti-Polish armed actions (Kudriachenko, Kalinicheva & Kostyria, 2006), then in Polish academic and public discourse it is a symbol of anti-Polish actions, suffering (and in this context, Yaroslav Kaczynski’s resounding statements “Ukraine with Bandera will not enter Europe” are more than logical). Stepan Bandera is a vivid example of when the simplicity of mythologemes creates prerequisites for their transformation and ideologization, which occurs through the formation and functioning of this image in mass culture and mass media. As Bohdan Temirov pointed out, the stereotypical characterization of Stepan Bandera as a “fascist” and “traitor” is exploited, for example, by the Polish authors. The controversial German historian of Polish origin Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe called Edward Pruss “the main Polish nationalist propagandist of anti-Bandera historiography and the creator of a negative stereotype of Bandera” (Rossolinskyi-Libe, 2010). It was he who used such conceptual constructions as “the Bandera Holocaust” or “Banderomakhiiia”, “Bandera people are a defect of history” in his books, which indicates their distance from academic standards. The title of the work of the German researcher “The Life of Stepan Bandera: Terrorism, Fascism, Genocide, Cult” (Rossolinskyi-Libe, 2021) – allows us to assert that he established certain schemes of presentation and dissemination in public discourse of evaluative stamps (“fascism”, “terrorism”, “genocidal nationalism”, etc.). This is the fundamental difference between scientific and popular science or journalistic presentation. The author’s scientific historical work is based on a wide variety of sources, which are the basis of conclusions; in the case of popular science presentations, which are primarily aimed at popularization of a certain idea, a historical thesis is taken, an opinion is formulated, and quotations from authoritative scientific publications or works of authoritative authors are already selected for them. At the same time, until recently, the Polish historians were not inclined to break the established myths and mythologemes about the Ukrainian liberation movement that were often imposed on them and constantly fueled by the Kremlin. The fact-proven cases of burning of the Ukrainian border villages by the Army soldiers and the mass destruction of their inhabitants are interpreted by both experts and society as retaliatory actions.

In the expert environment, there is an understanding of Stepan Bandera’s figure symbolism (Pankiv, 1999) and the distinction between reality and myth (Hordasevych, 2000). The importance of understanding Stepan Bandera in the context of the mythologeme “hero” in the Ukrainian academic space is revealed by the discussions which, for example, Yaroslav Hrytsak’s book “Passion for Bandera” caused. Their sharpness corresponds to the diverse emotions that his name evokes in the citizens of Ukraine. To this day, the agreement / combination / separation of the person / historical facts and myth regarding the leader of the OUN remains relevant.

It should be remembered that in the historical narrative regarding the Ukrainians over the centuries, there were three people who served for national identification (two of them

were active in the 20th century and are related to Poland). Regarding the Ukrainians who resisted colonization, Russian imperial propaganda (tsarist, Bolshevik/Soviet, post-Soviet) formed a kind of terminological triad: “mazepynsi”, “petliurivtsi”, “banderivtsi”. The term “mazepynsi” was applied to the participants and sympathizers of the uprising of Hetman Ivan Mazepa (1709) against the Russian Empire. Another attempt of the Ukrainians to gain independence in 1918 – 1921 gave rise to the stamp “petliurivtsi” – after the name of one of the leaders of the Ukrainian National People’s Republic, Symon Petliura. Banderivtsi appeared in the Soviet propaganda after well-known events of the 1940s. Therefore, in the Ukrainian tradition, there is persistence mythologeme of a fierce struggle for the future of Ukraine. At the same time, it is noticeable that all these three historical personalities performed the function of uniting the Ukrainian nation with difficulty. Thus, the figure of Symon Petliura, in addition to the fact that he needs rehabilitation, is not too integrative, at least in view of rejection by the people of Galicia. After all, according to the Warsaw Pact, the majority of Western Ukrainian lands, including Eastern Galicia, were part of the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, while the territory of Naddnpianshchyna was recognized as the Ukrainian People’s Republic. And almost immediately there were opinions about “betrayal”. Andriy Kokotiukha remarked not by chance: “Historians will not let you lie: Mazepa, Petliura, Bandera were certainly not ideal. On the contrary, these are ambiguous personalities in whom all parties got along. However, it is from these surnames that derived definitions, let’s say, of the Ukrainian Ukrainians” (Kokotiukha, 2021).

It is obvious that the communist authorities contributed a lot to the formation of a negative image of national heroes, which in this way personified the mythologeme “enemy” (in the case of Symon Petliura, Józef Pilsudski, and Stepan Bandera). And as a result, the same personalities became “heroes” in the understanding of some people, and “(anti)heroes” – for the others. At the same time, we will only state that the works formally written by professional historians, dedicated to these historical figures, resembled propaganda rather than scientific research.

As Z. Koval points out, a myth (in particular, a historical one) contains a hyperbolized image of enemy, which is presented as the root/personification of all evil, and the researcher considers this narrative to be an informational and psychological project and an effective historical factor. In this demonization of the enemy, one can trace manipulation of the archetype “alien” and general functioning of the dichotomy “own” – “alien”, which in turn is connected with the myths of the border territories (Chmelnyk & Khakhula, 2022).

The Ukrainian-Polish war of 1918 – 1919 was associated with the destruction of the myth of “one people of the ancient Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth”, because it fully revealed the differences of national projects. More and more often, the Poles began to receipt the Ukrainians as enemies, and the activities of the UVO-OUN and the events of World War II only cemented this, spreading the image of the Ukrainian as a “thug”.

The Ukrainian-Polish history of the first half of the 20th century presented the experience of fighting against a common enemy – it is primarily the Petliura-Pilsudski Pact and the Warsaw Battle in 1920 (another name for which – the “Miracle over the Vistula” in the context of our conversation is more than symptomatic). Modern Polish researchers pay more attention to the positive aspects of the union of 1920, we see a desire to smooth out the contradictions in the relations at that time and somewhat idealize the concept of the Polish-Ukrainian union. At the same time, the conviction prevails in the Ukrainian society that the Warsaw Pact, by and large, only benefited the Poles. They gained an ally to help them defend

their independence; it seems that the Warsaw Pact did not give anything to the Ukrainians, except that for a while the UNR. The current Russian-Ukrainian war actualizes the events of 1920, connecting the events of the 20th and 21st centuries. There is an identification of the struggle of the Poles with the Bolsheviks in 1920 and the Ukrainians with the Russians in 2022; just as today, defending its independence, Ukraine defends Europe against barbarism, so in 1920, side by side, together with the Polish Army, the Ukrainians defended Europe against the Bolshevik threat (Nafecz, 2022, p. 8; Szumiło, 2022, pp. 60–62).

Victimization (related to the spread of mythologeme “victim”) is an important element of domestic national mobilization (unification by suffering) and international politics. Proclaiming oneself as the only victim gives a deceptive conviction in the justice of repentance demands from the “enemy”. It is the stable functioning of the mythologeme “victim” in both Ukrainian and Polish societies that is the basis of historical disagreements and contradictions. Living side by side on the same territory for centuries, striving to build their own statehood, including the same territories within its boundaries, committing violence against each other (let’s not get into useless disputes here about who started it first or who was more to blame), the peoples have more than enough reasons for understanding and unification, and vice versa – for accusations and discord.

The myth of the “defense of Lviv” was a vivid manifestation of mythologeme “victim”. The myth of the “defense of Lviv” (cultivated in the literature and art of interwar Poland and supported in one way or another to this day) is as meaningful as the Battle of Warsaw in 1920 (when the Bolshevik offensive was stopped, Poland’s independence was defended and Europe was saved from the communist regime), and in terms of importance it is not inferior to World War I (Doroshko & Matviienko, 2021, p. 135). The myth of “defense” glorified the battle for Lviv as a symbol of the unification of the Polish state, and the rank of “defenders”, called the Eaglets, raised it to the rank of models of patriotic behaviour for future generations. The emergence of studies about the participation in the defense of Lviv by residents of Wielkopolska (Jarosław Biernaczyk), Czestochowa (Rafał Piotrowski) and the others should be considered as a manifestation and element of this construct. At the same time, the Poles of Lviv, according to this myth, are victims of the Ukrainian aggression who had to defend themselves. “Victim” and “enemy” mythologemes peculiar combination in the context of Lviv events is the vision of the defense of Lviv as the city liberation from the Ukrainians, supported today and by means of publication of documents of that era (Teodorowicz, 2009). In contrast to this, one should consider the reception of the events of the autumn of 1918 as the war of two patriotisms (Klimecki, 2018).

The Ukrainian-Polish confrontation cemented the mythologeme “victim” in the Polish society. This is what the interpretation of the Volyn events serves as such, where the Poles suffered exclusively; it is to this interpretation that the “myth of 100 thousand” victims is subordinated (as the historian Yevhen Misylo formulated aptly); it is related to this that the actions of the Polish units against the Ukrainian population are interpreted exclusively as “retaliatory” actions (this is how they are interpreted by leading experts, such as Grzegorz Motyka). Symbolization with one or another settlement singles out the mythologeme “victim”. Moreover, what interesting is that there are such symbols from both the Polish and Ukrainian sides: in the first case – Pavlivka (Porytsk), Ostrivky and Volia Ostrovetska, Huta Peniatska, in the second case – Pavlokoma and Sahryn. The involvement of historians in the formation of such symbolic places in public consciousness is very vividly illustrated by the example of the work of Leon Popek, who made a lot of efforts to spread the memory of family villages of Ostrivky and Volia Ostrovetska in Liuboml region.

The rootedness and effectiveness of the functioning of mythologeme “victim” in the Polish society is demonstrated by the results of sociological research by IPSOS in February of 2019. As many as 74% of respondents believe that the Polish people suffered more than other peoples (only 4% are sure of the opposite). It is interesting that almost no one chose the item “difficult to answer”, although the matter of comparing of different peoples’ suffering is a kind of challenge (Sitnicka, 2019).

The Conclusion. Drawing conclusions, we will point out that the Ukrainian-Polish relations with their centuries-long shared history are a vivid example of the compilation of stereotyped ideas and mythologemes that originated in the 10th – 13th centuries and continued to form and influence consciousness of the Ukrainian and Polish peoples in the 19th century and consolidated and replenished in the 20th century. The mentioned myths and mythologemes influenced and influence the issues interpretation related to the historical past.

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