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## **Beginnings and development of Polish education in Romania until 1939**

### **Abstract**

Poles appeared in the area of the present-day Romania in the fourteenth century. The next influx of Polish settlers came after the fall of the Kościuszko Uprising. The aim of this study is to present the history of education for the Polish minority in Romania. The work focuses on showing various forms of educational institutions from the beginning of the 19th century to 1939. In the analysed period, Poles organized mainly preschools and elementary and secondary schools in Bukovina (contemporary northern Romania). They also made attempts to introduce the Polish language learning in teacher training institutions i.e. male and female teachers training colleges. They established their own socio-educational societies and built Polish Houses in which they developed a wide range of educational and cultural activities. In the Kingdom of Romania, Polish children could also attend (under certain conditions) Polish language classes in Romanian public schools. Thanks to the Polish Schools in Romania, and then the Polish School Association in Romania, there appeared various forms of Polish private education.

**Keywords:** Polish education, Bukovina, Romania, Polish School Union in Romania, Polish Schools in Romania

### **Foreword**

Poles arrived in the territory of contemporary Romania in mid-14th century, during the reign of King Casimir the Great. They occupied an area called “Szczypin Land” in North Bukovina. Pursuant to a Polish-Hungarian-Moldavian Treaty of 1498–1499, they lost that land to Moldova. In subsequent ages, Poland competed with Hungary, then with Turkey, since late 17th century – with Habsburgs, and later with Russian Tsars for supremacy over Moldavia. Since the beginning of the Principality of Moldavia, the political, economic and cultural relations between Moldavia and Poland were lively, especially in the

border and transit region of Bukovina. A new Polish diaspora in Bukovina developed in the post-partition period.

In 1774, Bukovina was invaded by Austria. On the 1st of February 1787, by a decree of the Emperor Joseph II, Bukovina was annexed to Galicia as a circuit and was managed by the governorate in Lvov. Its governor was the mayor residing in Chernivtsi. During the Austrian period, Poles emigrated to Bukovina mainly for work, but also for political reasons. It should also be noted that Polish miners from Bochnia, Kałusz and Wieliczka were forced to move to the town of Cacica in south Bukovina. In the early 19th century, Bukovina was inhabited by Cadca highlanders and railway workers hired at the construction of the Lvov-Chernivtsi railway line.

In 1849, Bukovina separated from Galicia and became a principality with separate administration and autonomy and – since 1860, with its own emblem and a state government lead by a governor<sup>1</sup>. However, in some areas of administration, Bukovina remained linked with Galicia until 1918. The head of the state government was the president appointed by the emperor, who reported to the central government in Vienna. The President of Bukovina was at the same time the Chair of the National School Council<sup>2</sup>. The Kingdom of Bukovina was divided into 11 counties (Gura Humorului, Kimpolung, Kocman, Radowce, Seret, Storożhynets, Suceava, Vashkivtsi, Vyzhnytsia and Zastavna, and one city-county – Chernivtsi). In 1918, Bukovina was annexed to Romania. The area of Greater Romania covered also Bessarabia, a part of Banat and South Dobruja<sup>3</sup>.

Poles in Bukovina, and later in the Kingdom of Romania, were less numerous than Ukrainians, Romanians, Jews or Germans. According to a census of 1910, they were the 5th nationality, after the above five nationalities and before Hungarian, Russian, Czech, Slovak and Armenian nationals, and Gypsies. After World War I, many Poles returned to their homeland. “Approximately 5,000 people left Bukovina, many of them being the local elite, which significantly weakened the Polish national movement”<sup>4</sup>. According to a census of 1930, 10,000 Poles lived in Greater Romania, being the least numerous national minority<sup>5</sup>.

Concerning education in Bukovina, the Austrian monarchy started taking administrative control of education in mid-18th century. In 1760, the Imperial Commission for Education (Studienhofkommission) was established to supervise education. It was to be assisted by national school commissions in provinces and departments for school affairs in governorates. In Galicia, a school commission was established in 1776. In 1778, the Imperial Commission for Education was incorporated into the Imperial Chancellery

<sup>1</sup> NISTOR, I, *Istoria Bucovinei*, București 1991, p. 107–116.

<sup>2</sup> BIEDRZYCKI, E., *Historia Polaków na Bukowinie*, Warszawa–Kraków 1973, p. 23–24.

<sup>3</sup> DEMEL, J., *Historia Rumunii*, wyd. II poprawione i uzupełnione, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź 1986, p. 358–359, 386–387.

<sup>4</sup> NOWAK, K., *Problemy szkolnictwa polskiego w Rumunii oraz Mołdawii dawniej i współcześnie*, “Rocznik Stowarzyszenia Naukowców Polaków Litwy”, 2017, vol. 17, p. 235.

<sup>5</sup> SWORAKOWSKI, W., *Mniejszości narodowe w Rumunii wobec programu rządowego*, “Sprawy Narodowościowe” 1930, no. 5–6, p. 658.

(Hofkanzlei)<sup>6</sup>. Emperor Joseph II introduced German as the official language, as a result of which Latin and Polish lost their equal status. He organised education. In 1784, teachers were brought to Bukovina and two four-grade elementary schools, so-called Hauptschulen, were opened, one in Chernivtsi and the other in Suceava. They were bilingual schools, with German and Romanian languages. After Bukovina was annexed to Galicia, schools came under the supervision of the Governorate in Lvov. Since 1815, school affairs were supervised by the Roman Catholic consistory, and since 1851 – the Orthodox episcopal consistory in Chernivtsi. From 1860 to 1867, the Austrian Ministry of Public Enlightenment, later – of Denominations and Enlightenment, which replaced in 1848 the Imperial Commission for Education, was incorporated into the Ministry of State, and later reactivated. The Minister was responsible for: “a) agendas of the national clerical board, b) most senior management and supervision of all the branches of education, c) promotion of science and skills”<sup>7</sup> Educational reforms of 1868–1873 transferred supervision of education to secular officers. The government budget financed local schools, only the schools in Chernivtsi were financed by the city. In 1869, schools in Bukovina were attended by: 9.62% of German children, 5.87% of Polish children, 4.08% of Hungarian children, 1.05% of Ukrainian children, 1% of Jewish and Romanian children. In late 19th century, the scholarisation rate among children subject to compulsory education was almost 70%<sup>8</sup>. After World War I, Romanian became the official language across the whole Greater Romania. A regulation of 1922 imposed romanisation of the education of national minorities in the Kingdom of Romania.

The purpose of this study is to present the history of education among the Polish minority in the territory of contemporary Romania in the period from early 19th century to 1939, and specifically education in Bukovina. Polish education in Romania, notwithstanding successes and failures, conditioned in particular by political, demographic and social factors, has been developing for two ages now. Its commendable traditions are an inspiration for contemporary schools, such as, for example, the Krystyna Bochenek Primary School and Preschool no. 2 in Pojana Mikului or the Henryk Sienkiewicz Primary School in Nou Solonetu.

This essay is based on a study by Emil Biedrzycki and archive materials collected in the New Files Archives in Warsaw. The names of towns are the same as they are in the source materials.

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<sup>6</sup> SALMONOWICZ, S., *Podstawy prawne funkcjonowania Komisji Edukacji Narodowej*, “Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty”, 1980, no. 23, p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> LEWANDOWSKA, D., *C. K. Ministerstwo Wyznań i Oświaty 1848–1918*, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie, [https://www.archivesportaleurope.net/ead-display/-/ead/pl/aicode/PL-1/type/fa/id/PL-1-304\\_SLASH\\_0?jsessionid=C298A68029531A0119BCC1A9E3EBCFFD](https://www.archivesportaleurope.net/ead-display/-/ead/pl/aicode/PL-1/type/fa/id/PL-1-304_SLASH_0?jsessionid=C298A68029531A0119BCC1A9E3EBCFFD) [access: 10.02.2018].

<sup>8</sup> BIEDRZYCKI, E., *Historia Polaków*, p. 102–103.

### Beginnings of education among the Polish minority in Bukovina

Polish education in Romania started developing in the 19th century, mainly in Bukovina, which was the largest diaspora of Polish minority.

It has been determined that the first school, where Polish language was taught, was located in the village of Cacica, where Polish miners and civil workers constructed a salt mine. The mine started operating in 1791. “Since early 19th century, the mine had its own school with teachers speaking the three languages of the mine workers: German, Romanian and Polish”<sup>9</sup>. One of the teachers in the Cacica school in 1816 was Żurowski. One year earlier, the first school for girls was opened in Chernivtsi, with teachers speaking German and Polish and at least one teacher speaking Moldavian (Romanian)<sup>10</sup>.

In the period when the autonomy of the Principality of Bukovina was formed, although “the German language spread in Bukovina, finding fertile soil for development in German schools and German being the only official language, [...] this [Polish] element, persecuted by Romanians and Germans, their allies, deprived of any national rights, not only remained strong but even grew in strength and power”<sup>11</sup>. Two examples are the trivial school in Seret and Radowce, where, in the 1850s, Polish, alongside German, was the language of instruction<sup>12</sup>. In 1860, in Kocman, there was a school with a German division and a Polish-Ukrainian division. Meanwhile, in the Kingdom of Bukovina, the number of “entirely Polish schools or mixed schools with Polish as the language of instruction” was growing<sup>13</sup>. For example, in a village of Cadca highlanders in Nou Solonetu, a teacher in a two-grade school was one Mistalski, a Lithuanian. “The trivial school in Nou Solonetu reported to the metropolitan consistory in Lvov, and the parish priest in Cacica, who was at the same the chair of the School Council, was responsible for taking care of and supervising education in that school”<sup>14</sup>. Mistalski turned out to be a poor teacher and, with the support of the Polish Society of Fraternal Help established in Chernivtsi<sup>15</sup>, he was replaced by a Polish teacher, Daniel Mielnik, who started teaching Polish in Nou Solonetu in 1870, and continued teaching it for 40 years, until he retired<sup>16</sup>. It should be noted that the necessary organisation of Polish schools in Bukovina was blocked first by a state law (1868)

<sup>9</sup> SZEWCZYK, A., *Jest takie miejsce ... Kaczyka na Bukowinie*, “Wiadomości Bocheńskie” 2015, no. 4, p. 37.

<sup>10</sup> BIEDRZYCKI, E., *Historia Polaków*, p. 101.

<sup>11</sup> SMÓLSKI, G., *Polacy na Bukowinie*, “Nowa Reforma” 1906, no. 234 of 14 october, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> SWORAKOWSKI, W., *Polskie szkolnictwo prywatne w Rumunii*, “Sprawy Narodowościowe” 1931, no. 1, p. 67.

<sup>13</sup> BIEDRZYCKI, E., *Historia Polaków*, p. 105–106.

<sup>14</sup> ZELIONCA, A-E., *Nowy Soloniec. Dzieje wsi i parafii*, Suceava 2014, p. 83.

<sup>15</sup> The Polish Society of Fraternal Help was established on 16 March 1869 in Chernivtsi. ĆWIEK, W., *Przeszłość Towarzystwa polskiego bratniej pomocy i Czytelni polskiej*, Czerniowce 1995, p. 13–14.

<sup>16</sup> ZELIONCA, A-E., *Nowy Soloniec*, p. 85.

and then by a national law (1873). Changes concerned, among other things, transferring supervision of education from clerical to secular authorities. Reorganisation of popular schools, combined with the germanisation of Bukovina contributed to gradual removal of Polish language from schools. Polish language was eliminated from schools in Stara Huta, Suceava, Seret, Sadorha, Rohozno, Zucka, Panka and the Chernivtsi teacher training colleges<sup>17</sup>. However, Poles did not remain indifferent to this. They sent petitions to the authorities to restore Polish language in schools. They also published their appeals in newspapers, e.g. the Chernivtsi “Gazeta Polska” and “Kurier Lwowski”. Their efforts turned out to be successful and in 1890, the National School Council ordered Polish language lessons in Sadorha, and in 1896 – in the school in Zucka<sup>18</sup>.

The development of Polish education in Bukovina was promoted by the Galician Folk Art Society (FAS), established in 1879. They conducted proactive campaigns among the Polish community, triggering request to Austrian authorities to create public schools with Polish as the language of instruction<sup>19</sup>. However, due to the opposition of the German party, the FAS founded only private schools. In the 1904/1905 school year, the FAS opened 29 private schools, 9 of them in Chernivtsi<sup>20</sup>.

Apart from private schools, pursuant to the Austrian national law of 1873, until 1909, in Bukovina, Polish language was taught three times a week in state schools. Apart from Chernivtsi and Nou Solonetu, such schools were located in: Cacica, Kocman, Plesa, Pojana Mikuli, Solka, Hliboka, Zadowa, Panka, Laurenta, Dunaviec<sup>21</sup>. Later, the government, when founding elementary schools for Ukrainians, Romanians, Germans and Jews, also allowed Poles to have the two lowest grades in German schools with Polish as the language of instruction. Each year, subsequent grades were added, and in 1913, there were 36 elementary schools that had up to 5 Polish grades<sup>22</sup>. Polish grades turned into separate Polish schools at the initiative of the school inspector, Adolf Mitelski, only late into World War I<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> This concerned the male teacher training college established in 1870 and the teacher training college for girls created by the sisters of the Family of Mary in 1873 as the Polish female boarding school.

<sup>18</sup> BIEDRZYCKI, E., *Historia Polaków*, p. 106 and 109–110 and 118–119.

<sup>19</sup> SWORAKOWSKI, W., *Polskie szkolnictwo prywatne w Rumunii*, p. 67.

<sup>20</sup> Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie (hereinafter AAN), team: Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych (hereinafter MSZ), file no. 10752, *Dopełnienie do Raport wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego*, Czerniowce on 28.03.1930, c. 64.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>23</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, *Opracowanie wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego*, Czerniowce on 24.01.1930, c. 12.

### Polish education in Greater Romania

After World War I, Romania united into one country. It included the area of Bukovina and Bessarabia, where Polish education existed, as well as Transylvania, a part of Banat and South Dobruja<sup>24</sup>. The Greater Romania – “România Mare” was established. Bukovina lost its autonomy it had gained in Austria and the Polish diaspora – their representative in the two-chamber Parliament. In Romania, the Poles of Bukovina were represented by the Polish National Council (1918–1925)<sup>25</sup>. In Bessarabia, the representative authority was the Polish Union established on 9 September 1929 in Akkerman<sup>26</sup>.

In the first years after unification, Polish education in the Kingdom of Romania functioned without any obstacles, because “the Romanian government overtook Polish education from Austria as well as some of the FAS schools, and until 1923, it was relatively tolerant of the development of elementary schools”<sup>27</sup>. Even in Bessarabia before 1923, Polish schools in Kishinev, Bielce, Elizabetovka, Bendery and Krycoje were co-financed from the Romanian state budget. Education was also supported financially by social and private organisations. Thanks to this, until 1923, in Bukovina, 2685 children were taught in various towns, in separate schools or classes with Polish as the language of instruction and Romanian as a school subject. Those were: Chernivtsi (4 schools with 1129 pupils), Bojany (1 school, 92 pupils), Sadhora (1 school, 139 pupils), Storozhynets (1 school, 170 pupils), Laurenka (1 school, 73 pupils), Cacica (3 classes with 136 pupils), Nou Solonetu (3 classes with 122 pupils), Vyzhnytsia (2 classes with 82 pupils), Vashkivtsi (2 classes with 132 pupils), Davydivka-Zrub (1 class with 71 pupils), Dunaviec (1 class with 76 pupils), Zadova (1 class with 75 pupils), Kocman (1 class with 74 pupils), Hliboka (1 class with 62 pupils), Seret (1 class with 65 pupils), Banilow Ruski (1 class with 49 pupils), Zastavna (1 class with 63 pupils), Pojana Mikuli (1 class with 75 pupils)<sup>28</sup>.

Development of Polish education in Greater Romania was interrupted by the reorganisation of education in the country. A regulation of 1922 imposed romanisation of the education of national minorities<sup>29</sup>. Romanian as the language of instruction was introduced in

<sup>24</sup> DEMEL, J., *Historia Rumunii*, p. 358–359, 386–387.

<sup>25</sup> The Polish National Council was established in 1918, based on the former Polish Group in Bukovina. NOWAK, K., *Polskie życie organizacyjne w Rumunii do 1989 roku*, in: *Związek Polaków w Rumunii 1990–2010*, edited and proofread by S. IACHIMOVSKI and E. WIERUSZEWSKA-CALISTRU, Suceava 2010, p. 009. DOPIERAŁA K., *Spółeczność polska na Bałkanach Rumunia, Bułgaria, Jugosławia*, in: *Polonia w Europie*, (ed.) B. SZYDŁOWSKA-CEGŁOWA, Poznań 1992, p. 658.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>27</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Opracowanie wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 24.01.1930, c. 12.

<sup>28</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Opracowanie wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 24.01.1930, c. 13.

<sup>29</sup> In Greater Romania, minorities became very problematic for the authorities after inclusion of new areas to the country – after incorporation of Bukovina, the number of Germans and Ukrainians increased, Bessarabia – Russians and Transylvania – Hungarians. The first governments could not cope with the problem. The Prime Minister Ion I.C. Brătianu treated minorities as “second-category” citizens, and he was particularly hostile to

all types of public schools. Also, all non-Romanian private schools were turned into state or Romanian schools. On 1 September 1922, Polish schools were closed down and Polish children and youth could no longer learn Polish language<sup>30</sup>. Theoretically, religion could be taught in Polish, but only if there was a Polish priest or Polish teacher<sup>31</sup>. Polish teachers were relocated to other towns, usually deep into Romania, and replaced with teachers who could not speak Polish. Polish teachers were required to pass additional examinations in Romanian, and they were given very limited time to do that. Consequently, Polish teachers emigrated from Romania to Poland<sup>32</sup>.

Meanwhile, Greater Romania set about expanding the network of schools of all levels. In 1924, a law was passed which extended compulsory education in elementary school from 4 to 7 years<sup>33</sup>. Article 7 of the Law on General Public Education of 1924r.<sup>34</sup> and regulations of general public education provided for the issue of minority languages in schools. According to these regulations, Romanian authorities allowed a couple of hours of Polish language lessons in a school with at least 40 Polish children. This privilege was used by Polish children in Chernivtsi and in numerous towns in the province. However, the reforms of Polish language education were gradually blocked, and finally, in 1926, Polish lessons were cancelled in Nou Solonetu, Sathora, Pojana-Mikuli, Plesa and Ruda<sup>35</sup>. The Polish diaspora continued demanding continuation of Polish language lessons in Romanian schools. Parents of school children went on strike to block the law on the liquidation of Polish language lessons in schools<sup>36</sup>.

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Hungarians. SYLBURSKA, A., *Kwestia mniejszości węgierskiej w Czechosłowacji, Rumunii i Jugosławii w okresie międzywojennym na łamach "Spraw Narodowościowych" (1927–1939)*, "Acta Universitatis Lodziensis Folia Historica" 2014, no. 92, p. 155.

<sup>30</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Dopełnienie do Raport wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 28.03.1930, p. 66.

<sup>31</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Opracowanie wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 24.01.1930, c. 13.

<sup>32</sup> SWORAKOWSKI, W., *Polskie szkolnictwo prywatne w Rumunii*, p. 73.

<sup>33</sup> DEMEL, J., *Historia Rumunii*, p. 394.

<sup>34</sup> Art. 7 i 52 Ustawy o szkolnictwie powszechnym z dnia 24 czerwca 1924 r. ogłoszonej w Monitorze Oficjalnym Nr 161 z dnia 26 czerwca 1924 r. AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Dopełnienie do Raport wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 28.03.1930, p. 66.

<sup>35</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Opracowanie wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 24.01.1930, c. 13.

<sup>36</sup> The following fragment illustrates parents' resistance. The resident of Plesa "who opposed the law on the liquidation of Polish language lessons, in 1927 started a long school strike, by not sending their children to school. They did not yield to the pressure of Romanian authorities, who imposed financial penalties on them and threatened them with detention. Some of defenders of the Polish language were arrested, and one parent was beaten so badly that it took him a long time to recover. The steadfastness of the Polish highlanders corresponded to the overall resistance of Poles towards the romanisation policies, which resulted in restoring Polish as the language of instruction in the school year 1931–1932". ZELIONCA, A-E., *Plesa. Dzieje wsi i parafii*, Suceava 2016, p. 37.

Changes in Polish education in Greater Romania were initiated by the *Private Education Law* of 22 December 1925, signed by the Minister of Education, Constantina Angelescu, PhD<sup>37</sup>. This law enabled special educational institutions to establish private minority schools, including nurseries, elementary schools and secondary schools. Romanian authorities allowed secondary education in classes of at least 10 pupils and elementary education, if there were at least 20 children in a school<sup>38</sup>. On the other hand, the Polish minority was not allowed to open private teacher training colleges or university schools. This way, the legislator deprived Poles of possibilities to educate their own teachers<sup>39</sup>. In order to start a private minority school in Romania, a special educational institution had to acquire legal personality and special permits from the Romanian Ministry of Education. The first institutions to comply with these requirements were “Polish Municipalities” in Bessarabia and the Polish Society of Adam Mickiewicz in Bucharest. In Bukovina, the situation was more problematic, because, after the Romanian authorities had closed down all the Public School Society units, there was no institution to take care of Polish education in that region<sup>40</sup>. The activists in Bukovina needed some time to create an educational institution.

On the 1st of November 1927, at the initiative of attorney Grzegorz Szymonowicz, PhD, the Polish Schools in Romania (PSinR) was established in Chernivtsi<sup>41</sup>. It was a social educational society rooted in the PS established in Warsaw on 28 April 1905. Initially, Polish Schools covered the territory of the Kingdom of Poland, but after Poland regained independence, it spread to central and eastern regions of the country. In the period between the two World Wars, Polish Schools were perceived as “a propagator of Polish education and culture, a worthy heir of positivist ideals”<sup>42</sup>. Education in Christian and national spirit was propagated mainly by establishing, maintaining and promoting educational institutions. In the school year 1928/29, the PS in Chernivtsi opened two nurseries in Chernivtsi and Sadhora and schools in Chernivtsi. Those were a four-grade elementary school and an industrial school of continued education<sup>43</sup>. In subsequent years, in the period of reorganisation of Romanian secondary education, focusing on vocational schools, the PSinR

<sup>37</sup> Constantin Angelescu (1869–1948) – Romanian Minister of Education in 1918–1933 and 1934–1938. GOŁDYŃ, P., *W kręgu polsko-rumuńskiej współpracy oświatowej w pierwszej połowie XX wieku. Wybrane aspekty*, Poznań–Kalisz 2017, p. 13–14. RADZISZEWSKA M., *Stan prywatnego szkolnictwa polskiego w Królestwie Rumunii i w rejencji olsztyńskiej Prus Wschodnich na kanwie wizyty rumuńskiego ministra oświaty Constantina Angelescu w Polsce w 1937 roku*, in: *Historia i dzień dzisiejszy w relacji polsko-rumuńskich*, opracowanie editing and proofreading of Polish texts K. STEMPEL-GANCARCZYK and E. WIERUSZEWSKA-CALISTRU, Suceava 2017, p. 114–128.

<sup>38</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Ustawa o nauce prywatnej. Translation from Romanian, c. 26–48.

<sup>39</sup> SWORAKOWSKI, W., *Polskie szkolnictwo prywatne w Rumunii (dokończenie)*, “Sprawy Narodowościowe” 1931, no. 2–3, p. 239–240.

<sup>40</sup> Idem, *Polskie szkolnictwo prywatne w Rumunii*, p. 74.

<sup>41</sup> DOPIERAŁA, K., *Spółeczność polska*, p. 661.

<sup>42</sup> MARKIEWICZ, H., *Rzecz o Polskiej Macierzy Szkolnej*, Warszawa 2016, p. 269.

<sup>43</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Dopełnienie do Raport wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijęńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 28.03.1930, c. 68.

spread to Bessarabia, Transylvania and Moldavia<sup>44</sup>. On 1 December 1929, PSinR managed one 4-grade junior secondary school serving as secondary school, one vocational school of continued education, 7 elementary schools, 3 nurseries and 15 Polish language courses. 674 children attended those educational institutions<sup>45</sup>. It is worth noting that in the period 1929–1931, the schools managed by PSinR were located in the following towns: Bojany, Chernivtsi, Hiboka, Kishinev, Lupeni, Luzany, Panka, Raranca, Sadhora, Stara huta, Fereblesty<sup>46</sup>. According to the archives, there was also a “school for Polish minority children” in Bucharest<sup>47</sup>. The demand for Polish schools in Greater Romania was quite high. On the map of Romania, there were 40 towns with more than 30 Polish children in school age each (in the case of private schools, 20 children per class were enough). In June 1929, there were 2,499 Polish children attending elementary Romanian schools<sup>48</sup>. In the school year 1930/31, only 20% of Polish children in towns inhabited by Poles in the Kingdom of Romania attended schools<sup>49</sup>. The PSinR was subsidised by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>50</sup>. It ceased to exist after four years of operation. One of the reasons for its termination were the accusations of teachers associated with the institution. A statement dated 25 June 1931 says: “PS teachers [...] observe that the following phenomena are highly dangerous for the development of Polish schools in Romania: being dependent on politics and political parties, engagement of non-professionals in education and school affairs, not paying teacher salaries on time and spending money allocated for teacher salaries on other costs. Accordingly, the teachers of Polish schools in Romania declare that: 1) It is impossible to work in such conditions [...]”<sup>51</sup>. The accusations were addressed to Szymonowicz, who got himself engaged in politics.

After liquidation of the Polish Schools in Romania, the Polish School Union in Romania (PSUinR) was established in Chernivtsi. On 27 June 1931, on the founding meeting organised in the Dormitory of Adam Mickiewicz in Chernivtsi, the Board of the Union was appointed. The President of the Board was Aleksander Skibiniewski, PhD from Hliboka, the Vice-President – rev. Mieczysław Gieszczykiewicz, the Treasurer – Józef Aleksantowicz, the Bookkeeper was Władysław Sedelmeyer, the Secretary – Franciszek

<sup>44</sup> SWORAKOWSKI, W., *Polskie szkolnictwo prywatne w Rumunii*, p. 74.

<sup>45</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Opracowanie wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 24.01.1930, c. 18.

<sup>46</sup> DUBICKI, T., *Rumunia*, in: *Encyklopedia Polskiej Emigracji i Polonii*, (ed.) K. DOPIERAŁA, vol. IV, Toruń 2005, p. 301–302.

<sup>47</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Pismo Konsula Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej do Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych w Warszawie z dnia 18 marca 1928 roku w sprawie szkolnictwa polskiego w Rumunii, c. 144–145.

<sup>48</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10752, Dopełnienie do Raport wicekonsula Tadeusza Kijeńskiego pt. Szkolnictwo polskie na Bukowinie na tle szkolnictwa mniejszościowego, Czerniowce on 28.03.1930, c. 70.

<sup>49</sup> SWORAKOWSKI, W., *Polskie szkolnictwo prywatne w Rumunii*, p. 77.

<sup>50</sup> DOPIERAŁA, K., *Spoleczność polska*, p. 661.

<sup>51</sup> [no author], *Słowa prawdy Nowe drogi szkolnictwa polskiego*, “Polak w Rumunii” of 5 July 1931, no. 25.

Bohosiewicz and the members: Tadeusz Neumajer, Karol Sass, Tadeusz Kossowski, Józefa Mitelska and two representatives of farmers. The duties of the PSUinR were to organise and maintain Polish education in Romania, engage in non-school activities and represent Polish educational interests before Romanian authorities<sup>52</sup>. In the Kingdom of Romania, Poles were the least numerous national minority, which meant that they had to take care of their own education there.

Also the teachers engaged in the fight for Polish schools in Romania. On their initiative, on 19–20 June 1932, the 1st Convention of Polish Teachers in Romania was organised in Chernivtsi<sup>53</sup>. It was attended by numerous teachers from Polish private and public schools. Also, representatives of the Romanian Teacher Union, Mr Simionovici and Mr Reus, attended the Convention. Union delegates from Poland were: Jan Balicki from Lwow and Michał Markowski from Światyń. A group of teachers and school inspector Mądry from Światyń were also present. 58 active teachers attended discussions on standardising Polish language teaching in private and public schools in Romania and the mission of non-school education. The moderator of the sessions was Jan Rejner, teacher from Banyliv at the Cheremosh River. Members of the PSUinR and clergy were also present. The effect of the Convention was a Resolution and two communiques, one to the Organisational Council of Poles from Abroad in Warsaw, and the other to the Ministry of Education in Bucharest. Press releases quoted: “As to the final effects of the Convention, we must conclude that it definitely did not disappoint the expectations of the whole society and it yielded positive results”<sup>54</sup>.

PSUinR, apart from the central office in Chernivtsi, also had its field branches. In the first place, they looked after specific schools, ensured cleanliness, delivered fuel for heating and some teaching aids<sup>55</sup>.

In the school year 1934/35, there were no public schools for Polish diasporas in the Kingdom of Romania, according to the paper entitled “Polacy w Rumunii” in the Central Military Archives in Warsaw<sup>56</sup>. Also, in the same period, the Romanian Ministry of Education, Religious Denominations and Art imposed sanctions on Polish teachers. Minority teachers who did not pass an examination in Romanian language could be fired. This happened, e.g. to the provisional teacher Leopold Wirth<sup>57</sup>, previously appointed by

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>53</sup> [no author], *Nauczycielstwo na szanach oświaty i kultury polskiej. Sprawozdanie z przebiegu obrad Zjazdu Nauczycielstwa Polskiego*, “Polak w Rumunii” 1932, no. 76 of 26 June, p. 1–2.

<sup>54</sup> Ibidem, p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> AAN, team: *Opieka polska nad Polakami na Obczyźnie*, file no. 87, Press clippings. R., *Kącik nauczycielski. Rozmowa o szkolnictwie polskim na Bukowinie* of 31 December 1933, c. 8.

<sup>56</sup> Vide: REZMER, W., *Polacy na Bukowinie w latach 30. XX wieku w świetle materiałów Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego Wojska Polskiego*, in: *Historia i dzień dzisiejszy w relacji polsko-rumuńskich*, editing and proofreading of Polish texts K. STEMPEL-GANCARCZYK and E. WIERUSZEWSKA-CALISTRU, Suceava 2017, p. 58.

<sup>57</sup> After the intervention of the residents of Plesa and negotiations with the PSUinR, the teacher L. Wirth was moved to a private Polish school in Raranca. In the Romanian public school in Plesa, the school authori-

the Romanian authorities as the principal of the Romanian school in Plesa<sup>58</sup>. Also, professors were forbidden to speak in any other language than Romanian either in schools or on the streets of Greater Romania. Despite the hostility of Romanian authorities towards non-Romanian education<sup>59</sup>, the PSUinR tried to introduce Polish as the second language of instruction in elementary schools in all towns in Bukovina with more than 100 children aged between 7 and 16 years. The first towns were to be: Nou Solonetu and Bujany, then Vaskovce, Vyznica, Storozhynets, Tereblesti, Stanovce, Kocman, Bnilov, Cuciurul-Mie, Zastavna, Lehuceni-Teutului and four elementary schools in Chernivtsi. Finally, however, these initiatives were blocked by the Romanian administration<sup>60</sup>. Yet, there was a great need to educate Polish children in the Kingdom of Romania. In 1937, the “*Kurier Polski*” newspaper wrote: “Out of the appr. 12,000 Polish children in Romania, only 2,000 go to Polish schools or learn their mother tongue in one way or another”<sup>61</sup>.

According to PSUinR reports, the situation of Polish children in the Kingdom of Romania improved in the school year 1937/38. The 6-grade elementary school in Chernivtsi and the Polish elementary School in Bielce acquired the status of public schools. Earlier, the same status was obtained by the Polish Elementary School of the PSU in Lupen (Transylvania). Also, the PSUinR applied for the opening of new private schools in: Bulaj, Piotrowce-Arsica, Pojana Mikuli, Nou Solonetu<sup>62</sup>.

On 19 November 1938, the PSUinR received an authorisation from the Romanian Ministry of Education to teach Polish language in public schools. The authorisation concerned schools in 17 towns in Bukovina and 1 in Bessarabia. According to this authorisation, teachers could teach Polish language for 2–3 hours a week per child<sup>63</sup>. In three schools that the authorisation did not cover (Kocman, Zastavna, Glodeni), there were private Polish language courses. Similar courses were organised in: Pohorlăuți, Vrânceni, Zviniace, Cuciurul-Mic and Mihoveni by Polish priests who “taught religion and at the same time Polish language”<sup>64</sup>. In those courses, Polish teachers were engaged and paid by the PSUinR. Only the Polish school with public school status in Kisinow and Polish

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ties allowed 2 hours of Polish language in every class. The teacher was Władysław Sidak from a school in Nou Solonetu, AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 6422, Konsulat Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej ws. zwolnienia nauczyciela-Polaka w Pleszy do Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych w Warszawie. Letter of 7 February 1936, c. 43–45.

<sup>58</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 6422, Rewizor szkolny w Kimpólungu, letter of 26 November 1935, translation from Romanian, copy, c. 41.

<sup>59</sup> (ZJ), *Dzieci polskie w Rumunii pozbawione języka ojczystego*, “*Ilustrowany Kurjer Codzienny*” of 4 July 1935, no. 183, p. 8.

<sup>60</sup> AAN, team: Opieka polska nad Polakami na Obczyźnie, file no. 87, Press clippings [no author], *Dzieci polskie w Rumunji pozbawione języka ojczystego*, “*Ilustrowany Kurjer Codzienny*”, of 4 July 1935, c. 13.

<sup>61</sup> AAN, team: Opieka polska nad Polakami na Obczyźnie, file no. 87, Press clippings [no author] *Nasza największa troska*, “*Kurier Polski w Rumunii*”, of 11 April 1937, no. 195, p. 3, [no pag.].

<sup>62</sup> AAN, team: MSZ, file no. 10553, Sprawozdanie Polskiego Związku Szkolnego w Czerniowcach za czas od 30.I.1938 do 1.IV.1939, c. 44.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*, c. 45.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*, c. 46.

language courses in Ploseti, Chocim and Soroka were “an example of a local community initiative, sometimes even altruistic”<sup>65</sup>.

On 1 April 1939, there were the following Polish educational institutions in the Kingdom of Romania: 1 private Polish junior secondary PSU school in Chernivtsi, 7 Polish elementary PSU schools (Chernivtsi, Hliboka, Lupeni, Luzany, Bielce, Raranca, Panka), 3 Polish private parish schools (Bojany, Sadhora, Stara Huta) and 2 preschools (Chernivtsi, Sadhora). In total, 825 pupils attended the schools and preschools. There were also 11 private Polish language courses for 284 children<sup>66</sup>. In public schools, 1399 pupils learned Polish language. In total, in the analysed period, 2,508 learned Polish language in Romania<sup>67</sup>. Apart from that, there were also after-school and non-school activities, such as youth clubs, scout teams, sport teams and choirs<sup>68</sup>. To sum up, it should be noted that the supervisor of Polish private schools and Polish education in state schools in Romania was the inspector Waclaw Sanicki<sup>69</sup>, who was at the same time teacher of Polish and Chemistry in the Polish Private PSU Junior Secondary School in Chernivtsi. All forms of educational activities were organised in Polish Houses, in the buildings of the Polish Reifeisen Credit Union, in parish houses or in premises rented and paid for by the PSU in R.

A separate period in the history of Polish education in Romania were the years 1939–1945, when refugee education functioned. A particular role in its development was performed by the historian of education, Łukasz Kurdybacha, PhD. This issue is presented by the Author of this paper in her essay entitled: “Działalność historyka oświaty Łukasza Kurdybachy w Królestwie Rumunii w latach 1939–1940”<sup>70</sup>. The history of Polish diaspora education in Bessarabia, which was annexed to the USSR in 1940 and currently is a part of the Republic of Moldova, is also different.

## Summary

This study presents the history of education among the Polish minority in the territory of contemporary Romania in the period from early 19th century to 1939. With the arrival of a new wave of Polish emigrants in the post-partition period, Polish schools started developing. Initially, schools or Polish language classes were organised in Bukovina. Before World War I, with the support of social and educational organisations, i.e. the Public Library Society and Polish Society for Fraternal Help and Polish Library, 23 private

<sup>65</sup> Ibidem, c. 46.

<sup>66</sup> Ibidem, c. 46–47.

<sup>67</sup> Ibidem, c. 51.

<sup>68</sup> Ibidem, c. 55.

<sup>69</sup> Ibidem, c. 52.

<sup>70</sup> RADZISZEWSKA, M., *Działalność historyka oświaty Łukasza Kurdybachy w Królestwie Rumunii w latach 1939–1940*, in: *Polska i Rumunia. Wspólnie – obok – blisko*, editing and proofreading of Polish texts K. STEMPEL-GANCARZYK and E. WIERUSZEWSKA-CALISTRU, Suceava, 2015, p. 188–200.

schools were established in Bukovina. In 1918 Bukovina, Bessarabia, Transylvania and Banat became a part of unified Romania. The education of national minorities was romanised. Polish language lessons were removed from public schools. A solution for Polish Diaspora in Greater Romania was the Private Education Law of 1925, which enabled private institutions to open and manage Polish schools. First, Polish schools were opened by Polish Municipalities, mainly in Bessarabia, and later the Polish Schools Society in Romania. After liquidation in 1931 of the Polish Schools in the Kingdom of Romania, the Polish School Union in Romania (PSUinR) was established in Chernivtsi. In the last quarter of the school year 1938/39, Poles in the Kingdom of Romania managed Polish private educational institutions, such as: one junior secondary school, 10 elementary schools and 2 preschools and private Polish language courses. They also organised various after-school and non-school activities.

Between early 19th century and 1939, Poles established in Romania mainly comprehensive elementary and secondary schools, and nurseries. They also tried to introduce Polish language courses in teacher training institutions. They created their own social and educational societies as well as Polish Houses, where they developed broad educational and cultural activities.

The outbreak of World War II and inflow of Polish army members and civilians opened a new page in the history of Polish diaspora and refugee education in Romania.

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