

ETNICKÉ KOMUNITY VYJEDNÁVÁNÍ POZICE V MAJORITĚ



Eds. Dana Bittnerová, Mirjam Moravcová

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INTERETHNIC RELATIONS IN NORTHERN BUKOVINA AFTER 1991 IN THE CONTEXT OF BORDERLANDS

Kateryna Shestakova

There are several regions with distinct cultural, ethnic and national diversity in modern ethno-political map of Ukraine. This diversity is a direct result of historical processes. However, last but not least it was formed under the influence of social transformation of Ukrainian society, which started simultaneously with changes of administrative boundaries. Social changes covered even borderline regions: capabilities of social actors in borderlands have expanded; intensity of intergroup contact has increased; interstate cooperation in social, economic and political spheres is developing; factor of interethnic cooperation has increased. Interethnic interaction and awareness of individual and group identity has become very important for the subjects of borderland areas. First of all, this is due to the uncertainty of social ways of the development of borderland regions. As a result of increased social mobility through the proximity of the border has increased the temptation "to borrow" the model of neighbour, stranger society, bypassing, thereby, a creation of own coordinates for social self-determination.

Northern Bukovina may become an illustration of these processes. The name of the region is historical. Today its borders largely correspond to Chernivtsi region of Ukraine. Very often both terms are used as synonyms within everyday language. Direct frontier with Romania and Moldova, which borders region, determines the boundary nature of social processes. Actually the interethnic processes in Chernivtsi region can and should be analyzed from the perspective of the border region.

Bukovina as the Ukrainian-Romanian borderlands

The emergence of the definition “borderland” is concerned primarily with the presence of phenomena of multiculturalism, which we often face on the verge of cultural contexts – in the field of political and geographical border, among immigrants, intellectuals. In short, among those who “... *has the best chances give yourself, other than a family culture, a culture of “others”*.”¹

The cultural space, in which next generations live, forms their views and behavior. Full of values, space and place acquire features of ideological space, mythical and symbolic. It may be the place of residence or origin, as well as a place that is holy. For someone it has the sense of family or patriotic symbol, or a place that recalls an important event, outlived personally or with a group.²

The study of borderlands on the verge of ethnic groups is not affiliated with a particular area, as well as defining cultural space of regional communities genetically reach views of American cultural anthropologists and informational concepts of culture school of Tartu semiotic school.

In particular, according to Juri Lotman, one of the main mechanisms of semiotic individuality is the border. It can be defined as a limit, which expires on periodic form. This space is defined as “our”, “own”, “cultural”, “safe”, “harmoniously organized”, etc. He is opposed to “their space” – “strange”, “hostile”, “dangerous”, “chaotic”. The border can separate the living from the dead, settled from nomadic, city from plain; can have a national, social, national, confessional nature.³ According to J. Lotman the concept of border is always ambiguous. On the one hand it divides, on the other – combines. It is always border with something else and, therefore, belongs simultaneously to the both boundary cultures. It is bi- and poly-linguistic. It is the mechanism of transla-

- 1 SZPOCIŃSKI, A.: Kultury „indyck” a uniwersa kulturowe Polaków. Warstwa średnia i jej uniwersum kulturowe. *Kultura i społeczeństwo*, 2, 1996, s. 65.
- 2 BUKOWSKA-FLOREŃSKA, I.: Wstęp. In: BUKOWSKA-FLOREŃSKA, I. (ed.): *Studia etnologiczne i antropologiczne*, Tom 4: Przestrzeń kulturowego współistnienia, Katowice, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego 2000, s. 7–9.
- 3 ЛОТМАН, Ю. М.: *Внутри мыслящих миров. Человек – текст – семиосфера – история*. Москва, „Языки русской культуры” 1996, s. 175.

tion the texts of foreign semiotics to “our” language, it is a membrane, which filters and transforms other people’s texts so, that they can fit the internal semiotics of semiosphere remaining foreign objects at the same time.⁴

A good example of such interpenetration of cultures is the usage of double name of Lviv, which in the Polish version sounds like “Lvuv” (Lwów). In a similar way J. Hrabovych attempts to prove bi-polarity of Vilnius (Polish-Lithuanian identity), Szczecin, Poznan, Gdansk and Wroclaw (Polish-German), Trieste, Fiume, Chernivtsi and other cities.⁵

In case the semiosphere includes even real-territorial features, the border takes spatial sense in its true sense. In general, there are many semiotic factors contributing to the maintenance of stable communities or their transformation. Besides the presence of a temple or a palace, a library or an archive, specific planning, city’s connection with mythology, multilingualism is important, as well as multiple semiotic systems that are used simultaneously. It is inherent in such cities as St. Petersburg, London, Jerusalem and Rome.⁶ Within Ukraine, it may be, Lviv, Chernivtsi, Lutsk, Zhitomir, Odessa, Kharkiv, – cities that are located at the intersection of multiple cultures and ethnicities.

Referring to the Polish sociologist Andrzej Sadowski, we find interesting approaches to clarify the relationship between ethnic conflicts and ethnic groups in borderlands. According to the researcher’s definition, an ethnic borderland – is a thorn, where long-acting forms of social and cultural contacts occur between two or more neighbouring nations, national minorities or ethnic groups (which are not nations) as their existing socio-cultural evidence. Characteristic feature of ethnic borderlands are different

4 Ibidem, s. 183.

5 GRABOWICH G.: Mythologizing Lviv/ Lwów: Echoes of Presence and Absence. In: CZAPLICKA, J. (ed.): *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. XXIV (2000). Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press 2000, s. 314.

6 ИВАНОВ, В. ВС: К семиотическому изучению культурной истории большого городаю. In: *Семиотика пространства и пространство семиотики. Труды по знаковым системам. XIX / Учёные записки Тартуского гос. Университета.* – Выпуск 720. Тарту, ТГУ 1986, s. 19.

kinds of cultural contacts that can be simplified as ethnic relations.⁷

Observations of recent decades have shown that changes in the nature and forms of some political organisms (e.g. states) can cause significant changes in ethnic and cultural borderlands. First of all, these are the consequences of globalization and the formation of super-state communities and structures that are often called supranational. The boundaries of states become transparent not only in the cultural, economic and political sense, but also for individual migration. However, the emergence of new borders after the collapse of the socialist system and attempt to strengthen the old borders did not change the situation fundamentally (e.g. around the border of Ukraine and Russia or the Czech Republic and Slovakia).

Describing Bukovinian borderlands, let us consider the three-dimensional interpretation of this phenomenon. In the *spatial* sense Bukovina is historically located region far from the center, near state borders of Ukraine, Poland and Romania.

In *socio-cultural* context Bukovina stands for close social and cultural contacts between the ethnic groups that inhabit the region: Ukrainians, Romanians, Moldovans, to a lesser extent of Jews and Poles. Speaking about the non-territorial method of interpretation of borderlands, proposed by Antonina Kłoskowska,⁸ it should be noted that Bukovinian borderland is a neighbourhood of Ukrainian, Romanian, Moldovan, Polish and Jewish cultures. There are several reasons for this – a mixed national-ethnic marriages genealogy; membership in national or ethnic minority in the area where one culture dominates another national culture; the transition from a national self-identification to another, which may not mean a complete rejection of previous cultural links.

If a general view of the Ukrainian-Romanian borderlands is a simple but meaningful enough, we should look at this thorn

7 SADOWSKI, A.: Harmonia i konflikty na pograniczach. In: KRZYSZTOFEK, K. – SADOWSKI, A. (ed.): *Pogranicza etniczne w Europie. Harmonia i konflikty*. Białystok, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku 2001, s. 11.

8 KŁOSKOWSKA, A.: *Kultury narodowe u korzeni*. Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN 1996, s. 125.

through the prism of formation of such inter-ethnic coexistence planes as Moldovans – Ukrainians, Romanians – Ukrainians, Moldovans – Romanians and less vectors are associated with the Jews and Poles of Chernivtsi region. Exactly this feature can detect an underwater rock, about which actually says Magdalena Pokrzyńska “assertion that the region of Bukovyna is borderlands, has features of tautology, since penetration of cultures, daily osculation of the representatives of different cultures, overcoming socio-cultural and communication barriers were and remain features of social life in this region”.⁹

The question is how to define this borderland and its limits complicates by the fact that on the political map Chernivtsi region borders with Moldova and Romania. As a result of World War I Bukovina became part of Romania and Poland. In 1940, the northern part of Bukovina with the center in Chernivtsi was annexed by the USSR and the southern, respectively, remained as a part of Romania. Thus, it is possible to discern, some way to distinguish three borderlands – the Moldovan-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-Romanian, Romanian-Moldovan, who face on the territory of Bukovina. On the other hand, an example of some European borderland makes it facilitate the situation and look at the Bukovina primarily as at a problem of culture as any borderland is the category of inner-social (or inner-cultural), because it serves not only at the intersection of cultures, but also in the middle of each of them.

Inter-ethnic interaction in Bukovina

Borderlands have been and probably will remain over the territories, rivalry for domination of cultures that coexist in this area. Such competition should not lead to conflicts, but it is present.

Bukovina is no exception. Probably, in its socio-cultural space cases of rivalry are present. Regarding this, we would like to mention the widespread opinion about the full tolerance of Bukovina and its inhabitants. This was written not only by Ukraini-

9 POKRZYŃSKA, M.: Bukovina w perspektywie transgraniczności. In: LEZSKOWICZ-BACZYŃSKI, J. (ed.): *Transgraniczność w perspektywie socjologicznej. Kontynuacje i wyzwania*. Zielona Góra, Lubuskie Towarzystwo Naukowe 2001, T. 2, s. 123.

an researchers, but also Polish, for example Adam Koseski called Bukovina region as highly tolerant.¹⁰ However, it should be recalled that during the twentieth century the situation with ethno-religious structure of the population of Bukovina has fundamentally changed. Known is mass emigration of Jews, Germans and Poles to their historical homeland. Today the largest (in quantitative terms) ethnic minorities of Northern Bukovina remain Romanian and Moldovan communities. In this context increases the need for a sociological study of phenomena of tolerance, or better said – inter-ethnic interaction in Bukovina. It should reflect, how in the future will develop interethnic communication, whether or not there is an artificial creation of a living myth of interethnic and intercultural tolerance.

The majority of such conclusions derive, probably, with the known statistical indicators, which reflected the multiculturalism of region. Suffice it to recall that according to the census in 1910 on the territory of modern Chernivtsi region lived 4.46 % Poles, 8.12 % Germans, 38.38 % Ukrainians, 12.86 % of Jews, 34.38 % Romanians.¹¹ The two largest indigenous groups in Bukovina were Ukrainians and Romanians, in Galicia – Ukrainians and Poles. Romanians of Bukovina lived compactly in the southern counties (33–34 %), a considerable proportion were in Storozhynets, Seret, Chernivtsi counties and the town of Chernivtsi.¹² It has not been recorded manifestations of mass religious or linguistic intolerance by representatives of various ethnic groups.

However, analysis of the historical papers, published in different years by the employees of Chernivtsi University, shows that the ethno-social indicators in Bukovina have always been very low for Ukrainians, Moldovans and Romanians on the one hand, and somewhat higher for Germans, Jews and Poles, on the other.

10 KOSESKI, A.: *Procesy migracji i spoleczności polonijne. Problematyka metodologiczno-historyczna*. Lublin – Pułtusk, UMCS 2003, s. 180.

11 ДОБРЖАНСЬКИЙ, О.: *Національний рух українців Буковини другої половини ХІХ – початку ХХ ст.* Чернівці, Золоті литаври 1999, s. 75.

12 СКОРЕЙКО, Г.: *Населення Буковини за урядовими переписами другої половини ХІХ початку ХХ ст.: історико-демографічний аналіз*; Автореф. дис..... канд. історич. наук. Чернівці, Чернівецький державний університет 1998, s. 11.

The evidence of tolerance in the political context is the presence of Polish, Jewish, Romanian, German national-cultural societies in Chernivtsi. Eight editions in Romanian and Ukrainian languages and one in Russian and Yiddish are printed in the region. Chernivtsi regional TV- and radio company broadcasts programs in Romanian and Jewish (with some interruptions) languages.¹³ Indirect confirmation of the mentioned phenomenon is the indicator of index of social distance relative to different nationalities in Ukraine. In particular, in comparison with 1994, in 2001 the Romanians have received more confidence in the categories of “agree to allow as family member / as close friends / as citizens of Ukraine / as guests of Ukraine”. Instead, the coefficient of distance in the “do not admit them into Ukraine” has increased from 6 to 9. A similar trend is observed in relation to the Moldovans. The average rate for Romanians was in 1994 – 4.19 in 2001 – 5.22. For Moldovans it was in 1994 – 4.60, in 2001 – 5.09. For the Poles it was in 1994 – 4.44, in 2001 – 4.88.¹⁴ During the year the distance increased: in 2002 the index for Romanians was 5.4, for Moldovans – 5.3, for Poles – 5.0.¹⁵

Of course, the representativeness of the data in case of Bukovina is controversial. Natalia Panina, the researcher who adapted the scale of Emory Bogardus to the Ukrainian context, argues that the tendency to closer contacts (family, friendship, neighbourhood, work) by the majority of the population was found mainly among the Ukrainians, Russians, Belarusians, Poles and Jews. That is, the groups in respect of which a historical experience of living together was accumulated. In particular, in Kyiv this index was less than 4 points.¹⁶

13 Преса етнічних груп України (Додатки). Ін: *Сприяння поширенню толерантності у поліетнічному суспільстві*. Київ, Фонд „Європа ХХІ“ 2002, s. 305–310.

14 *Українське суспільство 1994–2001: Результати опитування громадської думки*. Київ, МІА – „Поділ“ 2001, s. 98–106.

15 ПАНІНА, Н.: Щодо застосування шкали соціальної дистанції у дослідженнях національної толерантності в Україні. *Соціологія: теорія, методи, маркетинг*, 4, 2003, s. 33.

16 *Ibidem*, s. 34–35.

It is logical to suppose that long-term Ukrainian's neighbourhood with Romanians and Moldovans within Bukovina should help to reduce the distance between these ethnic groups, but rates of Ukraine are the contrary. Sociological research on contemporary ethno-political situation in the Chernivtsi region, conducted in 2002–2003 by the Department of Political Science and Sociology of Chernivtsi National University in cooperation with the Regional Centre for training of civil servants at the Chernivtsi State Administration, presented an interesting and mixed picture. For the representative sample (including age, gender, education and ethnicity) 1,900 respondents from 11 districts of region and town of Chernivtsi were polled. Despite the conservation of traditionally friendly relations between people of different nationalities in the region, sociometry analysis shows that 5% among those who malevolently treat other nationalities the majority were the citizens of Romanian-Moldovan and other nationalities. Also in 2003, in comparison with 2002, the number of representatives of Romanian-Moldovan population who malevolently treats people of other nationalities, has almost doubled, suggesting, as anticipated Anatoly Kruhlashov, the dynamics of significant negative trends in international relations in the region.¹⁷

Perhaps, the defined phenomena should be associated with negative ethno-social situation of some ethnic communities. As the researchers note, average wages of workers and employees in Hertsa district (inhabited mostly by Romanians) in 1997 were the lowest among other districts of the region. There was the highest average rate in the region for infant mortality. Groups of Romanian youth leave to study in their historical homeland and often settle there. As a result, the potential revival of the Romanian community in Bukovina is reducing.¹⁸

Turning finally back to issue of the ethnic interaction you can ask: what type of interaction in the Northern Bukovina domi-

17 КРУТІАШОВ, А.: Буковинська етнополітична мозаїка. Історична спадщина та сучасні тенденції. *Політичний менеджмент*, 2, 2004, s. 60.

18 МАЙБОРОДА, О.: Етнополітична ситуація в Україні: регіональний вимір. In: *Сприяння поширенню толерантності у поліетнічному суспільстві*. Київ, Фонд „Європа XXI“ 2002, s. 23.

nates? The conclusion arises that among all possible types – assimilation, subordination and cultural pluralism¹⁹ – the latter is determining for inter-ethnic climate in the region. Although, to establish more detailed reasons for this phenomenon further investigation is required, one thing is certain – the idea of tolerance of Bukovinians is one of the most effective instruments of preservation the cultural pluralism and simultaneously acts as a tool of “preservation instinct” of good neighbourly relations. At the same time there is no doubt that we may face with an arbitrary manipulation of the subjects with their ethnic characteristics, as well as with conscious, deliberately, expected tolerant behavior.

In conclusion do not forget that the described phenomenon reflects the trends, which are characteristic for the borderlands of Central and Eastern Europe, therefore, can and must be made the new parallels, as well as study of the specific interaction of ethnic groups in the borderlands.

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19 АЛЕКСАХИНА, Н.: *Динамика межэтнического взаимодействия в Российской Федерации*. Praha, Research support scheme 1999, s. 4.

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