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THE RESTORATION AND ACTIVITY OF THE PROSVITA SOCIETY'S READING ROOMS IN DROHOBYCH LAND IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

The article treats of a process of the restoration, establishment, and activity of reading rooms of the Prosvita society in Drohobych county in the 1920s – 1930s. On the basis of archival documents the information on the dates of creations and closings of the society's reading rooms by the Polish power is presented, their quantitative structure, material condition, and surnames of the responsible for the reading rooms persons are specified. The main reasons which hampered the functioning of reading rooms, in particular, obstacles of the power during restatements of their statutes and creating of artificial barriers in their work, shortages of qualified and active cadres, and influences of the leftist ideas on educational activity are defined. The achievements and non-realized possibilities of reading rooms of the Prosvita society are elucidated, the relations between them and the Polish state administration are cleared out. It is proved that the reading rooms of the Prosvita society in the interwar period acted as a driving force and a component of the all-Ukrainian cultural and educational movement, assisted the transformation of the Ukrainians of the land into a well organized community, formed national consciousness and patriotism.

Key words: Drohobych land, the Prosvita society, reading room, interwar period.

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ВІДНОВЛЕННЯ ТА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ ЧИТАЛЕНЬ «ПРОСВІТИ» НА ДРОГОБИЧЧИНІ У МІЖВОЄННИЙ ПЕРІОД

У статті досліджується процес відновлення, становлення й діяльність читалень «Просвіти» у Дрогобицькому повіті в 20 – 30-х рр. ХХ ст. На основі архівних документів подано інформацію про дати створення та закриття польською владою читалень товариства: їх кількісний склад, матеріальний стан, прізвиська керівників. Визначено головні причини, які гальмували розвиток читалень, зокрема, перешкоди польської влади під час перезатвердження статутів, створення штучних перепон у функціонуванні товариства, нестача кваліфікованих і активних кадрів. Відзначено, що основною причиною відновлення праці товариства була реакція українців на колонізаційні процеси, що відбувалися у Галичині. Встановлено, що початок 1920-х рр. був досить складним періодом для відновлення діяльності читалень «Просвіти» на Дрогобиччині через вплив лівих політичних сил на просвітницький рух.

Висвітлено, наполегливу організаційну діяльність голови дрогобицького товариства «Просвіти» Степана Витвицького та виділу філії по відновленню та створенню розгалуженої мережі просвітніх осередків у повіті. Встановлено, що головами читалень «Просвіти» були місцеві парохі та поважні селяни-господарі або місцеві інтелігенти. У більшості сіл читальні мали власні дома, у деяких у 1930-х рр. здійснювали будівництво. Робота читалень контролювалася

філією та Головним віділом. Інспекторські перевірки поживлявали просвітню працю читальень, забезпечували контроль за діяльністю й популяризували нові форми і методи освітньої роботи. Висвітлено здобутки й нереалізовані можливості читальень «Просвіти», вказано на стосунки між ними й польською державною адміністрацією.

Доведено, що читальні «Просвіти» у міжвоєнний період виступали рушійною силою і складовою частиною загальноукраїнського культурно-просвітнього руху, сприяли перетворенню українців краю у добре організовану спільноту, формували національну свідомість та патріотизм.

Ключові слова: Дрогобицьчина, товариство «Просвіта», читальня, міжвоєнний період.

The statement of the problem. The Prosvita society played an important role in the national and cultural revival of Ukrainian Galicia. In the conditions of the inter-war period the organizational structure of the society was the optimal for Ukrainians form of self-organizing and self-defence for the purpose of upholding their national interests. That is why the gained experience of the organizational activity of the county's reading rooms of the Prosvita society on Drohobych land and carrying out of cultural-educational work by them in the interwar period gives a chance to more fully comprehend the essence, value, and a role of public organizations in the contemporary Ukrainian state. A number of problems, which nowadays arise before the Ukrainian society, are similar to what the Ukrainians in the interwar period faced: the confirmation of spirituality, formation of the national consciousness and a civilized society, and so on. The organizational inheritance, experience, and working activity of the reading rooms of the Prosvita society have not lost the topicality for today's time.

The analysis of recent researches. In independent Ukraine the theme of the Prosvita society's activity in the Western Ukraine during the inter-war period is investigated by a significant amount of scientists. Among the great amount of the works on the specified topic, I. Zuliak's work (Zuliak, 2005) and, also, Zh. Kovba's publications (Kovba, 1993), as well as a lot of other researches are well-grounded. However, speaking generally, the specified problem has not found a full enough illumination in scientific publications. On the Prosvita society's activity on Drohobych land there is some information in the four-volume edition «Drohobychyna – the land of Ivan Franko», in particular, the studies of I. Skochyliak (Skochyliak, 1973), M. Havryliuk (Havryliuk, 1997), P. Siviak (Siviak, 1997), M. Romaniak (Romaniak, 1997), L. Kitsyla (Kitsyla, 1997), Y. Kulchytskyi (Kulchytskyi, 1997), and others. But, as a matter of fact, these publications, as a rule, are grounded on the eyewitnesses' memoirs and have no appropriate base. Recently, the research work concerning the educational movement on the regional level, in particular, on Drohobych land, have become more active. The question is elucidated in the scientific works by B. Dobrianskyi (Dobrianskyi, 1995), M. Chepil (Chepil, 1997), T. Borduliak (Borduliak, 2003), M. Shalata (Shalata, 2012), O. Shved (Shved, 2010), M. Haliv (Haliv, 2013; 2014), I. Chava (Chava, 2014), I. Zuliak (Zuliak, 2017), Y. Komarnytskyi (Komarnytskyi, 2017), and others.

The article's purpose is on the basis of archival documents to analyse the process of restoration, establishment, and functioning of the Prosvita society's reading rooms on Drohobych land during the period between the two world wars.

The statement of the basic material. As is known, the branch of the Prosvita society in Drohobych was founded on July 6th, 1903. Father Mykhailo Bachynskyi (1866 – 1912), parish priest of the village of Ripchytzi, was elected its Chairman. In the following year the organization's Chairmen were Yaroslav Olesnytskyi, again Father M. Bachynskyi, and Volodymyr Chapelskyi. In 1910 in the Drohobych branch the Prosvita society 54 reading rooms were functioning (Borduliak, 2003: 6, 8). The beginning of the First World War and

the arrival of the Russian troops caused a termination of the activity of the Prosvita's reading rooms for a certain period. After the defeat of the Ukraine's national-liberation competitions and the loss of its statehood, in the majority of the towns the Prosvita houses were requisitioned, and the activity of the reading rooms was suspended. The attitude of the Polish power to the Ukrainian society was quite hostile and included desperate resistance to the restoration of the Prosvita's reading rooms. An ordinary example of such an attitude of the power to the society's activity can be the reading room of the village of Opaka community which was founded in 1905 by the permission of the former ruled by the governor-general region in Lviv and included under P. 265 in the cadastre of societies of Lviv voivodeship. The reading room owned a small house in which a cop-shop was located. After the war the Prosvita's reading room in the village was restored, the latest general meeting took place on 7.15.1923, at which Stas' Dub was elected chairman. At the meeting there were the representatives of the starostvo and the election was accepted into account. When life in the reading room began arising, the starostvo took off its confirmed statute and, then, the local gendarmerie closed the reading room (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2292. S. 1). One of the Prosvita society's member Vasyl Mudryi wrote as follows: «the Prosvita society at its beginnings carried out its tasks under very difficult and adverse circumstances, having against itself a strong then Moskwophile camp, the Polish administration, and all the Galican landlords who opposed the spread of education among our people» (Mudryi, 1958: 2).

The Drohobych branch the Prosvita society restored its activity in 1921, but it did not inform the Main department of the society in Lviv of it. Antin Horbachevsky (1856 – 1944) became Chairman of the restored Drohobych ĩ branch of the Prosvita society, and at the meeting in September, 1921 V. Chepelskyi was elected its Chairman. In the report of 1922 he so explained the not productive activity of the branch in the county: «Because not all the existing before the war reading rooms were registered, the administration found only three reading rooms functioning according to the regulations, whereas during its activity... three more were restored due to the hard measures and interventions in the government's authorities» (Shwed, 2010: 137). It is possible to assume that in the time of the incorporation of Drohobych land in the structure of the Austro-Hungarian empire many reading rooms could exist formally, but stay idle.

It is necessary to specify, that in the early twenties on Drohobych land the Ukrainian social-democratic party (USD) had a significant party influences and actively spread political propaganda throughout the county. At a branch general meeting of the Prosvita society on January 21st, 1923 the «social democratic cell» was elected. By the way, the leftists' provocations were frequent, particularly, in 1926 – 1931 when they tried to receive their management of libraries and to supervise over their basic work. In 1934 the staff of Drohobych branch addressed to the Main department of the the Prosvita society with the request to exclude Vasyl Shikh from the list of the society's members as «a demagogue who with his speeches expressing extremely leftist views does much harm at any questionnaire or branch meeting of the Prosvita society in Drohobych and equally negatively pronounces about the Prosvita society's activity in his village of Kolptsi (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2295. S. 86, 88). As V. Mudryi remarked in his report on a trip to Drohobych on July 7–8th, 1923 (he was sent there by the Main department of the Prosvita society to get acquainted with the situation): «... All the fault for the election of this staff lies only on the Ukrainian intelligentsia of Drohobych which escape from work, does not show a crumb of initiative in any field and is resting as if in a condition of some drowsiness and insensitive to the national needs» (Dilo, 1923: 3; Shwed, 2010: 137).

In 1924 an inspector, signed by letters H. P., in his report on his trips in Drohobych and Boryslav wrote about the indifference of the inhabitants of county's towns and villages to the «national-cultural issues»: «I have an impression that this part of the population is entirely cut off from any cultural world, no work is carried out among them and nobody and nothing serves for maintaining of their national consciousness... In Boryslav, due to the efforts of priest Leshchynskyi, almost all conscious population is involved in membership in the Prosvita society, but there is a lack of solidarity between workers and intelligentsia». On the margins of the report presented to head of the organizational commission Petro Petryk, in pencil the following is written: «So it will not be. We must operate» (Kovba, 1993: 78–79). As is obvious, the majority of representatives of Drohobych intelligentsia did not wish to be engaged in cultural-educational work which demanded self-return, use of free time, and not always yielded fast results.

With the returning of Stepan Vytvytskyi (1894 – 1965) to Drohobych in 1924, the situation in educational movement really changed. On November 10th, 1924, at the general meeting of Drohobych branch of the Prosvita society he was elected its Chairman (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2292. S. 17, 18). It is necessary to give due to S. Vytvytskyi's tireless work who during the 1920s – 30s visited almost all towns and villages of the county. Here is what he wrote in his reminiscences: «My trips took place by means of a common at that time transportation, which was a simple rural horse-drawn cart; usually on Sundays, but when the trip was long, then on Saturdays the cart called at me and I was driven to a village. The people gathered in a reading room, filling its small apartment, and so our meeting took place. Sometimes there were mean tricks from the left activists, but I should say that, in general, I was accepted favourably, hospitably, and that these meetings with peasants in their houses belong to my best recollections» (Vytvytskyi, 1973: 10).

In the 1920s – 1930s old reading rooms gradually revived and new ones were founded. From archival materials, by the condition for 1925, we have the information on the activity of reading rooms of the Prosvita society in the villages of Skhidnytsia, Nahuievychi, Modrychi, Rykhtychi, Ripchytsi, Hubychi, Bania Kotivska, and Volia Yakubova.

The reading room in Skhidnytsia held the latest gathering on March 25th, 1925, had 111 members; Yakym Pron' was elected Chairman; there were 592 zlotys and 65 groshes in the cash desk; the library had 180 books, of which 154 had been read, and 6 magazines; the amateur theatre group organized 2 performances; the reading room had no house of its own.

Nahuievychi: the general gathering was held on May 1st, 1925; the number of the members is 40; Ilko Badynsky was elected Chairman; there were 142 zlotys and 90 groshes in the cash desk; the library contained 60 books, of which 20 had been read, and 3 magazines; there was a theatre group which showed 4 performances; the reading room had its own house; the holiday of the Prosvita society was celebrated.

Hubychi: the general gathering took place on January 25th, 1925, there were 150 members; gymnasium professor Mykola Hryhorchuk was elected Chairman of the reading room; cash receipts – 3598 zl. and 90 hr.; the library had 300 books, of which 80 had been read, and 4 magazines; the theatre group gave 6 performances; a chorus was organised; the reading room had its own house.

Ripchytsi: the reading room had 90 members; Father Panteleimon Maletskyi was elected Chairman; 8 sessions were held; the receipts amounted to 105 zl., the expenses were 89 zl.; in the library there were 20 books and magazines; there functioned an amateur theatre group which gave 5 performances; the reading room has its own house.

Rykhtychi: the latest general gathering was held on May 16th, 1925; there were 27 members; Petro Stasyk was elected Chairman; the receipts were 15 zl.; the reading room had a wandering library from the branch of the Prosvitasociety which consisted of 16 books and one magazine; it had its own house.

Modrychi: the latest general gathering took place on November 29th, 1925; there were 36 members; Vasyl Kovtsun was elected Chairman of the reading room; the receipts made up 111 zl., the expenses were 44 zl., 50 gr.; in the library there were 102 books; there was an amateur theatre group which produced 5 performances; 2 reports were read; the reading room had its own house.

Bania Kotivska: the latest general gathering was held on April 12th, 1925; there were 48 members; Mykola Ivanchuk was elected Chairman; the receipts were 366 al., 78 gr.; there was an amateur theatre group which had given 5 performances; there were 2 magazines and 2 reports were read; it had its own house.

Volia Yakubova: the general gathering took place on February 15th, 1925; the members counted 114 persons; Stefan Kulyniak was elected Chairman; the receipts were 352 zl., the expenses were 177 zl.; in the library there were 80 books, of which 122 had been read, and 3 magazines; there was an amateur theatre group which had shown 4 performances; 3 reports were read; the reading room was placed in the village People's House (alias Narodnyi dim), the holiday of the Prosvita society was celebrated, and the concert in honour of Taras Shevchenko was organized (CSHAUL is held. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2292. S. 44, 44 rev.).

The power neglected the rights of the Ukrainians, suppressed any displays of their national development, regularly conducted checks, audits, created artificial obstacles in the society's functioning. For each meeting and each lecture the power demanded a special permission. The texts of speeches and even songs passed censorship. There were cases of the intervention of policemen during the carrying out of reading rooms' gathering, – for example, in the villages of Pochaievychi and Neudorf (now Nove Selo). In Opaka, the policeman who had arrived from the copshop in Pidbuzh, demanded 6 zlotys for a cart and «the reading room paid in order to get rid of the trouble and to have rest». In Pidbuzh reading room, during an audit on December 22nd, 1927, the police took away «History of Ukraine» by Mykola Arkas as «anti-state, illegal, and not censored» (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2292. S. 112 rev., 113). The actions of the Polish power testified to the purposeful and violent assimilating policy concerning the Ukrainians, that limited their natural and inalienable right to their native language and original national culture.

Lviv voivodeship issued orders with which the county's reading rooms of the Prosvita society could be liquidated, – as, for example, in the village of Solets (on 16.04.1928), for the gathering of the parents of the school children for to settle the question of the school plebiscite, or in Nahuievychi (on 17.06.1930), for reason that the organization «Selrob-Yednist» had held a meeting in the reading room on purpose to incite to a strike of «carriers of timber from the state forests», and, also, for an allegation that two members of the reading room had been elected to the committee structure, but their surnames were not specified. After the branch of the Prosvita had carried out an investigation, it appeared that the participants of the meeting «rushed into the reading room by using force, without informing and without the permission of the reading room's staff». In Skhidnytsia (18.06.1930) – for singing of the national anthem at a concert, for which local priest, Father Volodymyr Maryshchak was brought to judicial responsibility and – by the decision of the county court in Drohobych – was dismissed from punishment; in Mykhailevychi (21.06.1930), for the political content of

the report of the branch delegate Ivan Horodyskyi (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2292. S. 83, 110a, 111, 114 rev.; Dilo, 1930: 3).

The reading rooms were also closed in Sniatynka (on 12.03.1928), Dobrivliany (1928), Bania Kotivska, Uniatchi (on 22.07.1929), Hayi Nyzhni, Yasenytsia Silna, Opaka, Ranevychi (on 27.11.1928), Roliv (1928), Hrushiv (Krasne), and in Modrychi (in June, 1930). In Sniatynka – for a political speech of Vol[odymyr] Martyn at a meeting in February, 1928; in Opaka – for the fact, that the reviewer explained the matter of the Polish budget; in Hayi Nyzhni – for the advisory meeting for the creation of a reading rooms of the Plast organization; in Uniatchi – for the use of the reading room's seal by the secretary in «a private letter»; in Ranevychi – for the fact that some members of the reading room belonged to the illegal Communist party of the Western Ukraine and for the reception by them of this party's books from Berlin; the rest closures were motivated mainly for singing of the national anthem (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2292. S. 114, 114 rev., 121–122). On the basis of the statute, the property of the closed reading rooms passed at the disposal of Chairman of the society's branch S. Vytvytskyi, on which fact it was necessary to inform the Voivodeship in Lviv and Starostvo in Drohobych. All in all, by the middle of July, 1930, in Drohobych filial county 12 reading rooms were closed, and this number was constantly increasing.

However, despite the power's oppressions, the process of restoration of reading rooms of the Prosvita society in the county went on. Numerous appeals of Drohobych branch of the society to its Main Committee with the request to send the statutes testify to it. On May 1st, 1930 the reading room in Kolptsi, which had been closed on 17.04.1926, renewed its activity. On July 7th, 1930 a new reading room was created in Pochaievychi (Vasyl Kovalenko was elected its Chairman). Here the meeting took place without informing of the Starostvo and «a policeman arrived by the end of the meeting and made a denunciation for an illegal meeting without the permission of the power». This case was transferred for consideration into court (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2292. S. 121, 122, 123).

On June 29th, 1932, in the report at an annual general meeting, Chairman of the branch of the Prosvita society in Drohobych S. Vytvytskyi remarked that of 49 reading rooms 43 were active, and 40 of them had sent their annual report. The power allowed the activity of 16 reading rooms which testifies to a considerable progress. It should also be noticed that the leftist influences which at the meeting was presented by 9 persons, declined and was limited only to personal attacks. Four Drohobych reading rooms opened kindergartens, the same ones had to be created by the reading rooms elsewhere in the county. Also, such other creations were noted: 1 female section, 3 sections of youth, 32 theatre groups (187 performances), 9 choruses (19 concerts), and 1 wind band. Besides, the reading rooms and libraries received 6846 books and 114 magazines (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2295. S. 18; Business, 1932: 5).

On July 18th, 1932 Drohobych branch sent to the Main department the statutes of the founded reading rooms in Oriv for the purpose of their entering to into the Voivodeship. In the report it was underlined that «this is only a formality as the reading room in Oriv already exists, but in [1]924 it had not inserted new statutes, or had not renewed them...». It turned out that the statutes were in the office of the Main society for more than a month. The same concerns the statutes from Boryslav (Bania Kotivska), what had been sent by the branch yet on 9.05.1932. The branch also asked to respond to the creation of the student reading rooms of the Prosvita society in Drohobych and forwarded the report of the constituent assembly on the creation of a new (the second) reading room in Hrushiv-Stare Selo and Krynytsia (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2295. S. 27, 27 rev., 28).

In a letter to the Main department of the Prosvita society in Lviv, dd. April 5th, 1933, Drohobych branch informed the society on the activity of such reading rooms in the county: Binychi, confirmed by order of 23.06.1928 and was «a sub-settlement of the community of Hayi Nyzhni»; Hukova Hora, confirmed 6.01.1926 and belonged to the town of Great Boryslav; in Hayi Vyzhni the reading room was formed earlier, but its new statutes were confirmed by the Voivodeship later, on 30.12.1932. The general gathering took place on February 12th, 1933, Vasyl Huk was elected its Chairman; in Dovhe Pidbuzhetske the reading room restored activity thanks to the initiative of Father Severyn Matsiurak who was elected Chairman at a general meeting on April 2nd, 1933; in Nahuievychi it was restored by order of 17.06.1930, but the sent representation to the Ministry was rejected, therefore, there was no reading room there; in Ripchytsi the reading room was registered and functioned (registration date was not specified), its Chairman was Father Panteleimon Maletskyi; in Lastivky «the reading room is active enough», the general gathering took place on January 29th, 1933, Father Teofil Klish was elected Chairman; the reading room in Tyniv was «5 years not active», but on April 2nd, 1933 it held a meeting and elected Yosyp Markov Chairman; the reading room in Litynia – sub-settlement «Hrudy» – was not active for several years, but at the initiative of Dean Lev Stetsev on 19 February 1933 it held a general gathering on which it elected him Chairman. «The reading room starts to develop correctly, is located in a parochial house and is in constant contact with the Branch; the reading room in Luzhok Dolishniy develops poorly as it has no corresponding premise «(thanking to Old Ruthenians». In the summer of 1932 the branch sent its delegate Olexa Veselovskyi to the reading room, which resulted in a «misunderstanding with the local dudes» and the case appeared in court. For these reasons the reading room is almost idle. The latest general gathering took place on April 3rd, 1932 and elected Hryts Fedyk Chairman; the reading room in Pidbuzh starts building «its own big house», its activity is visible thanking to «the mobility of the local youth» and, also, the new lawyer Volodymyr Kuzyk who was elected Chairman at a general meeting on February 15th, 1933. It had a constant contact with the branch; the reading room in Rybnyk was «inactive, there was no force to wake it up from its sleep»; the reading room in Roliv was restored on 12.12.1928, a representation was sent to the Ministry which made no respond to it, hence – the reading room did not exist and all cultural-educational work was done by the Ridna Shkola society; as to the restoration of the activity of the reading rooms in Sniatynka, Skhidnytsia, and Uniatychi, the power did not permit it, motivating its negative decision by the fact that «these are only detour statutes, and continuation of the activity of the old reading room». Therefore, in these villages no reading rooms were present, while the cultural-educational work in Sniatynka is conducted by a local co-operative, in Skhidnytsia it was done by the Silskyi Hospodar society, and in Uniatychi the Ridna Shkola society (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2295. S. 62, 62 rev., 63).

In the second half of the 1930s the process of creation of new reading rooms went on. In June, 1933 Drohobych branch addressed to the Main department with the request to create a reading room staff in Urizh, as well as to correct the matter with the statute in Bystrytsia as «the people interrogate us what is the matter with the statutes for which they have to wait so long». The reading room in Stebnyk and Oriv-Zymivky was restored (under the other name) in 1936, and the community of the village of Radelychi asked a permission to establish the reading room of the Prosvita society (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2295. S. 66–67, 190). In January of 1938 the permissions to create reading rooms of the Prosvita society in Kolpitsi, Uniatychi, and Hayi-Potik were received, but, at the same time, no such permissions were re-

ceived from the county Starostvo in Drohobych by Hayi Vyzhni-Potic, Smilna, and Uniatychi (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2299. S. 47, 79).

Reading rooms were the lowest link in the structure the Prosvita society which administration was elected at the meeting and consisted of the chairman, assistant, secretary, librarian, cashier, and house-keeper. The activity of reading rooms depended on many factors: number of members, financial capability, presence or absence of competing structures, etc. Often communication between a reading room and the branch became complicated through the absence of effective means of communication. Chairmen of reading rooms of the Prosvita society were local clergyman, respectable peasants, or local intelligentsia. In the majority of villages a reading room had its own house, in some villages (Urizh, Hayi Nyzhni Lutsiovi) in the 1930s new buildings were under construction (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2299. S. 5). Members of the Prosvita society gathered in the reading rooms on Sundays and on holidays after the matins were served in churches. Lending of books, loud reading, and providing discussions concerning the read magazines, conversations on political themes, listening to convenient reports and speeches of the local or invited visitors, - such were the subjects of the reading room meetings. A special attention was devoted to the decoration of the premises of reading rooms during holidays, as it created a solemn mood in their visitors, while the holiday strengthened their national feelings. Of the most frequently anniversaries celebrated by the reading rooms of the Prosvita society on Drohobych land were these of T. Shevchenko, I. Franko, S. Petliura, and M. Shashkevych, and of the holidays most often celebrated were that of the Prosvita society, Kruty, the Unification Day, November revolt, and other. Each room had its library and formed various amateur groups. Reading rooms became the centres of cultural and educational life in villages.

All reading rooms in the county should pay monthly payments, and also necessarily subscribe to magazines «Narodnia Prosvita» and «Amateur Theatre» (the annual subscription of both magazines cost 4 zl.). Besides, the reading room staff had to be members of the Prosvita society and pay membership dues in the sum of 2 zl. (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2292. S. 69). Sometimes, the poorer reading rooms, than those which built separate houses, were dismissed from the payment. In a leaflet of the society's Main department of May 27th, 1930 there is a mention that the reading room of the Prosvita society in Hrushiv did not pay «the dues to to the maternal society for 1926, 1927, 1928, and 1929». There were branch pleas to the Main department with the request to release the reading rooms in Bilche, Bilche-Bolonia, Vynnyky, Hrushiv, Hukova-hora, Dovhe (near Medenychi), and Opari from «membership dues» (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2299. S. 40).

The work of reading rooms was supervised by the branch and the Main departments. Twice for a year the county organizer of the branch or an employee of the office carried out a basic check of the activity and an economic condition of the reading room. Besides, every year work of reading rooms was checked by the inspector from the Main office of the Prosvita society in Lviv. In 1926 29 trips to the reading rooms of Drohobych county were made with the purpose of checking and reading reports on historical, literary, and social themes.

In 1936 – 1939 Y. Andrusiecko, O. Kobiv, and V. Tatomyr visited Drohobych. After each check reports were written which were then discussed at the sessions of the branch with the reading room staffs and heads of groups present, in which also the achievements were analyzed, plans were prepared, the experience was exchanged, and new forms of work were studied. So, on December 17–25, 1937 inspector Y. Andrusiecko checked the activity of reading rooms in Drohobych county. The remarks made by him allow the contemporary researcher to estimate

their work. What concerns the positive conclusions, these were as follows: the sessions of the reading rooms' staff took place «almost correctly»; in each reading room regular and planned «loud readings» about Ukraine's history and geography, and with attention to the literature about the liberation struggle was conducted; the organisation of teaching courses for the illiterate (three such were in Oriv, Dobrohostiv, and Kropyvnyk); the carrying out by the branch of training preparation (studies on Mondays during several years) of the heads of self-educational groups and of Moloda Ukraïna (Young Ukraine); the presence of theatrical groups almost in each reading room; the practice of reception of permissions from the power for carrying out of the actions by the branch of the Prosvita society was good, as was, also, the control of the branch over the cash of each reading room. As to the drawbacks, they were such: the absence in some reading rooms of appropriate office-work «on the attributed printed matter»; the number of libraries should be increased and the stock-taking of books should be done; it was necessary to carry out an inventory of the property with the specified cost of each unit of possession; the cash-books should be checked each quarter, as well as the library, economy, office-work, and the work of the reading room on the whole. Medenychi reading room was noted to be weak in the organisation of work (CSHAUL. F. 348. D. 1. C. 2299. S. 46–46 rev.).

In the report of Drohobych branch of the Prosvita society for 1938 such achievements of the organization were underlined: the creation of the office; the division of the branch into 12 areas – Drohobych, Boryslav, Skhidnytsia, Pidbuzh, Bronytsia, Hrushiv, Rykhtychi, Medenychi, Voroblevychi, Dovhe (near Medenychi), Haii Nyzhni, Dobrohostiv (each comprising from 2 to 13 reading rooms and co-ordinating their work); the opening of a library; a subscription of 31 magazines, and so on. In general, Drohobych branch numbered 74 reading rooms (of which 48 worked «well» and 20 worked «poorly»). The total of the members of the staffs of all the reading rooms of the county was 7 229 persons (4605 men and 1213 women) (Dilo, 1938: 5).

The conclusions. Renewing of the activity of the Prosvita society's reading rooms in the interwar period was an absolute must of time and became a manifest evidence of the survivability of the educational idea of the Prosvita, the dynamics of the society's progress in the realisation of the national cravings of the Ukrainians. Their activity took place in extremely difficult conditions. The main reasons which braked the development of the Prosvita society's reading rooms, were such: obstacles of the power during the restatement of statutes, a lack of active cadres, and influences of the leftist political ideas on the Prosvita's activity. The persecution of the Ukrainian educational movement (Ukrainian «prosvita» means «enlightenment») was a bright illustration of the fact that the power created artificial obstacles and barriers in the functioning of the Prosvita's local centers and tried to limit its influence on the formation of the national consciousness.

The organizational advance of Drohobych branch of the Prosvita society was characterised by a constant expansion of a network of reading rooms, increase of the quantity of the society's members for the sake of giving the education-cultural work a mass character and for the strengthening of the opposition to Polonization and assimilation. The 1930s were particularly fruitful years in the activity of reading rooms of the society on Drohobych land, which became the period of transition from inertness to a hard work. After all, the development of all cultural and educational movement in the area depended on the branched out network of reading rooms of the Prosvita society and the quantities of Ukrainians involved in its membership. The reading rooms the Prosvita society in Drohobych county were among the main carriers of the Ukrainian national idea, their activity assisted in the increase of the conscious and educated Ukrainians.

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