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## POLISH FOLK CULTURE OF UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY GLOBALIZATION PROCESSES

Фольклорна культура поляків України вперше отримала справжнє відродження в Україні на початку 90-х років ХХ ст. Протягом багатьох років з ініціативи Співки поляків України майже щороку відбуваються фестивалі «Веселка Полісся» в м. Житомирі та «Квіти Поділля» у м. Городку Хмельницької області. У статті здійснено аналіз сучасного стану фольклорних традицій поляків України в контексті збереження їх ідентичності в умовах негативного впливу сучасних глобалізаційних процесів.

**Ключові слова:** поляки, фольклорна культура, ідентичність, глобалізаційні процеси.

Фольклорная культура поляков Украины впервые получила настоящее возрождение в Украине в начале 90-х годов ХХ в. В течение многих лет по инициативе Союза поляков Украины почти ежегодно проходят фестивали «Радуга Полесья» в г. Житомире и «Цветы Подолья» в г. Городке Хмельницкой области. В статье осуществлен анализ современного состояния фольклорных традиций поляков Украины в контексте сохранения их идентичности в условиях негативного влияния и современных глобализационных процессов.

**Ключевые слова:** поляки, фольклорная культура, идентичность, глобализационные процессы.

Folk culture of the Polish Ukraine received the first true renaissance in Ukraine in the early 90<sup>th</sup> of the XX century. Over the years the initiative of the Union of Poles of Ukraine almost every year such festivals as «The Rainbow of Polissya» in Zhytomyr and «The Flowers of Podillia» in Horodok (Khmelnytsky region) took place. The article analyzes the current state of Polish folk traditions in Ukraine in the context of preserving their identity in terms of the negative effects of modern globalization processes.

**Keywords:** Poles, folk culture, identity, globalization processes.

The research of national communities belongs to the prior directions almost in the whole sphere of humanities nowadays. First, it is the focus of interest for historians, sociologists, and political scientists. The whole complex of questions connected with the culture of each ethnos, both in the historical aspect and in its current functioning, remains important as well. It is the cultural traditions, both the folk and the professional ones that suffered most from the ruinous influence of totalitarianism, when the mentality of a nation as well as its national consciousness and self-identification had no right to exist.

The Stalinist period was tragic for the Poles of the former USSR and especially of Ukraine that was then its part as to the scope of repressions and genocide. Many people that inhabited its land suffered mass deportations, some of them were deported almost totally just like the Crimean Tatars and the Germans. The Poles were perhaps the first people in this tragic Stalinist experiment. It was in the districts of Kazakhstan, where once «120 thousand person from the Zhytomyr region were deported, only as a consequence of mass deportations of the Poles that had begun in the 30s thus, the Polish population decreased in Ukraine from more than 1 million to 300 thousand. It was not occasionally that according to the definition of the researcher M. Ivanov the Polish people entered the history as «the first punished people» [1].

All the complex functioning of the Polish culture in Ukraine in this respect was destroyed and suffered irreparable losses that even now, under the conditions when all national minorities, owing to the support of the creation and the formation of the Ukrainian independent state, are enjoying processes of revival, are very difficult to restore, as a series of generations suffered assimilation and even lost the knowledge of the native tongue.

The tragic end of those events was predestined with the very system of the «communist» society and the epoch of Stalinism, when the realization of human rights was rigorously restricted, as the rights for the place of settlement, for the choice of work,

for culture and education. Some rights, such as the right of free confession etc, were absolutely out of the question. Its echo was to be heard still in the 70-es and 80-es, when its new reflection was found in the image of the «united soviet people». In that time some monuments of culture and cult buildings were destroyed, and there was not even a word as to the reopening of schools for the Polish minority of the Ukraine. The only school with the Polish language of teaching existed traditionally in Lviv.

Both the Poles and the other minorities began to express themselves only in the years of the so-called «Gorbachev reconstruction» at the end of the 80s. Then they began to create the first cultural-educational organization according to the national principle. Such a uniting, consolidating center was the Union of the Poles of Ukraine that had achieved the tenth anniversary of its foundation in August 1988 [2]. It was under its auspices and with the support of the state, that the first Ukrainian newspaper «Dziennik Kijowski» in Polish appeared as a supplement to «The Voice of Ukraine». Now it is published as a bimonthly. In these years the magazine «Krynica» appeared, and in 1997 the first book from the series «The Library of the Union of Poles of Ukraine» appeared. It was a bilingual Ukrainian-Polish edition in the Chief Specialized edition of literature of the languages of national minorities of Ukraine under the title «How difficult it is to be a Pole!». This edition was dedicated to the memory of the first president of the Union of Poles of the Ukraine Stanislav Shalatski [5].

Owing to his initiative, Union of the Poles of Ukraine in Kyiv started to create various circles and courses of the Polish language. One ought to say that it was the educational activity, which became definitive for the Union of the Poles. It was not accidental that at first it was called the Polish cultural-educational society. The whole families started to study Polish language at Sunday schools. Such an educational activity spread all over Ukraine to the places, where there were branches of the Union of the Poles of Ukraine or of

other Polish organizations that were created later – the Federation of Polish Organizations with the Polish House in Kyiv, in Lviv, Khmelnytsky, Zhytomyr, Winnitsia, Kamianets-Podilsk, Horodok and other Ukrainian cities.

A worse situation was observed at the regions of compact and mixed settlement of the Polish community in the rural locality. Not all the inhabitants of villages used the Polish language as the active language of communication, but the folklore traditions and prayers were still preserved in their memory. The texts of the folk songs were often rewritten in the Cyrillic alphabet.

Some of them were sent to us from the leader of the folk ensemble from the village Susly from the Novohrad-Volynsk region, Antonina Shchyrska, who apologized in her letter for not having an opportunity to study Polish language at school.

Such a phenomenon seems to us to be of a significant order because many a settlement in Ukraine even today, when under the rule of the independent Ukrainian state, all the nationalities have got their constitutional right of education.

Now the problems of culture and education are being solved at the state level. To arrange the system of education in the Polish language – both facultative and class study of the native tongue, history, and culture – a bilateral covenant between the ministries of education of the Ukraine and Poland was signed. A great assistance is also granted by such organization as «Wspolnota Polska» (The Polish Community) that protects the fate of the Poles that are dispersed all over the world.

It was Lublin that became the center of the yearly summer courses for the teachers, the leaders of music ensembles, and choreologists, where the teachers from Ukraine improve their pedagogical and linguistic qualification every year as well.

The same can be said about the Ukrainian students and pupils, a youth of non-Polish origin, who see their future in the common European homeland.

In the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture special departments for the matters of the national minorities have been created. An extremely high support for the circles of the Polish national community has been granted also by the Committee for the Nationalities and Migrations. With its support the Federation of the Polish Organizations of Ukraine has conducted the International scientific conference «The Polish culture in the life of the Ukraine» (November 7–8th, 1997, Kyiv).

The educational work is present also almost at all forms of activity of the Polish national communities' organizations. It is not accidental that at the Adam Mickewicz Library in Kyiv they created the Adam Mickewicz Cultural-Educational society. The library itself has become a constant studying place for the students of the junior high school No.48 in the city of Kyiv with the Polish language of teaching. The students of the International Relations Department of the Slavic University accomplish their referential practice work concerning the Polish periodicals here too.

There were also the courses of the Polish language at the Polish House in Kyiv. The amateur movement of Poles in Ukraine has begun to develop among those Poles who inhabit the regions of compact settlements. It bears clear witness of the revival of Polish language and culture. It is already many a year that due to the initiative of the Union of the Poles of the Ukraine the yearly festivals «The Rainbow of Polissya» and «The Flowers of Podillya» take place in Zhytomyr and in the city of Horodok of the Khmelnytsky region. Last year the first festival of the Polish culture took place in Lviv. All over the Ukraine one observes the multiplication of the amateur folk ensembles, both of dance and song. The Polish language and the Polish culture are becoming the incarnation of their self-identification. Unfortunately, it is not each of such ensembles that promote building circles for studying the Polish language.

A sample of such a linkage between educational and musical activity may be the ensemble of the ancient music «Canticles».

Another sample of education of the school youth in such a mood are the Kyiv ensembles «Jaskółki» of Slavonic University (led by the deserved worker of Arts of the Polish Republic, the soloist of the Kyiv Opera Victoria Radik) and «Pierwiosnek» (led by Boleslav Krasnopolski). One ought to notice that the quantity of the children's ensembles is growing steadily. A favorable factor as to the mastering of the Polish language itself may be the assimilation of the texts of Polish songs as well as concert tours to Poland or the participation in the festivals and traditional concerts that take place on the Day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> May Constitution, or on the Holiday of Independence of Poland in the Teachers' House in Kyiv or in the Zhytomyr philharmonics. Such events fill the vacuum within the education of the Polish language for the persons of the Polish nationality or the mixed families that is, unfortunately, still present in the regions of the compact settlements of the Polish community. In particular, such a situation takes place in the Zhytomyr district, which not only enjoys the revival of the Polish culture but also, according to our opinion, has become the area of the formation of their self-consciousness expressing itself in the events of the kind [3; 6].

It is promoted with the efforts of the Ukrainian independent state that enlivens their contacts with their historical homeland that begins to protect them. It is evident that it was just Zhytomyr that the President of the Polish Republic Aleksander Kwasniewski chose as the place of his meeting with the Poles while visiting the Ukraine in 1997.

The Polish-Ukrainian connections enjoy today a particular moment of their maximal favorable degree in all the spheres. Our cultures find new forms of expression, of the mutual learning and of mutual understanding.

Since February 1999, the Polish institute in Kyiv has begun to work actively. It is led by the first secretary of the Embassy of the Polish Republic in Ukraine, Mr. Piotr Kozakevich. Its activity

has already found favorable responses both among the Ukrainian intellectuals and the representatives of the Polish community. It will surely have positive consequences in the development of the Ukrainian-Polish and Polish-Ukrainian cultural relationships.

The future of our countries and peoples depends essentially upon the situation of the Polish ethnos of Ukraine. It depends upon the fact whether all its representatives (as well as all the other peoples that inhabit the Ukrainian territory) feel as the full right citizens, whether they will be able to enjoy their rights and in particular the right of education in their native tongue, and of the development of culture and identification. The same concerns the rights and contemporary status of the representatives of the Ukrainian community in Poland.

For the newly independent states that emerged on the territory of the former USSR the problem of the interethnic relations is an essential factor for creating models of a new democracy, where an important place belongs to the ethnic and cultural traditions of various communities. Positive consequences of the building of such models have been achieved now in Hungary where, in the city of Bekerchaba, international scientific conferences on the problems of state building have become a tradition.

For Ukraine, as for the newly independent state that survived the period of the formation of democratic institutions, the realization of the experience of a multicultural society is possible. The manifold picture of religious, linguistic, cultural and ethnic traditions is not an obstacle for mutual coexistence of various national groups within the borders of a common area that would be void of contradictions. It can be a uniting factor.

The problem of international relations, which is immediately connected with the above-mentioned topics, requires new investigations and new elucidation because until recently it was misinterpreted, being subject to these or those political realities.

Special attention should be paid to the problem of the national identification within the context of the Polish culture and the legal questions of each ethnic community with the dependence of social, family and cultural status of their representatives.

All the complex of the interrelations that stretches from the rights of national communities to their concrete participation in daily and customary life remains important in this respect. A model can be the relation of the state structures and the representatives of various ethnic communities, whose interests must be protected with the corresponding civil organizations created according to the national features, like for example the Union of Poles of Ukraine. Interethnic marriages can here also play a positive role where family traditions have to become a warrant of the protection of linguistic and cultural values against the assimilation and destruction from outwards.

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## SUMMARY

Traditional folk culture became an important part of the implementation of ethnic consciousness of Poles in Ukraine, preserved the ethnic terror and repression of Stalin. Field research of the Rylsky Institute of the Arts, Folklore and Ethnology of National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and our work, carried out over several years in the regions of Central Ukraine, indicates that the village remains for Poles living in Ukraine their «little homeland», where folklore traditions remain. In Zhytomyr, Vinnytsia and Khmelnytsky regions there are numerous villages, where folk songs remained the symptom of national identity of Poles. Unfortunately, in rural areas people of Polish origin are often treated, especially by local authorities, as the Ukrainian Catholics, once polonized... Each of these villages can be considered a «small homeland», which combines social and regional situation, family factors and local individuality.

The amateur movement of Poles in Ukraine began to develop among those Poles, who inhabit the regions of compact settlements. It bears clear witness of the revival of the Polish language and culture. By initiative of the Union of Poles of Ukraine, such folklore festivals as «The Rainbow of Polissya» in Zhytomyr and «The Flowers of Podillya» in Horodok (Khmelnitsky region) were held for many years. We observe a big amount of different amateur folk choirs, musical and dance ensembles all over Ukraine. The Polish language and culture becomes the incarnation of their self-identification. Unfortunately, such ensembles does not promote the studying of Polish language. The mentioned documented materials have gained a special value for the rebirth of ethnic music nowadays. These materials became an essential part of some folk ensembles' repertoire as the researches worked on this field. The paper examines the contemporary state of folk, ethnic, educational and cultural traditions of Polish minority in Ukraine and their changes over the past 10 years compared with earlier investigations.

**Keywords:** Poles, folk culture, identity, globalization processes.

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