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COUNTERACTION TO ILLEGAL MIGRATION ACTIVITIES ON THE UKRAINIAN SECTOR OF THE POLISH-SOVIET BORDER IN 1929–1933

The purpose of the article is to analyze counteraction to illegal migration activities at the border of the Republic of Poland (Second Polish Republic) in particular, in the Ukrainian sector of the Polish-Soviet border from 1929 to 1933. The article focuses on the Ukrainian sector of the Polish-Soviet border, as it was characterized by unique characteristics associated with the peasant uprisings of 1930 against collectivization and the Great Famine (Holodomor) of 1932–1933.

The study proposes to track the reaction of the Polish and Soviet sides to permanent illegal migration across the border, the attempt of intelligence of these countries to master the smuggling trade. The researcher pays special attention to the structural changes that the intelligence departments (in Polish: ekspozytury wywiadu) of the Polish Border Guard Corps (Korpus ochrony pogranicza, KOP) have undergone. Also, on the example of specific investigative cases, the schemes of sabotage and intelligence activities of the Soviet side on the border of the Republic of Poland are considered.

Keywords: intelligence, illegal migration, USSR, Republic of Poland, Soviet-Polish border.

The study of the counteraction to illegal migration activities of the Border Guard Corps (KOP) of the Republic of Poland and the border guards of the USSR (which were part of a single Soviet structure) in 1929–1933, i.e., during the active peasant resistance to collectivization and directly during the Holodomor of 1932–1933, is an essential issue for Ukrainian historical science. The territorial framework of the problem studied in the article will be the lands of modern Zhytomyr and Khmelnytsky regions (formed later than the studied events – in 1937) of Ukraine and Brest, Minsk regions of the Republic of Belarus, and in particular, existing from 1923 to 1930 Kamyanyets, Proskuriv, Shepetivka, Zhytomyr, Korosten, Mozyr, Slutsk and Minsk districts as the part of the USSR and the borderlands of Tarnopol and Volyn voivodeships of interwar Poland (now Ternopil and Rivne regions, Ukraine).

Modern historiography related to illegal migration processes on the "Riga border" (which were always accompanied by espionage) is limited to the fundamental works of the following foreign scholars: Timothy Snyder [1], Henryk Dominiczak [2], Artur Ochal [3], Krzysztof Danilevich [4] and their Ukrainian colleague – Oleksandr Solovey [5]. Given the limitations of the processed material, the issue of illegal migrants who tried to enter the Poland from the territory of the USSR, the facts of reconnaissance and sabotage work on the border remain unexplored. This scientific problem can be compensated by attracting unpublished sources stored in the archives of the Republic of Poland (Central Military Archive (CAW) in Warsaw) and Ukraine – Kyiv (CDAHO Ukraine), Zhytomyr (DAZhO) and Ternopil (DATO).

The article aims to study counteraction to the violation of the state border regime during 1929–1933 to obtain, by the Soviet or Polish side, intelligence information or actions harmful to the neighbouring state. The subject of the study is the facts of combating the illegal entry into the territory of the Second Polish Republic or the USSR and to obtain the necessary information how the Soviet or Polish side fought against the actions mentioned above. The article was prepared with grant support from "Solidarity Fellowship", sponsored by the Institute for Human Sciences (Vienna, Austria), the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University (HURI, USA), and the Harriman Institute at Columbia University.

Describing the historical background of the illegal migration processes (personal and collective unlawful border crossing, smuggled trade relations), we note that their intensification was caused by continuous collectivization in

the USSR, which grew exponentially [6, p. 16]. Statistics available in archival sources show that if, as of January 1, 1930, collectivization indicators covered about 16 % of peasant farms in the USSR on March 1, 1930, 64 % of farms were included in the united ones [7, apk. 68]. As a natural reaction, in February-March 1930 in the border areas of Ukraine, the peasant resistance took the form of an uprising (or "volynki", as these events are often called in documents) [8, p. 82–85]. The peasants' demonstrations mostly ended with the dispersal of the Soviet authorities by the insurgents in the district centers and the defeat of the collective farms on the ground. The border population actions were intended to achieve international reaction by demonstrating opposition to the activities of the Soviet authorities in the area of visual reach of the state border rather than to open armed confrontation with the Bolsheviks. In the event of the ineffectiveness of these measures or armed persecution by the Soviet authorities, more and more peasants declared their intention or crossed the border to the Polish side. On February 26, the uprising engulfed a large part of the villages in Shepetivka districts, and the insurgents' shouted slogans: "Stop collectivization!", "Don't touch the churches!" Many women went to the Polish border, but border guards detained them", historian Taisiya Yeremenko wrote [9, p. 40–41]. Opposition to the collectivization policy was observed along the entire Ukrainian section of the Polish-Soviet border and included locals of different nationalities, for example, on December 4, 1929, from the village of Chornokyzynsi, Orynyn district, Kamyanyets district (now Kamyanyets-Podilsky district, Khmelnytsky region) across the "Zbruch border", five families fled to Poland: Polish one, a Jewish one and three Ukrainian [10, apk. 44].

Taking into account the growing number of refugees from the "Soviet country", we note that during the heyday and collapse of the NEP (1921–1929), illegal migration was thought of by residents of the predominantly Polish part of Volhynia and Galicia driven by national political persecution and unemployment. According to the Korosten district of the USSR, in 1925 7 people crossed the border from Poland to the USSR, in 1927 – 6, 1928 – 2, and since the beginning of 1929, in connection with the world economic crisis, 11 people did so (registered in official documents as "farmers" and "workers") [5, p. 89]. Instead, in the first half of 1931, in the Byelorussian SSR, border guards detained 1,405 kulaks, Soviet or Polish deserters, and "defectors" who tried to enter the border between the USSR and Po-

land. Simultaneously, out of 171 "kulaks", 111 were detained at the border while trying to escape from the USSR, and only eight tried to return [11, p. 143]. In the conditions of simultaneous deployment of collectivization and mass repressions, pro-Polish sentiments on the Soviet border intensified – in the village of Bronytsia, Horodnytsya district (now Novohrad, Volyn district, Zhytomyr region), did the inscription "Here will be the Polish headquarters. Give us the Sovereignty. Long live Poland" [12, apk. 13]. Also, in the nearby Markhlevsky Polish National District (now Zhytomyr Region), according to British historian Kate Brown, only 7% of peasant farms were part of collective farms after the anti-Soviet riots and the temporary easing of administrative pressure [13, p. 109–110].

On the other side of the border, the Polish authorities, given the need to maintain good neighbourly relations with the USSR, economic problems and the socio-political explosiveness of the "refugees", tried to minimize their arrival on their territory. As part of this policy, the Lviv Intelligence Branch of the Second Division of the General Staff (SG) in 1930, together with Polish border guards, accused 74 illegal migrants of espionage [14]. It is complicated today to find out which of these people carried out the intelligence tasks of the Soviet side and which escaped from Bolshevik repression and collectivization. Documents of both the Polish and Soviet sides are incredibly biased and need careful verification, as government officials created them. Still, they remain almost the only source (along with newspaper publications of the time) that sheds light on the phenomenon of illegal migration across the "Zbruch border" [15, p. 18–23].

Let us consider a few examples of the Polish and Soviet fight against espionage, briefly outlining the institutions that dealt with it. In the Republic of Poland, since 1924, the border and adjacent territories have been guarded by a paramilitary formation, the Border Guard Corps (in Polish: Korpus ochrony pogranicza, KOP), created in response to Soviet saboteurs' intensification of the "Active Intelligence" program [15, p. 18–23; 17, p. 13]. On July 15, 1929, the KOP received a new organization of the intelligence service, which has since consisted of independent intelligence offices under the leadership of the KOP. In 1933, the entire Polish Eastern Intelligence Service came under the supervision of the Intelligence Headquarters (Szefostwo Wywiadu), which was responsible for the Second Division of the General Staff № 1 in Vilnius and № 5 in Lviv, and their intelligence divisions [3, p. 17–35]. Instead, in the Soviet state, on September 27, 1922, the Labor and Defense Council (RPO) transferred border protection to the Department of the State Political Administration (DPU), creating a Separate Border Corps, headed since 1926 by the Main Border Guard Directorate (in Russian: Главное управление пограничной охраны, ГУПО) [18, p. 150–153]. In 1929, the number of Soviet border troops increased one and a half times due to the "intensification of enemy intelligence and provocation at the border" [19, p. 44–45]. To strengthen the closure of the border, in April 1930, a resolution was adopted "On the border zone", in December 1930 – "On the political and economic situation in the border areas of the USSR", and in 1932 the sky over the border began to patrol aircraft [18, p. 155]. Also, Soviet border guards, from the local population, created special "assistance brigades" (according to the "Instruction on the procedure for involving the population of the border zone in the protection of the USSR border" of May 9, 1931), which were to monitor the appearance of unknown persons at the

border and suspicious changes on the territories of neighbouring states [20, p. 17].

From such intensification of reconnaissance measures at the state border (unprecedented since the creation of the Polish-Soviet border in 1921–1923), the intentions to limit border permeability for migrants became clear. Tightening the border closure coincided with the intensification of peasant resistance to collectivization. But the border still retained traditional "windows" – areas where illegal border crossings or smuggling took place under Polish or Soviet patronage (such as in the Cherepy tract between Dorogoshcha and Ostroh). It increased attempts to escape from state massacre abroad [21, p. 22–24]. The general situation on the border was aggravated by the fact that in 1928 there was a significant crop failure in Ukraine, which could lead to famine [22, p. 115]. The Republic of Poland's government, fearing a social explosion in 1929 due to the same crop failure and the consequences of the economic crisis, bought imported grain, which reduced grain prices within the country, thus ruining the private farms of Volhynia [5, p. 89–104]. Thus, the rebellious inhabitants of the USSR fleeing across the border to Poland also fell into the zone of social tension of the local population of Volhynia and Galicia, dissatisfied with Warsaw's policy. It is evident that tolerating the mass of such migrations was highly unfavourable to the Second Polish Republic both in terms of internal security and to avoid escalation in relations with the USSR.

Nevertheless, a certain percentage of illegal migrants in the 1930s became vital for Polish intelligence in conditions of the maximum closeness of the Soviet border and effective (rather quantitative than qualitative) struggle of the USSR secret services against Polish spies. During the Holodomor of 1932–1933, another significant surge of illegal activity was observed on the Polish-Soviet border. For example, during the period from June 24 to July 24, 1933, on the section of the border subject to the intelligence department of KOP-10 in Tarnopol, Polish border guards detained 89 people on charges of forcing the state border to the USSR or Poland, vagrancy (wólczygostwo) in the border, smuggling, suspicion of espionage or for resistance to border guards KOP [23]. Those who crossed the Polish-Soviet border were a substantial recruiting base for Polish intelligence. They were well-versed in the border, spoke local dialects, and did not stand out from the Soviet population regarding clothing and habits. Cooperation with the Second Division of the General Staff (SG) of the Second Polish Republic was mainly mutually beneficial and gave the refugee from the USSR the opportunity to stay in Poland. In 1931–1933, 1,894 refugees and deserters were detained on the border of four intelligence units (Placówek Wywiadowczych) of the KOP in Rokytno, Rivne, Tarnopol, and Chortkiv (subject to the Lviv Intelligence Branch). Of these, 162 people were involved in reconnaissance activities in favor of Poland [24]. Illegal migrants were also an essential source of Soviet documents for the Second Division of the SG intelligence services – any forms of documents held by refugees were immediately transported to Lviv or Warsaw for study and use in intelligence activities [4, s. 318].

We can track the algorithm of intelligence work in the case of a native of Gorodok in the Khmelnytsky region, carpenter Pavla Reitarovskiy (b. 1894). In July 1932, he was recruited, and after short courses, in early August, he was transported to Poland. According to the task, the agent (pseudonym "Black") surrendered to the Polish authorities as a zealous Catholic, a fugitive from Soviet repression

immediately after crossing the border. After some time, the spy had to get out of the "sleeping phase" and start collecting information about the location and activities, weapons, maneuvers of the KOP departments in Husiatyn, Kopychyntsi, Chortkiv in Tarnopol Voivodeship. In parallel, Reitarovsky processed information about the attitude of the local population to the Polish government, the relationship between them. The agent contacted his foreign curators through letters to his father, in which intelligence information he was written with milk between the lines of ink [4, s. 373]. Chorny's conspiracy turned out to be successful – the intelligence department of KOP-9 in Chortkiv recruited him to carry out its tasks on the territory of the USSR. Immediately after being transferred abroad, Pavlo appeared at the Soviet commandant's office, from where he went to Proskurov, where he provided the DPU with descriptions of buildings and personnel of KOP Husiatyn, information about railway stations on the Husiatyn – Chortkiv branch, and personal data of KOP-9 intelligence officers in Chortkiv. Instead, the double agent was given fake intelligence information. On September 7, 1932, Chorny was shipped to Poland again. Polish border guards managed to expose the double spy by analyzing his correspondence – the contents of the letter sent on August 31, 1932, to a secret address to Chortkiv. Its translation by Reitarovsky himself during the reporting differed. The Polish secret services suggested that the letters had not been sent in person, which the agent himself admitted after two weeks of interrogation [25].

The situation of this period on the Polish-Soviet border is described by a lawyer from Tarnopol, ambassador of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, journalist Stefan Baran (1879-1953) in the article "From our tragedy on the Zbruch", published in the newspaper "Dilo", May 21, 1933, which presented in translation with slight reductions [26, p. 1]. Using the testimony of refugees from the Ukrainian SSR, the author reports "there are no personal relations between our citizens in Galicia or Volhynia and our relatives on the Dnieper [...]. From time to time, peasants from across the Bolshevik border run away. More than one victim who tried to escape the Bolshevik hell was forever covered with the waves of the river [...] Troops of Moscow origin densely surround the border. The eastern side of Zbruch looks like a military line that is difficult to breakthrough. The refugees tell us that they managed to cross the Zbruch because most of them either died of the bullets or fell into the hands of the guards. The living bones have come here because the hunger is terrible there. About three weeks ago, a man with his wife and two small children fled to Okopy [in the original, the name of the village is given in small letters – author's note] to his brother in the Borshchiv region. They were taken to the starosty in Borshchiv [Tarnopol voivodeship – author's note], which ordered their deportation behind Zbruch was avoided thanks to the involvement of local activists. Cases such as in the Borshchiv area, where 27 new refugees have passed through the last few days, occur in all border counties – Kopyczyniecki, Skalacki and Zbaraski. If it had not been for the powerful Bolshevik border guard armed with machine guns and field cannons, then Galicia and Volhynia would have flooded tens of thousands of our peasants. There was a natural, spontaneous movement to escape hunger through Zbruch. Ukraine had no bread and no potatoes. The commune took everything from the village, and the Ukrainian village died helplessly. Refugees see rescue in crossing the border of Zbruch" [26, p. 1].

The intelligence activities of the USSR posed a particular threat to the Polish side. Often, recruitment by secret

services resulted in multiple illegal border crossings. For example, we can refer to Kajetan (Kaetan) Dolski – a Polish peasant from the border Soviet village of Huków (now the Khmelnytsky region). During an interrogation by the police of the Second Polish Republic on February 26, 1931, Dolski (an agent pseudonym "Chemist") admitted that he had been recruited into espionage for the UkrSSR in person by Nikolai Dergachev, the head of the State Political Directorate (GPU) in Kamianets-Podilskyi [27, apk. 5]. By resorting to bribery, Dolski was supposed to create a network of agents in the town of Skala upon Zbruch and its vicinity, consisting of people appointed by the Soviet secret services. Within seven months (from August 1930 to February 1931), he crossed the border eight times, and each time he returned, he reported his actions to Dergachev and then to his deputy, Nikolai Klavin. For each crossing to the other side of the border, he received 5-7 US dollars, not counting the income obtained from contraband, which was used as a cover for intelligence activities. The police investigating the network of agents associated with "Chemist" managed to establish that, while conducting espionage activities, he cooperated with the Soviet commanders of border crossings and GPU officers "N. Shyshnin, N. Wasiljev and N. Ostrychenko". Revealing Dolski was not easy, as he was considered a Polish spy. He had previously signed up to cooperate with Polish intelligence and even delivered the Soviet press to the head of the KOP post. However, he did not manage to recruit the owner of a large textile store (manufactory), Zalman Hausner, who informed the Polish side about everything [27, apk. 2–16]. In 1939, the new, Soviet, authorities remembered the merchant's "non-civic attitude" and sentenced Hausner to be deported to Siberia, where he died in 1944 (Hausner). The further fate of "Chemist" was reported by the newspaper of the Ukrainian diaspora in the United States, "Svoboda" of October 26, 1931: "A trial against Kajetan Dolski, who was accused of espionage, was held before the district court in Chortkiv. He was sentenced to 5 years of hard imprisonment" [28, p. 1].

In 1932, there was also an event with no analogues since the demarcation of the border. There were attempts to penetrate small groups of insurgents from Polish territory to the Soviets to facilitate peasant riots against collectivization. According to Ukrainian researcher Oleksandr Solovey, these insurgent groups used "bee tactics", which included the activities of small mobile groups appearing from abroad, sabotaging and fleeing back. However, such activities were unsuccessful due to the resistance of the peasant masses, broken by collectivization and famine, and the increase in the contingent of Soviet border guards and troops [28, p. 62]. The figures of illegal migrants and spies neutralized by border detachments were a key argument for characterizing the detachment's activities. For example, the 17th Tymkovytsia Border Detachment (Tymkovychi village, Kopyl district, Minsk region, Republic of Belarus) guarded the Belarusian section of the Polish-Soviet border reported on the destruction of "large subversive gangs of the Lutsko, Dasyukevich" convict organization during 1931–1935, "Brotherhood of Russian Truth", sabotage groups Makareni and Efimchik, Yanchuk and others sabotage groups of the "Khvylyasty brothers, Zhyruk, Miroshevsky, Drobeni, Dyby, and the Kovaleny gang". For these successes, the detachment was awarded the Order of the Red Banner just like the 23rd and Kamianets-Podilskyi Border Detachment [11, p. 41].

Note that the number of espionage cases conducted by the KOP was half of the total Polish statistics: in 1928–

1935 in 4 areas of the Corps of the Soviet-Polish border was detected 2015 espionage scams, which is twice the number in the other seven districts of the Corps [30]. But can all those accused of espionage be found guilty? It is probably not, because the incrimination of such a crime as intelligence allowed to bring an illegal migrant out of the orbit of the local Ukrainian community – the only party interested in helping a refugee. The minutes of the commission of inquiry of the USSR and Poland on the crossing of the border by Polish citizens stated that the Soviet side was interested not to lose their citizens, and the Polish side was not interested in admitting illegal migrants in the "Zbruch border" [31, арк. 8]. For this purpose, accusations of cooperation with the intelligence of other countries could be used. Also, it was undesirable for Poland the appearance of illegal Soviet migrants in Western Volhynia during the global crisis, which hit the Polish economy hard and created tensions in the agricultural workers' labor market [32, p. 152–161].

Thus, illegal migrants of the interwar twentieth century, from their very appearance on the "Riga border", became an undesirable phenomenon for the official Soviet and Polish sides. The fight against illegal migration and smuggling across the border had led to border infrastructure development, increasing the contingent of border guards and troops in the borderlands. The question arises, how could illegal migration exist at one of the most closed borders in the crucial period of 1929–1933? In response, we conclude that there were primarily illegal smuggling and personal migration tolerated by the Polish or Soviet side, which was actively used for their own economic, intelligence or informational propaganda purposes. Such illegal migration was fought if it belonged to the enemy, and at the same time, attempts were made to recruit an agent. The uncontrolled illegal migration of Volhynia and Podillya to Poland in 1929–1933 was completely undesirable and even harmful for the Soviet side. The authorities rightly feared that refugees from the USSR would inform the world about the Holodomor in Soviet Ukraine [16, s. 339; 11, c. 96–97, 134].

The incrimination of illegal migrants favoring foreign intelligence, the incitement of espionage hysteria, and measures to strengthen the protection of the USSR's state border with "bourgeois Poland" made an illegal border crossing a complicated task. Since the early 1930s, Soviet security forces have controlled most smuggling flows at the border, involving the smugglers themselves in their intelligence network. An illegal migrant who did not cooperate with the DPU or was not recruited for such cooperation became the exception rather than the rule. Based on such considerations and relying on their informants, the KOP border guards, with minimal preconditions, accused the vast majority of "fugitives from the USSR" of collaborating with Soviet intelligence. It was not uncommon for refugees to be extradited to the USSR immediately or after serving a prison sentence for cooperating with foreign intelligence. Extradition scenes were often criticized by the Western Ukrainian public, as Soviet border guards often killed a border trespasser immediately. From a legal perspective, KOP fighters acted by their statutes and Polish law in this situation; moreover, it was not uncommon for Polish border guards to transfer an illegal migrant to a local Ukrainian community or smuggle him across the border as a resident [15, c. 18–23].

In the 1930s, the Second Polish Republic faced (it should be noted: for the second time, after the migration crisis in the early 1920s) the problem of mass illegal migration. In contrast to the illegal movements of workers and

smuggling across the border, this migration was utterly different. When talking about illegal migration across the Polish-Soviet border in the years 1929–1933, we must understand that we are dealing with the experience of mass political migration (in the conditions of an enlarged social community, including peasants, sometimes intellectuals, clergy, former soldiers), which often took place under the threat of physical destruction (as in the case of starving Ukrainian peasants or Poles fleeing Soviet political repression). Hence, it is worth emphasizing the timeliness of this study at the present stage of the history of the European Union, which once again faced the influx of not only labor, but also mass political migration related to the "Arab Spring" and the crisis in the Middle East (2011–2017, early 2020), the war in Ukraine (since 2014, and especially since the full-scale invasion of Russia – February 24, 2022), the coronavirus crisis (COVID-19, early 2020) and permanent political migration from Belarus. Research on illegal migration from the "state of the Soviets" gives examples of the self-organization of the society in the eastern provinces of the Second Polish Republic, which without state aid (or instead on condition of its neutrality) provided social and economic support to "refugees" from the Soviet Union. It is also imperative to pay attention to the humanitarian aspect of the host party in the context of mass political migration.

Summing up, it should be noted that the massive surge in the activity of illegal migration processes on the Polish-Soviet border intensified the opposition to this phenomenon by the border structures of the Republic of Poland and the USSR. However, the same systems purposefully maintained illegal, mostly smuggled, activity at the border for their sabotage and reconnaissance activities in enemy territory. An essential component of the work of the border and security agencies of Poland and the USSR during this period is the recruitment of their agents of informants, exposing similar activities of the other party, misinformation. Paradoxically, the struggle of the Ukrainian peasantry against collectivization, mass attempts to flee abroad from Bolshevik persecution and famine allowed the Soviet side to intensify its activities to build an intelligence network the eastern voivodships of the Republic of Poland. Due to the capabilities of the totalitarian state in the use of administrative resources, mass migration processes and the closure of the state border, the special services of the USSR managed to conduct practical intelligence activities in the Polish direction, partially neutralizing her intelligence forces. Finding out the causes and course of these events, further study of illegal migration on the Soviet-Polish border in the 20s and 30s of the twentieth century, as a method of illegal entry into the territory of a neighboring state for intelligence and destabilization in the region, remains a relevant topic of further historical studies.

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ПРОТИДІЯ НЕЛЕГАЛЬНОЇ МІГРАЦІЙНОЇ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ НА УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ ДІЛЯНЦІ ПОЛЬСЬКО-РАДЯНСЬКОГО КОРДОНУ В 1929–1933 РОКАХ

Проаналізовано протидію нелегальній міграційній діяльності на кордоні Республіки Польща (Другої Речі Посполитої) та СРСР протягом 1929–1933 рр. Зосереджено увагу на українському секторі польсько-радянського кордону, оскільки він мав унікальні характеристики, пов'язані із селянськими повстаннями 1930 р. проти колективізації та Голодомором 1932–1933 рр.

Запропоновано відстежити реакцію польської та радянської сторін на постійну нелегальну міграцію через кордон, спробу розвідки цих країн взяти під свій контроль контрабандну торгівлю. Особливу увагу приділено структурним змінам, яких зазнали розвідувальні відділи (експозитури) Корпусу охорони прикордоння (КОП) Польщі. Також на прикладі конкретних слідчих справ розглянуто схеми диверсійно-розвідувальної діяльності радянської сторони на кордоні Республіки Польща.

Ключові слова: розвідка, нелегальна міграція, СРСР, Республіка Польща, радянсько-польський кордон.