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Hutsul Highlanders in Military Propaganda for the Purpose of Preparing the Society for War During the Decline of the Second Polish Republic (Selected Research Problems)

*Górale huculscy w wojskowej propagandzie na rzecz przysposobienia
społeczeństwa do wojny u schyłku Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej
(Wybrane problemy badawcze)*

ABSTRACT

The article discusses research findings on issues related to the preparations for defending the country taken at the end of the 1930s by the leadership of the Polish armed forces. Although the current historiography contains a great number of studies and articles dealing with this subject, the impression is that the role played by military propaganda in these preparations received too little emphasis. Propaganda for the defence of the state was intended to include as many citizens of Polish society as possible, also from ethnically and geographically diverse backgrounds. Therefore, the article contains an analysis of extensive propaganda activities, which after 1935 were implemented by the Polish military authorities in the face of the growing threat of war, carried out mainly on the basis of archives from the resources of the Central Military Archives (Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe) in Warsaw.

The essence of the discussion is the question why the military authorities of that time insisted that highlanders living in the Eastern Carpathians, primarily the Hutsuls, be involved in the defence preparations of the country. In the first place, propaganda measures were considered, with the help of which the army's leadership tried to influence the civilian population. Trying to explain why the use of the most effective propaganda tools, such as the press, radio and sound film turned out to be ineffective towards highlanders living in the furthest corners of the Carpathians, among other things, the lack of a well-developed communication network in that area was indicated. It was established that in the present situation the military authorities managed to involve the Hutsuls, Lemkos and Boykos in the life of the current state only thanks to the annual organisation of the 'Mountain Festival'. The celebrations organised in order to unite all highlanders who lived in the territory

of the Polish state were also conducive to carrying out effective military activities by the armed forces against the Polish population most distant from civilisation.

Research has shown that this type of activities was of great importance for the development of the situation in the Eastern Lesser Poland dominated by Ukrainian nationalists. Attention was drawn to the extremely valuable assets of the Hutsul region. It was an exceptionally attractive area in terms of tourism, sports and health. Thus, it had the chance to attract crowds of tourists from all over the country, which would strengthen the Polish element in the whole region. Hutsuls, however, were sceptical about the Ukrainian national movement, which made the army's leadership recognise them as an element easy to bind with the Polish state. Thereby, the inhabitants of the Hutsul region could be a counterbalance to the anti-state Ukrainian movement in Eastern Lesser Poland – an area of strategic importance! Unfortunately, advanced and properly conducted works were interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War.

Key words: Second Republic of Poland, army, military propaganda, defence of the state, preparation of society for war, Eastern Carpathians, Mountain Festival, Hutsuls, Hutsul region

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The final years of the Second Polish Republic went on under increasing threat of war. After the end of World War I, since mid-1930s, the order of Versailles was rapidly falling apart¹. The process undermined the position of Poland's. The perspective of aggression from Germany or the Soviet Union was becoming more and more real. Polish military strategists assessed the international situation as a prelude of a new global military conflict which would require the commitment of the entire manpower of the population alongside military strength². As part of military preparations, it was therefore important to activate as many of the citizens as possible, including people originating from politically, geographically and ethnically diverse environments³.

After 1935, the role of the army became more significant in political and social life of the Second Polish Republic⁴. It stemmed mostly

¹ P. Stawecki, *Z dziejów wojskowości Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Pułtusk 2001, pp. 55–56.

² J. Kęsik, *Naród pod bronią. Społeczeństwo w programie polskiej polityki wojskowej 1918–1939*, Wrocław 1998, p. 102.

³ A. Ignatowicz, *Przygotowanie obronne społeczeństwa w Polsce (1921–1939)*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 295, 297.

⁴ It managed to secure significant influence on education and upbringing, state economy and national matters. The army supervised national and social institutions. The position of the armed forces was also improved with regards to the formal and legal aspects. Under the April Constitution the army became a far more independent institution. The President's decree of 9 May 1936 also contributed to the state of affairs by reinforcing the position of the General Inspector of the Armed Forces [hereinafter: GISZ]. Among other things, his influence on decisions of the government was increased. For more details see:

from the military threat but the state of affairs was also considerably affected by the internal situation of the country⁵. After the death of Józef Piłsudski, arose problems involving the selection of new authorities⁶. Radicalisation of social moods caused by the economic crisis of the early 1930s intensified⁷. Numerous national minorities, aware of their individuality and political goals, still posed a threat to the unity of the country⁸. The circumstances indicated that the armed forces proved to be an institution which could help maintain the integrity of Poland both in external and internal sense⁹.

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Actions for the purpose of preparing the society for the possibility of war were taken by the army shortly after Poland regained independence. Their activity manifested mostly in areas of education and upbringing. During the entire interwar period, the military, alongside schools, performed the function of a large educational facility¹⁰. Fighting illiteracy was particularly important, initiated by military authorities without waiting for the effects of civilian institutions. The problem directly affected the defensive abilities of the country¹¹. The courses provided during compulsory military training did not only instruct the illiterate

J. Kęsik, *op. cit.*, pp. 107, 110–111, 118. Aneta Ignatowicz points out the need of a formal confirmation of the head of the GISZ, gen. Edward Śmigły-Rydz, who, unlike Józef Piłsudski, did not have an indisputable position in top level authorities of the country. For more details see: A. Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 205–206.

⁵ J. Kęsik, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–34.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 106.

⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 102–103.

⁸ A. Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 295. Ethnic minorities were unevenly distributed across the country. This led to many problems regarding formation of defence and security of the country. For more details see: T.A. Kowalski, *Mniejszości narodowe w siłach zbrojnych Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (1918–1939)*, Toruń 1998, p. 17. Ukrainian and Belarusian population sought national and social liberation. German minorities tried to keep a privileged position which would allow them to dominate over Poles in economic and political aspects. The aspirations of these three minority groups undermined the unity of the Polish country. For more details see: A. Chojnowski, *Koncepcje polityki narodowościowej rządów polskich 1921–1939*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk 1979, p. 240.

⁹ J. Kęsik, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 188.

¹¹ According to military authorities, an illiterate soldier was unable to become interested in matters regarding the state, learn independent action and most importantly was not fit to effectively carry out orders. The problem was the least severe in Greater Poland, Silesia and Pomerania. It was more pronounced in Galicia. The worst situation was in the former Russian partition, in particularly the Kresy, where the percentage of illiterate conscripts reached up to 90%. For more details see: J. Kęsik, *op. cit.*, pp. 139–140.

soldier on reading and writing but also taught him about the organisation of the country, its system and history¹².

During the decline of the Second Polish Republic the fight against illiteracy was continued but at a smaller scale. Development of education decreased the number of affected people¹³. Propaganda activity, in turn, was intensified in face of the rising threat of war, and it was intended to affect both military and civilian groups of the society¹⁴. It was necessary to familiarise everyone, starting from privates, with the disadvantageous international position of Poland at the time. As a consequence, an emphasis was put on the grave importance of the armed forces and the necessity of contributing to the preparation of the country's defences¹⁵.

Execution of the task required increased application of resources used in propaganda¹⁶. Military recreation rooms acquired publications on topics regarding national defence. Radio receivers were also being supplied. Reading press during educational courses was meant to encourage soldiers to take an active stance in face of events taking place in national and social environment, whereas listening to radio programmes would persuade them to treat the radio as an excellent source of information, which in turn led to supplementing their knowledge and providing entertainment. In addition to that, propaganda measures involved garrison cinemas, theatres and army choirs. Programmes of national anniversaries, regimental celebrations and commemorative military ceremonies were structured in a way that would allow the soldier to acquire the qualities of real wartime heroes through songs, music and theatrical plays. That way he would learn how to express the attachment to his homeland as well as discover the significance of a celebrated holiday. One of the aims of such activities

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 137.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 141.

¹⁴ A. Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

¹⁵ Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe [hereinafter: CAW], 11 Dywizja Piechoty, ref. no. I.313.11.69, 48 Pułk Piechoty Strzelców Kresowych. Program pracy oświatowo-wychowawczej i propagandowej w pułku, no pagination

¹⁶ Launching the propaganda action changed the meaning of army education. Defence-oriented upbringing with the use of multifaceted propaganda influence was a priority. An institution responsible for defence education of the entire society was the Military Education Institute [hereinafter: WINO], established in 1934. For more details see: A. Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 206. WINO had access to measures of shaping public opinion such as press, radio or publishing institutions. See P. Stawecki, *Następcy Komendanta. Wojsko a polityka wewnętrzna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1935–1939*, Warszawa 1969, p. 244. The cultural, educational and propaganda aspect in the Polish Army of the Second Polish Republic is covered in studies by Janusz Odziemkowski and Lech Wyszczelski. See J. Odziemkowski, *Armia i społeczeństwo II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1996; L. Wyszczelski, *Działalność oświatowo-wychowawcza w Wojsku Polskim II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1997.

was preparation of the soldier to properly read propaganda materials. He would popularise these ideals in the environment from which he came from. He would also propagate the most effective means of propaganda at the time, namely press, radio and sound film, far more effectively. It was also desirable that he took part in social life of his town in such ways as helping organise celebrations of national holidays. This would provide other inhabitants with a role model¹⁷.

As accurately noted by Piotr Stawecki, military education based on propaganda did not always produce expected results. After returning to civilian life, the soldiers were susceptible to negative influence¹⁸. However, taking into account the international position of Poland at the time, it has to be noted that it was the duty of military authorities to make sure that no key methods leading to the increase of the society's awareness concerning national defence were overlooked. A veteran soldier seemed to be the primary means for meeting these expectations¹⁹.

Military camps and gatherings provided an occasion for more direct and effective propaganda influence on society. Close contact of the soldiers with civilian population would make it easier for citizens to accept the necessity of having a strong and well-equipped army. It also involved the need of making citizens aware of the fact that their taxes go to a righteous cause. This especially involved areas populated by people of mixed ethnicity where the intention was to encourage local Polish communities and at the same time inspire the non-Polish population to admire the army. Both officers and privates had to behave among citizens in a way which would convince the entire community that this was their army. This was achieved by organising entertainment in which participated not only locals but also people from surrounding areas. Such activities would mostly have edutainment qualities but with the use of propaganda influence. Apart from a military band, the programme of said events would also include army choirs. An appropriate selection of military songs would promote desirable patriotic values. Plays were staged by military theatre groups, but wandering theatres were also allowed²⁰.

¹⁷ CAW, 11 Dywizja Piechoty, ref. no. I.313.11.69, Ministerstwo Spraw Wojskowych. Message No. 11. Wytyczne pracy oświatowo-kulturalnej i wychowawczej na okres jesienno-zimowy 1936-1937, no pagination

¹⁸ P. Stawecki, *Następcy Komendanta*, pp. 214-215.

¹⁹ CAW, DOK VI Lwów, ref. no. I.371.6.36, Dowództwo Okręgu Korpusu NR.VI. Samodzielny Referat Oświatowy. Wytyczne pracy oświatowo-kulturalnej i wychowawczej w wojsku na okres 1935/36 r., no pagination

²⁰ CAW, 11 Dywizja Piechoty, ref. no. I.313.11.69, Ministerstwo Spraw Wojskowych. Wytyczne propagandy w czasie pobytu wojska w obozach i na koncentracji. 11 June 1938 r., no pagination.

It is worth noting that the military strongly opposed improper use of the means of propaganda, for instance, in the case of a comedy play written even before the war, titled 'Rural Wedding'. Military authorities realised that the continuation of a play, which was formerly used for attacking the then partitioning government, would in turn undermine the Polish government. In particular, it would prove detrimental to the defence capabilities of the country. The reason for arriving at such a conclusion was the fact that the story introduced the idea that the taxes paid by peasants are used for maintaining the army and ensuring their blind loyalty. The message conveyed by the play was therefore for the villagers to avoid tax payment. Therefore, the choice of plays for amateur theatres was subject to review, and inappropriate scripts were rejected²¹.

Soldiers training during military camps and gatherings had access to a travelling cinema and radio. They were allowed to use such devices during celebrations with civilian population which undoubtedly influenced the attractiveness of such events in a positive manner²². A vehicle equipped with cinema-radio sound system was considered to be a very effective means of distributing propaganda, which was based on trials and observations carried out in Grodno District²³. It had particular significance for rural population, who saw sound films for the first time in their lives. Having seen Polish Army soldiers portrayed on screen as kind towards people and ready to provide help to citizens, they were ready to consider them as one of their own. This therefore validated the necessity of paying taxes²⁴.

During an extended stay of an army detachment in any town efforts were made in order to raise awareness among the locals about the idea of having the entire society help reinforce the defence capabilities of the country. It was ordered to broadcast cases of purchasing military equipment by civilian population in various parts of the country. In towns

²¹ CAW, Departament Dowodzenia Ogólnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.22.120, Niewłaściwa propaganda przez teatry amatorskie. July, August 1937 r., no pagination.

²² CAW, 11 Dywizja Piechoty, ref. no. I.313.11.69, Ministerstwo Spraw Wojskowych. Wytyczne propagandy w czasie pobytu wojska w obozach i na koncentracji. 11 June 1938 r., no pagination.

²³ CAW, Departament Dowodzenia Ogólnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.22.120, Dowództwo Okręgu Korpusu nr III. Praca samochodu kinowo-radiowego. Pokrywanie wydatków. 7 October 1937 r., no pagination.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, Dowództwo Okręgu Korpusu nr III. Akcja propagandowo-oświatowa samochodu kinowo-radiowego. 7 October 1937 r., no pagination. Army units which were present at training ground exercises were obligated to provide assistance to the local population with e.g. construction of bridges or field work. For more details see: J. Kęsik, *op. cit.*, pp. 70–72.

which already donated equipment for the National Defence Fund, it was recommended to highlight the bond created between the army and the people that way²⁵.

Welcoming celebrations were organised for soldiers returning from training. These were meant to improve already existing bonds of the army with the people through open expression of real affection of civilians directed towards armed forces²⁶. This was also one of the ways of affecting the society, with the use of the most effective propaganda tools. Newspapers immediately informed that home cities of particular units welcome warmly the soldiers returning from the preparations for the defence of the country. Attention was brought to the overflowing 'popular trains' which would bring people to the organised events in each city. The composition of greeting committees was broadcasted, indicating the participation of the highest urban authorities. Speeches made by state officials were announced by radio. Newspaper sections dedicated to the most interesting radio programmes reports on finished military training²⁷.

Promoting events in big cities such as Warsaw or Lviv affected smaller towns where celebrations were organised for regiments stationed there. Local press would strongly emphasise that regimental celebrations were organised for the entire city. Messages were directed to the citizens inviting them to not only join in the celebration but also participate in organising them. Also in this case the celebration programmes were broadcasted by radio. During the celebration of the Holiday of the 1st Regiment of Podhale Rifles, the authorities of Nowy Sącz even organised broadcast by all Polish radio stations²⁸.

These actions usually achieved their intended goals. The people often greeted the soldiers returning from training as if they were war heroes.

²⁵ CAW, 11 Dywizja Piechoty, ref. no. I.313.11.69, Ministerstwo Spraw Wojskowych. Wytuczne propagandy w czasie pobytu wojska w obozach i na koncentracji. 11 June 1938 r., no pagination. In addition, quite important for propaganda activity was supporting many funds for the purpose of improving the army equipment. National Defence Fund, established in April 1936, was the most popular. There were also cases of spontaneously organised local collection funds for purchasing weapons for a selected military unit. All these actions were linked with large scale defence education. For more details see: A. Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 210–211.

²⁶ CAW, Departament Dowodzenia Ogólnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.22.117, Pismo Prezydenta Miasta Stołecznego Warszawy Stefana Starzyńskiego do Generała Janusza Głuchowskiego I Wiceministra Spraw Wojskowych z dnia 25 września 1936 r., no pagination.

²⁷ *Armia z narodem. Uroczyste powitanie wojska powracającego z ćwiczeń*, 'Polska Zbrojna' 18 September 1936, 251.

²⁸ *Odezwa Zarządu miasta Nowego Sącza w związku z uroczystościami pułkowemi*, 'Głos Podhala' 4 October 1936, 40.

Seeing them as their future defenders, they voluntarily sought to form as close bonds with the army as it was possible²⁹.

The bond created that way was meant to increase the defence capabilities of the country. It involved primarily the border areas. Military authorities wanted to stabilise situation in those areas due to the increasing threat of aggression from the two powerful neighbours of Poland. In terms of political and military questions, Eastern Lesser Poland was seen as a key location due to the presence of rich resource deposits in the area, including crude oil and potassium salts. The army authorities were also concerned that the Ukrainian population living there would disrupt mobilisation efforts in the near future³⁰. Development of radical Ukrainian nationalism provided reasons to worry, especially in the form of terrorist and sabotage activity of the Ukrainian Nationalist Organisation (OUN) formed in 1929³¹.

The source of inspiration for nationalist movements among the Ukrainian minority was the complicated international situation of Poland, especially the threat of German attack³². The Nazis launched a campaign which would support Ukrainians in a fight for their own independent country³³. They used the German minority inhabiting South-Eastern Poland to increase tensions in Polish-Ukrainian relations³⁴. Anti-

²⁹ P. Stawecki, *Z dziejów wojskowości Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, p. 307.

³⁰ J. Moklak, *Łemkowszczyzna w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Zagadnienia polityczne i wyznaniowe*, Kraków 1997, p. 160.

³¹ O. Grott, *Związek Ziemi Górskich – sanacyjna próba budowania regionalizmu karpackiego jako funkcja podniesienia bezpieczeństwa na Kresach Południowo-Wschodnich*, in: *Wokół regionalizmu. Formy i odmiany kwestii regionalnej*, sci. ed. J. Poniedziałek, Olsztyn 2015, p. 75. The terrorist and sabotage activity of the Ukrainian Nationalist Organisation [hereinafter: OUN] was broadly discussed in the paper by Roman Wysocki. Cf. R. Wysocki, *Organizacja Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów w Polsce w latach 1929–1939. Geneza, struktura, program, ideologia*, Lublin 2003. Chapter V of this thesis (pp. 229–257) involves the activity of OUN during the second half of the 1930s.

³² T.A. Kowalski, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

³³ R. Torzecki, *Kwestia ukraińska w polityce III Rzeszy (1933–1945)*, Warszawa 1972, p. 175. It is worth remembering that cutting the Second Polish Republic off the eastern territories and formation of independent and united Ukraine was the most important goal of the most of Ukrainian political circles. For more details see: H. Chałupczak, T. Browarek, *Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce 1918–1995*, Lublin 2000, p. 84. Hopes of Ukrainians of founding Great Ukraine with the help of Germans were rekindled in the moment of so-called Autonomous Carpathian Ukraine in September 1938. For more details see: A. Chojnowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 234–235.

³⁴ Efforts for that purpose were mostly carried out by Protestant clergy and local German teachers. German teachers conducting Ukrainian studies in these areas doubled as intelligence agents. Having an easy access to Ukrainian politicians and social activists they led to reinforcing an already strong German agitation among the Ukrainian population inhabiting South-Eastern Poland. R. Torzecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 149–150, 169–170.

state demonstrations were organised in Lviv, Stanisławów and other cities of South-Eastern voivodeships³⁵. Ukrainian nationalists considered Germans to be their allies, even after the failed attempt of forming a small Ukrainian state in Carpathian Ruthenia. They encouraged their fellow countrymen to initiate preparations for the purpose of armed insurgency. At a certain point the development of events lead to a situation where Polish authorities had to take into consideration a possibility of an uprising in Eastern Lesser Poland³⁶.

These events and many similar ones indicated the lack of identification as part of the Polish state among the nationally alien population. Fraternisation of the Ukrainian minority with the potential aggressor, especially, their possible participation in sabotage operations, led to a situation in which the army authorities linked the security of South-Eastern border with strengthening the Polish identity in these parts³⁷. It was not only about the increase in Polish population by bringing them from other parts of the country. Military authorities also wanted to diminish the influence of the Ukrainian minority by using natural animosities among their communities³⁸. Therefore, they decided to assimilate Lemkos, Boykos and Hutsuls as these regional groups had a vague national identity³⁹. They constituted separate groups of Ukrainian people, with different history, dialect and traditions. They also separated themselves from the Ukrainian nationalist movement⁴⁰.

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During the Second Polish Republic Hutsuls, Lemkos and Boykos lived in Eastern Carpathians⁴¹. Inclusion of these peoples for the sake of national defence was not easy. They inhabited the high parts of the mountains which, combined with the weak development of the local communication network, made it impossible to immediately employ the most powerful means of propaganda. This disadvantageous state of things is confirmed by some of the assumptions of the plan regarding the Carpathians developed in 1939

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 174.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 182. The possibility of starting an uprising in South-Eastern voivodeships of Poland was rendered impossible only by the signature of Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. For more details see: *Ibidem*, p. 185.

³⁷ J. Kęsik, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

³⁸ H. Chałupczak, T. Browarek, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

³⁹ O. Grott, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

⁴⁰ H. Chałupczak, T. Browarek, *op. cit.*, pp. 57–58.

⁴¹ In accordance with the division of the Carpathians within the borders of the Second Polish Republic as done by professor Walery Goetel. For more details see: W. Goetel, *Zagadnienia Regionalizmu Górskiego w Polsce*, Kraków 1936, pp. 12–19.

in accordance with the tasks stemming from the activity of the Union of the Mountain Lands (Polish: Związek Ziem Górskich, hereinafter: ZZG), an organisation closely cooperating with the army. The Plan of Cultural and Economic Development of the Carpathians primarily involved developing the radio infrastructure of Carpathian rural areas, development of rural cinematography, supporting programmes of establishing reading rooms and libraries as well as construction of community centres. It indicated the need for reorganisation and development of the local road network⁴².

However, those projects were time-consuming and required significant financial investment. Complications arose due to the shortage of large urban centres located in the Carpathian region⁴³. This made it difficult to access daily press, posters hung in various places, travel cinema-radio or amateur theatre plays. Cities and towns could constitute a natural concentration of various types of propaganda spreading into surrounding rural areas. A villager arriving at the market would not only sell his produce and acquire work tools but also have a chance of becoming interested in state matters.

Hutsuls, Lemkos and Boykos virtually did not participate in the process of town-village exchange. They were very poor. Their sustenance was based on herding and farming. However, poor soil quality made farming efficiency in Eastern Carpathians significantly weaker in comparison to other agricultural regions in Poland⁴⁴. They could not offer much at a town market, and their meagre profits made it impossible for them to obtain daily use products. Instead of being oriented towards exchange of goods, the economy of the local villages had to be self-sufficient. People satisfied their basic needs locally by working in their own homestead industries.

⁴² *Podstawy Planu Rozwoju Kulturalnego I Gospodarczego Karpat*, Związek Ziem Górskich, Warszawa 1939, copy from 'Rocznik Ziem Górskich – 1939', pp. 4, 10, 15. ZZG founded in August 1936 during the 'Mountain Convention' in Sanok. The main goal of the organisation was increasing the cultural and economic standing of the Carpathians, socialisation of the local population and rational use of the regional values of mountain territories for general benefit of the country and society. For more details see: E. Chudziński, *Związek Ziem Górskich (1936–1939)*, 'Małopolska' 2002, 4, pp. 251–263. The primary goal of the ZZG was cooperation with ministries of the state authorities responsible for economic and cultural matters. Their priority was cooperation with the military. Head of the organisation, Minister of Military Affairs Gen. Tadeusz Kasprzycki, stated that the effort in relation to improvement of economic and cultural state of the Carpathians only seems to be less involved with the main goal of the state resulting from the present political situation, namely working for the development of defences and armed forces. The planned development of border territories included Carpathian areas as well. For more details see: O. Grott, *op. cit.*, pp. 78–79.

⁴³ O. Grott, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 90.

Each farmer was a craftsman by necessity. They became joiners, carpenters, wheelwrights or shoemakers, as necessary. They would tan leather using alum as well as other household chemicals such as sour dough made of flour and grit. Mountain villagers rarely brought grain to a mill due to poverty, and ground them into flour in their own querns. Primitive roads also made it difficult to contact other inhabitants as they were not usable by horse carriage in heavy rain. Even journey on foot became impossible when the waters of local rivers and streams rose, destroying passages and footbridges. Such events completely isolated them from the outside world. These people would often live exclusively in peace of their home village or at the most in vicinity of a few small villages⁴⁵. They were isolated even from culturally related highlanders inhabiting other parts of the Carpathians⁴⁶.

Lowlands are devoid of obstacles typical to mountainous environment. There are no hills hindering communication, the climate, landscape and economy is less diverse which means that there is more cultural exchange and, as a result, civilizational development is more uniform. Mountains, in turn, facilitate the existence of isolated regional units and, therefore, lead to inconsistencies which are difficult to overcome. This phenomenon was meant to be remedied by the organisation of the 'Mountain Festival' (Polish: 'Święto Gór') events which would involve all highlanders living in the Second Polish Republic⁴⁷. The undertaking would allow simultaneous incorporation of the most remote peoples into the national routine. They would mingle with other highlanders, and learn about other citizens of Poland as well as their cultural heritage. The grand common holiday of the highlanders would be held in a different area each year. Each time a different representative of the mountain peoples would have the honour of hosting, giving every one of them a chance to prove themselves as organisers⁴⁸.

⁴⁵ E. Słuszkiewicz, *Przewodnik po Sanoku i ziemi sanockiej*, Sanok 1936, pp. 31–33.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 38.

⁴⁷ O. Grott, *op. cit.*, p. 78. In years 1935–1938 regular meetings took place which involved inhabitants of Silesian and Żywiec Beskids, Skalne Podhale, Gorce, Pieniny and Nowy Sącz regions with Eastern Carpathian highlanders. For more details see: E. Chudziński, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

⁴⁸ E. Słuszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 37–38. The organisation of a holiday for all Carpathian highlanders in 1934 did not come to fruition because of a great flood. The following celebrations were held each year but under a different name each time: in 1935 'Mountain Festival' in Zakopane, in 1936 'Zjazd Górski (Mountain Congress)' in Sanok, in 1937 'Tydzień Gór (Mountain Week)' in Wisła, in 1938 'Dni Gór (Mountain Days)' in Nowy Sącz. In 1939 the outbreak of the war made it impossible to organise the 'Tydzień Gór' in Zakopane. Due to the same circumstances the next holiday, meant to be hosted by ZZG

Starting from inaugural celebrations which took place in 1935 in Zakopane, the significance of the regional holiday started to grow into that of a national event⁴⁹. Apart from highlanders arriving from various parts of the Carpathians, people from the entire Poland would come as well. Performances of artists who wished to faithfully represent their folklore, parades of regional bands, marches along city streets, expositions presenting folk craftsmanship, agricultural fairs and shows, meant that Poles were enriched with another element of culture and patriotism. The annual organisation of 'Mountain Festival' constituted a great occasion for strengthening the pre-existing bond of the society with the military and facilitated establishment of new friendly relations by the army. The celebrations were accompanied by performances of army bands, military parades and marches, apart from regional highlander groups there were also guards of honour from local regiments. Minister of Military Affairs, gen. Tadeusz Kasprzycki actively participated in many important events associated with that highlander holiday. Such was the case with dożynki celebration, which were a part of the 'Mountain Days' (Polish: 'Dni Gór') programme in Nowy Sącz, when during the march of all regional groups before the honorary viewing platform he received a highly ornamental wreath. On the 'Zjazd Górski' which occurred in Sanok two years earlier, for the opening of touristically important road of Komańcza-Jaśliska, Gen. Kasprzycki arrived accompanied by the voivode of Lviv, a former legionnaire, Władysław Belina-Prażmowski⁵⁰. His earlier military activity made him a legend even during his lifetime⁵¹. Grand

Stanisławów Branch with a meeting place in one of the towns in the Prut Valley also could not be organised. For more details see: E. Chudziński, *op. cit.*, pp. 254, 261–262.

⁴⁹ M. Wołos, *Władysław Raczkiewicz jako wojewoda krakowski w 1935 roku*, in: *Londyńska reduta*, vol. 1: *Władysław Raczkiewicz (1885–1947)*, sci. eds. J. Kłaczek, M. Golon, K. Kania, Z. Girzyński, Toruń 2017, pp. 188–189, 201.

⁵⁰ M. Kurzeja-Świątek, *Święta Gór (1935–1938) i ich rola w krzewieniu wiedzy o regionach, 'Małopolska'* 2013, 15, pp. 132–156.

⁵¹ Colonel Władysław Belina-Prażmowski was the creator of the reformed Polish cavalry, president of the city of Kraków and voivode of Lviv. By commanding cavalry of the Polish legions during World War I he brought back to life the greatest traditions of this military unit. He was one of the most popular figures of Polish interwar period. Over the span of several generations 'Belina' was an important patriotic role model for many young Poles. Many anecdotes and stories were made up about him. The famous uhlan was portrayed in songs, poems and legends. When Władysław Belina-Prażmowski made public appearances, especially during important celebrations, he would inspire awe and respect for the military even when he did not intend to. For more details see: P. Stawecki, *Prażmowski (Belina-Prażmowski) Władysław Zygmunt (1888–1938)*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 28, 3, 118, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź 1985, pp. 393–395. For more details see: P. Hubiak, *Belina i jego ulani*, Kraków 2003, pp. 5–6, 102.

speeches by officers of the Polish army during celebrations also played an important role. These referred to the participation of highlanders in Poland's independence and reminded the society about the need of cooperation with the army in every scope of activity⁵².

'Mountain Festival' contributed to spreading national defence propaganda among the people who were on the fringe of its influence range. This is indicated by the course of excursions organised by the military authorities in years 1935–1937. Trips around Poland were a reward for excellent performances during holidays held in Zakopane, Sanok and Wisła. Highlanders representing all regional artistic groups participated in said excursions. The mountain youth learned about Polish cultural heritage by visiting monuments in large cities. They could also admire the economic achievements of the country by visiting the sea port in Gdynia or mines and metalworks in Katowice. The highlanders treasured the travels to the biggest Polish cities as their fondest memories, sharing their experiences in their home villages and towns afterwards. An outing organised under the name 'Highlanders welcome the Army' (Polish: 'Górale witają Armię'), set up in September 1936, had a crucial significance in terms of propaganda⁵³. Just as the two other events, it served the purpose of the unification of highlander peoples with the inhabitants of great Polish cities as well as guiding visitors around the most interesting parts of Lviv, Warsaw, and Kraków. One of the key goals was to present the inhabitants of Carpathian villages with an opportunity to partake in official welcoming of the army returning from training. The programme and route of the excursion was planned in a way that would allow the highlanders to participate in the great review of the army organised at the time in Lviv⁵⁴. They had a chance to see thousands of Lvivians with flowers in their hands, crowded on pavements and welcoming troops returning from their manoeuvres. A parade of fifty thousand soldiers greatly impressed the highlanders, including those from the furthest parts of the Carpathians. They also engaged in greeting the troops, cheering for the army and their founder, Marshall Józef Piłsudski. Accompanied by the endless clapping and cheering, they admired the famous cavalry, proud of their traditions. The infantry, marching at constant pace with sharpened bayonets and glistening steel helmets, seemed cordial towards the patriots and fierce to the enemies. They also saw a parade of motorcyclists in black jackets, artillery and tanks. Hearing the roar of three hundred military

⁵² M. Kurzeja-Świątek, *op. cit.*, pp. 146, 156.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, pp. 136–137, 142, 150.

⁵⁴ CAW, Gabinet Ministra Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.1.644, Sprawozdanie z wycieczki góralskiej po Polsce w dniach od 12–18.IX.1936 r., no pagination.

planes flying overhead in formation, they admired this latest technology with delight. These unforgettable moments resulted in the declarations that highlanders were always loyal to Poland as well. The Raclawice Panorama, viewed on the day preceding the official welcoming of the army, must have helped in forming such a declaration. The highlanders saw how peasants used to shed blood for Poland. Seeing the burning cottages and a Christian cross shredded by bullets, they found themselves unintentionally clenching their fists. Women could not hold back their tears at the sight of a dead bloodied villager who just moments before with his axe defended not just his own possessions, but his homeland as well. Highlanders asked whether they liked the painting answered unanimously that it was worth coming just to see it. Going to Warsaw, their next destination, they were saddened to depart from Lviv so soon⁵⁵. Bonding with soldiers was also facilitated by accommodating and feeding the tourists at military barracks. Garrisons took great care of the visitors, trying to make their stay as comfortable as possible. Based on the course of the tour, the army authorities recognised that despite representing a minuscule part of the society, highlanders had a chance of appreciating the value of the Polish Army⁵⁶.

In September 1939, due to the planned involvement of foreign regional groups, the highlander holiday would gain an international character. However, the organisation of the 'Mountain Week' (Polish: 'Tydzień Gór') in Zakopane was made impossible due to the outbreak of World War II. The programme assumptions of the unrealised event indicate that the efforts of the military authorities in mobilising the highlander population for defence preparations were effective. In face of the constant predictions of an imminent military conflict, all Polish highlanders were to manifest their readiness to take part in the effort of defending the mountainous areas during the 'Mountain Week'. Exemplary attitude of the Carpathian border population would show the world that the Polish nation is capable of facing the attacker at any section of their country's borders. The holiday was also meant to cement the last years' efforts put in reuniting the entire community of highlanders. The intention was to remind the highlanders that they are bound by common tradition, identical culture and customs, similar living conditions and their devotion to their mountains. By visiting the expositions and looking at regional performances they would become more certain that they constitute a big family. Highlanders would have also realised by then that they are united in the fight for freedom

⁵⁵ M. Szurmiak, *Górale witają armię*, 'Głos Podhala' 27 September 1936, 39.

⁵⁶ CAW, Gabinet Ministra Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.1.644, Sprawozdanie z wycieczki góralskiej po Polsce w dniach od 12–18.IX.1936 r., no pagination.

of their homeland, taking after their ancestors from various parts of the Carpathians whose bravery was recorded in Polish history. Ranks of the Legions were populated by Silesian highlanders, Podhale inhabitants and Hutsuls living in the most inaccessible parts of the Carpathians⁵⁷.

* * * *

Hutsul highlanders usually did not settle in valleys. Their cottages were scattered along slopes, distant from one another⁵⁸. Most often, the Hutsuls inhabited the mountainous parts of Pokuttia and Bukovina⁵⁹. Within the Second Polish Republic's territory the Hutsul settlements existed in the Southern part of Kosiv and Nadvirna districts, as well as in the Kolomyia district⁶⁰. The Hutsul region, encompassing the ethnographic Hutsul parts in the three aforementioned districts, was located in the Stanisławów Voivodeship⁶¹.

As early as in 1914 Mieczysław Orłowicz stated in a guidebook on Eastern Carpathians that 'this strip of land, mountainous and forested, is inhabited by a group of Ruthenian highlanders, having different garments, character, appearance and customs from others'⁶². The forces of the 2nd Brigade of the Polish Legions realised this when in late autumn that year they fought against an offensive of two Russian divisions marching towards Bukovina⁶³.

Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade already had a chance to familiarise themselves with the Ruthenian peoples during their stay in Hungary and near Nadvirna. In comparison to the friendly Hutsul men and women wearing unusually elaborate outfits, these people seemed poorer, more secretive and, most importantly, not hospitable towards Polish soldiers. Meanwhile in Żabie (now Verkhovyna), an unofficial centre of the Hutsul region, an atmosphere of freedom, trust and happiness was noticeable upon their arrival⁶⁴.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, Związek Ziem Górskich. Main committee of 'Mountain Week' in Zakopane of 1939, sheet 446–449, Draft of a letter of the president of the Union of the Mountain Lands addressed to the chief director of the Powszechny Bank Związkowy containing a request for subvention to cover organisation costs of the 'Mountain Week', sheet 461.

⁵⁸ M. Orłowicz, *Ilustrowany przewodnik po Wschodnich Karpatach Galicji, Bukowiny i Węgier*, Lwów 1914, Warszawa 1990 reprint, pp. 30, 70.

⁵⁹ A. Smoliński, *Barwa 49 Huculskiego Pułku Strzelców – ciekawy element działań integracyjnych w Armii II Rzeczypospolitej*, 'Rocznik Przemyski' 2012, 48, 1, *Historia wojskowości*, pp. 94–95.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 96.

⁶¹ W. Goetel, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁶² Cited after M. Orłowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁶³ A. Smoliński, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

⁶⁴ J.A. Teslar, *Legiony na Huculszczyźnie*, 'Wiadomości Polskie' 1914–1915, 1, 16, p. 6.

Poles fighting in the Hutsul region did not just meet with hearty greetings from the locals, they could also count on their assistance⁶⁵. Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade were supported by Hutsul scouts assembling in Żabie. Also along the front line, which spanned along Kryvorivnya, Yaseniv, Jaworowa and Sokołówka, the Hutsuls would provide Poles with valuable intel on the position and forces of the enemy on their own initiative. They warned in advance the forces retreating from the front about dangers, which allowed them to prevail. Volunteers also entered the ranks of the reforming Polish Army⁶⁶. About 120 inhabitants of the Hutsul region were recruited, forming the 'Hutsul Company', the existence of which within the 2nd Brigade is the first documented fact of the Hutsul service in Polish armed forces⁶⁷.

Between the legionnaires of the 2nd Brigade and the Hutsul people a certain bond had formed which indicated the possibility of incorporating Hutsuls into the Polish statehood or even their Polonisation. However, military and political authorities of the reborn Polish state seemed to overlook this advantageous situation, at least initially. All Ukrainians from areas of the former Eastern Galicia were treated as 'Ruthenians'. The authorities ignored the fact that some of them declared that they were not 'Ruthenians' or Ukrainians but Hutsuls, Lemkos, Boykos or simply described themselves as 'the locals'⁶⁸.

The interest in the Hutsul region which started at the turn of the century, especially due to its invaluable tourist potential and suitable conditions for winter sports, continued and intensified. This applied to more than just the civilian part of the society. Hutsul region also fascinated officers serving in detachments accommodated near that region, in particular the 49th Infantry Regiment stationed in Kolomyia⁶⁹.

⁶⁵ A. Smoliński, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁶⁶ J.A. Teslar, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁶⁷ A. Smoliński, *op. cit.*, p. 101. It is worth noting that Hutsuls helped all soldiers who fought against Russians in the Carpathians. This included Poles as well as Ukrainians, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians and Germans. Hutsuls were also eager to join the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen [hereinafter: USS]. A certain form of rivalry had emerged between the 2nd Brigade and the USS over the Hutsul volunteers. For more details see: A. Smoliński, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–104. More detailed information about the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, including the Polish-Ukrainian rivalry over recruiting Huculs into their own ranks and their service in the USS can be found in the study by Marek Bogdan Kozubel. See M.B. Kozubel, *Ukraińscy Strzelcy Siczowi 1914–1920*, Oświęcim 2015.

⁶⁸ A. Smoliński, *op. cit.*, pp. 108, 118.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 117–119. This was caused not only by the geographic proximity of the region. A very important role was played later by Brig. Gen. Kazimierz Orlik-Łukoski, who began his career in the 2nd Brigade of the Polish Legions. He was a great admirer of the Hutsuls. While commanding the 11 Infantry Division since 1927 (renamed in 1937 as 11th

Carpathian highlanders, a large share of whom were Hutsuls, served in the 49th Infantry Regiment alongside Poles and soldiers of other nationalities. The Hutsul tradition and folklore, as well as the nature of Eastern Carpathians constituted an important element of the educational effort carried out in the regiment. Walls of the recreational rooms, casinos and offices were decorated with Hutsul kilims as well as photographs and paintings depicting the beauty of their land. Officially celebrated regimental holiday became an occasion to establish cooperation with the local community. Representatives of the authorities would be hosted during the celebrations, as well as delegations of befriended regiments and local population. In addition, present were inhabitants of mountainous regions who saw the regimental celebrations as an attractive spectacle and entertainment. Soon the detachment was even referred to as 'our regiment'. This created bonds which integrated the Hutsuls with the army as well as with the country they represented. National holidays and anniversaries were also a regular occurrence. The crowning moment of the cooperation of the military with the civilian population inhabiting these areas was the regimental holiday of 1938. A parade of several hundred Hutsuls marched through the streets of Kolomyia. The regiment was also granted weapons funded by the inhabitants of Pokuttia. The holiday included a radio programme titled: 'For the Hutsul Infantry Regiment'⁷⁰.

Another way of creating and strengthening rapport with civilian population was the socio-economic activity of the 49th Infantry Regiment, which involved initiating the foundation of education facilities, cooperative organisations, stores, interest free loan funds and organisation of various courses, especially regarding trade and veterinary medicine. A significant example in which the activity of the regiment could have helped the local society was the excursion to the sea, the costs of which were covered by the army. This occurrence was of tremendous importance since it involved a large group of Hutsul children. Most families living in the Hutsul region could not afford such an attraction to their children. On their way there, they also visited Warsaw⁷¹.

The top-level military and political authorities finally realised that all these efforts started at least in mid-1920s, shouldered by the command of the 49th Infantry Regiment for the goal of associating the Hutsuls

Carpathian Infantry Division), Gen. Łukoski instilled this attitude toward Hutsul region in his subordinates. He was likely the first to identify the possibility of integrating Hutsuls into the Polish country via the army. For more details see: A. Smoliński, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 119-120.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 120.

with the army, and their results could prove quite advantageous to the Polish state⁷².

The question of Eastern Lesser Poland was one of many ethnic issues in the Kresy during the second half of the 1930s. Local Ukrainians intimidated and terrorised Poles who gradually started to feel inferior in these lands. The well-organised Ukrainian nationalists attempted to educate other 'Ruthenians' on what is their 'true' national identity, undermining the authority of the Polish state. Therefore, a necessity arose to do whatever it took to hinder the activity of the Ukrainian anti-state movement. As assessed by the military authorities, the Hutsul region was the least affected area. Because of that fact they decided that it might be beneficial to look into the general situation unfolding in Eastern Lesser Poland⁷³.

Army authorities concluded that the Hutsuls, loyal and quite resistant to Ukrainian influence could destabilize their concentrated anti-Polish front. This was also motivated by the fact that the Hutsuls fought in the 2nd Brigade of the Polish Legions. These civilians, in turn, served the legionnaires selflessly by organising reconnaissance and guiding them among this difficult, mountainous area. Most importantly, they were aware that they do not support Austrian army but Poles, so called 'Sokoliki (Little Falcons)'. Therefore, it was decided that it is necessary to remind the Hutsul highlanders of their earliest ties with the Polish Army⁷⁴. The first ski march organised by the army in 1934 under the slogan 'Along the Hutsul Trail of the 2nd Brigade of the Legions (Huculski Szlak II Brygady Legionów)' proved to be such an occasion⁷⁵.

The motto of the march contained a certain message directed mostly to veteran legionnaires who worked in various organisations. Referring to a treasured tradition of military cooperation, they would begin to promote among the Hutsuls the idea of joint effort, which would lead to cultural

⁷² *Ibidem*, pp. 120, 122.

⁷³ CAW, Departament Dowodzenia Ogólnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.22.109, Plan pracy na Huculszczczyźnie. Introduction, no pagination.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, Materiały o Huculszczczyźnie i marszu 'Szlakiem II Brygady Legionów', no pagination.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, Powiadomienie o organizacji 3-dniowego marszu narciarskiego o charakterze zawodów pod nazwą 'Huculskim Szlakiem II Brygady Legionów' z dnia 28.XII.1933 r., no pagination. It was decided that the history march along the Carpathian route would be organised in winter to honour the legacy of the 2nd Brigade of the Legions and to promote the idea of collective effort for the purpose of overcoming difficulties posed by the harsh mountainous environment. It was organised in form of patrols. Apart from the army, also civilian ski patrols could take part in it. *Ibidem*, Regulamin marszu zimowego 'Huculskim Szlakiem II Brygady Legionów', no pagination.

and economic development of the region⁷⁶. The launch of the annual march inspired former legionnaires, organised in the Legionnaire Circle of the Friends of the Hutsul Region Society, to arrange a colleague excursion to the Hutsul region. Its route was a clear indication of the mission of the participants. Trying to access as many Hutsul settlements as possible, the wanderers split up into a few groups. One of them went towards the Legionnaire Cross on Rogodza. Second, going to Mołotków, Solotvyn and Poroarów, visited battlefields and legionnaire graves. Another group arrived at Żabie, where a lecture was delivered on the topic of the Hutsul campaign of the 2nd Brigade of the Polish Legions. The common goal for all tourists groups was to reach out to the Hutsul inhabitants, especially the local Hutsul legionnaires⁷⁷.

The 'Hutsul Route of the 2nd Brigade of the Legions' march was one of many winter events organised in the Hutsul region with the intention of building bridges between the local population and Polish Army⁷⁸. The undertakings of this and other kind were meant to contribute to associating the Hutsuls with Polish statehood in terms of economy by improving the living conditions and therefore promote the Polish spirit in the area. These were the two closely intertwined objectives on which the military authorities concentrated all their efforts regarding the development of the Hutsul region⁷⁹.

The Hutsul region, already famous for its tourist, athletic, artistic and folklore values, would also prove to be an attractive area regarding the matters of health. It was assumed that the local climate was among the healthiest in Poland. The lower water vapour content in the air allowed the human organism to be less susceptible to very harsh winters.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, 'Huculskim Szlakiem II Brygady Legionów Polskich'. Jaką myśl zawierają te słowa? Co znaczy ta nazwa?, no pagination.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, Kolego! Weź udział w legionowej wycieczce w dniach 15-18 lutego b.r. na Huculszczyźnie. Prospekt – programme of 27 January 1934, no pagination. It needs to be noted that military authorities also wanted their propaganda to affect the society via various organisations, especially those of paramilitary character and societies cooperating with the army. For more details see: A. Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 205–211, 237–277.

⁷⁸ These involved matters such as army's skiing championships, horse riding and skiing competitions of the Hutsuls organised mostly for the local population which would also help overpower the initiative of Ukrainian organisation and serve as an exciting three-way skiing event of three districts of the following countries: Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania. Gatherings and winter manoeuvres were not forgotten as they did not just establish bonds but also provide income to the local population (army units had to purchase local supplies such as food) CAW, Departament Dowodzenia Ogólnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.22.109, Uwagi do projektu organizacji sezonu zimowego na Huculszczyźnie, no pagination.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, Plan pracy na Huculszczyźnie. Introduction, no pagination.

In comparison with the Tatras, the precipitation in the Hutsul region was much lower, whereas sunny days occurred there much more frequently. Due to the various mountain ranges and the existence of many short lateral valleys, many villages were well protected from harsh winds. The lush and varied local foliage proved further the advantageousness and healthiness of the climate. An unusual concentration of solar radiation made the grasses, vegetables and grains richer in vitamins compared with plants growing in valleys. As a result, the milk and butter originating from these regions had particularly high nutritional and preventive values. They would stimulate growth, prevent rickets and immunise against tuberculosis⁸⁰.

The natural curative values of the Hutsul region would constitute an additional encouragement for the tourists. Therefore, attention was paid to satisfying the material and cultural needs of the locals. Efforts were made to accommodate the visitors not only in lavish and large villas and hotels but also in any of the other Hutsul cottages⁸¹. They were usually very well maintained by the inhabitants and contained a certain number of rooms not utilised by the homeowners. Organised with a sense of artistry typical to Hutsuls and having sun-lit rooms, they were very suitable for renting to guests⁸². Firstly, the owners would have to be instructed as to how they should address the guests and how to prepare for their arrival⁸³. The regular everyday occupations would also become a source of significant profits. Various guidebooks were written which addressed the problems with fertilising soil, mountain dairy production or beekeeping. These guidebooks advised on fighting diseases and pests posing danger to orchards and crops. Most importantly though, they showed the Hutsuls how to make a decent profit. This especially involved selling the products of Hutsul folk industry⁸⁴. The increase in sales of all sorts of articles produced by local population would undoubtedly encourage creation of an urban-type centre which would attract cultural and trade activity. At the same time, the increased circulation of people would radiate outwards into other

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Huculszczyzny – Sekcja Higieny, Rzut oka na warunki higieniczne i lecznicze Huculszczyzny i możliwości ich wykorzystania, no pagination.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, Note. Sezon zimowy na Huculszczyźnie, no pagination.

⁸² *Ibidem*, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Huculszczyzny – Sekcja Higieny, Rzut oka na warunki higieniczne i lecznicze Huculszczyzny i możliwości ich wykorzystania, no pagination.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, Note. Sezon zimowy na Huculszczyźnie, no pagination.

⁸⁴ CAW, Gabinet Ministra Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.1.644, Projekt kalendarza huculskiego na rok 1937, sheet 535.

points of interest in the region⁸⁵. Construction of such a centre required designating a suitable location. The problem lied in the fact that nearly all larger Hutsul settlements were scattered across a large area⁸⁶. The Head Management of the Friends of the Hutsul Region Society suggested that such Żabie should become such a place. However, this largest Polish village spread along a dozen or so kilometres along a narrow string of distant cottages. Effective management of human traffic flowing in from all direction would therefore be difficult. However, the idea was met with enthusiasm of the local intelligentsia. Their representatives: a physician and a lawyer, also pointed to the need of opening a cultural centre and cinematograph in Żabie. They believed that the cinematograph would be appreciated by Hutsuls who enjoyed entertainment⁸⁷. Such a bottom-up initiative indicated that the intentions of the military authorities were met with positive response among Hutsul highlanders.

Ultimately the Hutsul region would play a primary role in the national and social action inspired by the military used against the anti-state movement of Ukrainians in Eastern Lesser Poland. There were major arguments for the solution. The mindset of the Hutsuls, so different from other Ruthenians, made them easy to incorporate into the country. Domination of the Hutsul region by Polish influence did not require complicated methods or large sums of money. The local natural conditions allowed to assume that the mobilisation of the region in terms of economy would occur quite quickly and the Polish element would easily penetrate it. Apart from the above, the undisturbed operation in the Hutsul region would allow for valuable research material to be collected, this time in significantly more difficult terrain⁸⁸.

A simple yet very precise method for implementation of the set goals was chosen. The state tried to establish conditions in which the development of the region would become more rapid. Military authorities and government institutions, with the support of the Friends of the Hutsul Region Society (Polish: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Huculszczyny,

⁸⁵ CAW, Departament Dowodzenia Ogólnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.22.109, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Huculszczyny – Sekcja Higieny, Rzut oka na warunki higieniczne i lecznicze Huculszczyny i możliwości ich wykorzystania, no pagination.

⁸⁶ M. Orłowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁸⁷ CAW, Departament Dowodzenia Ogólnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.22.109, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Huculszczyny – Sekcja Higieny, Rzut oka na warunki higieniczne i lecznicze Huculszczyny i możliwości ich wykorzystania, no pagination.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, Plan pracy na Huculszczynie. Introduction, no pagination.

TPH)⁸⁹, began developing of sanatorium facilities. Within that framework new resorts and spas would be established, which along with the organisation of athletic and artistic events would significantly contribute to encouraging tourism. This led to the formation of a major tourist and sanatorium facility in the Hutsul region. The abovementioned measures translated into the improvement of the living conditions for the Hutsuls due to the possibility of obtaining better jobs and easier sales of their goods. They would therefore notice the significant help and concern of the country. Tourism, winter sports and summer camps for young people would lead to all-year-round increase of Polish influence in the region. The perfectly organised sanatorium facilities would attract Poles to seek permanent settlement there. This would allow for permanent association of the Hutsuls with Polish statehood. Military authorities decided that the Hutsul region under Polish influence and skilful administration would shortly become a platform for political agreements which would lead to mediating conflicts not just in Eastern Lesser Poland but also at the scale of the entire area of the Kresy. This would prove to be a crucial part of strategy and propaganda in face of the impending threat of war⁹⁰.

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The political situation in which Poland found itself after 1935 led to the necessity of engaging the largest possible numbers of citizens in national defence, which would increase the security of the country. Military authorities therefore began a massive propaganda operation which led to the formation of a mutual bond between the army and the society.

This bond between the army and the civilian population was the most important in border areas, especially in Eastern Lesser Poland, dominated by anti-state Ukrainian movement. The army command was aware that soothing tensions present in the region required more than just a sudden

⁸⁹ The Friends of the Hutsul Region Association was founded on 12 December 1933. Their main goal was protection of the environment, folklore and folk art in the Hutsul region. At the same time, they were involved in activities for the cultural and economic development of the Hutsul region. Inspired by military authorities they took part in the construction of infrastructure for the dynamically growing tourism. They also took part in the efforts of harnessing the curative values of the region. The Society did not intend to Polishise the Hutsul peoples, but to support the Hutsuls in maintaining their ethnic identity, separate from other Ukrainians who lived in the Eastern Małopolska region. The high importance of the TPH was indicated by the fact the president of the General Board was none other than Gen. Tadeusz Kasprzycki, who would later become the Minister of Military Affairs. For more details see: A. Smoliński, *op. cit.*, pp. 120–121.

⁹⁰ CAW, Departament Dowodzenia Ogólnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wojskowych, ref. no. I.300.22.109, Plan pracy na Huculszczyźnie. Introduction, no pagination.

and intensified inflow of native Poles. Reinforcing Polish identity in Easern Lesser Poland was also associated with assimilation of the Hutsuls as well as the Lemkos and Boykos. The implementation of these goals would be facilitated by exposing these people to propaganda for the sake of preparing the society for the defence of the country. However, natural obstacles prevented the state from utilising the most effective propaganda tools among the most remote peoples. The problem was alleviated thanks to the annual organisation of the 'Mounain Festival' holiday, during which people from the furthest parts of the Carpathians could integrate with the rest of highlanders, learn about Polish culture and, most importantly, familiarise themselves with matters involving the country, which during the decline of the Second Polish Republic were mostly limited to the notion of protecting the country.

Attempting to associate the Hutsul highlanders proved to be very fruitful. Actions in that area were initiated by the authorities of the 49th Infantry Regiment of Kolomyia ever since the 1920s. Close relations were easier to establish thanks to the friendly attitude of the Hutsuls towards the Polish Army, dating back to World War I. The circumstances led to the situation that in face of the intensified threat of war the central military authorities found the Hutsuls to be the easiest to communicate with of all three of the unique Eastern Carpathian people. The rest was to be made complete by effective management of the tourist and curative values of the Hutsul region, the crowning moment of which would be the friendly coexistence of arriving Poles with the local 'Ruthenians'. Policies of the military regarding the Eastern Lesser Poland area, leading to weakening the subversive activity of Ukrainian nationalists, would then find support among the inhabitants of the Hutsul lands.

Hutsuls in the military propaganda for the sake of preparing the society for war can be an example that ethnically and culturally separate people could actively participate in state affairs as well as take part in defence preparations. The successful, advanced and promising operations were cut short by the unavoidable outbreak of World War II.

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STRESZCZENIE

Druga połowa lat trzydziestych upływała pod znakiem nasilającego się zagrożenia wojennego. Władze wojskowe Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej usiłowały objąć propagandą na rzecz obrony kraju, zróżnicowane pod wieloma względami społeczeństwo polskie. Z powodu napiętej sytuacji w Małopolsce Wschodniej, kierownictwu sił zbrojnych bardzo zależało, aby w przygotowania wojenne zaangażować górali zamieszkujących najdalsze zakątki Karpat, w szczególności Hucułów. Brak odpowiednio rozbudowanej sieci komunikacyjnej na terenie Karpat Wschodnich, nie pozwolił na zastosowanie najskuteczniejszych narzędzi propagandowych, jakimi wówczas były prasa, radio oraz film dźwiękowy. Zainteresowanie sprawami państwa wśród Hucułów, Łemków i Bojków – górali najbardziej oddalonych od cywilizacji, wzbudziło dopiero organizowane co roku (1935–1938) „Święto Gór”. Współpraca górali huculskich z armią, ułatwiała walkę z antypaństwowym ruchem ukraińskim w Małopolsce Wschodniej. Do wzmocnienia polskości w tym regionie przyczynić się miało również odpowiednie wykorzystanie nieocenionych walorów Huculszczyzny.

Słowa kluczowe: Druga Rzeczypospolita, wojsko, propaganda wojskowa, obrona państwa, przysposobienie społeczeństwa do wojny, Karpaty Wschodnie, Święto Gór, Huculi, Huculszczyzna

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