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**FEATURES OF THE VOLHYNIA “PROSVITA” SOCIETIES LIQUIDATION
BY THE POLISH AUTHORITIES DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD**

Abstract. *The article focuses on the analysis of peculiarities of the “Prosvita” societies liquidation in the Volhynia Voivodeship, which was carried out by the Polish authorities during the interwar period. Since the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia did not have a centralized structure, as it was observed in neighbouring Galicia, and operated according to separate statutory documents, or did not have registered statutes at all, the Polish authorities took advantage of this moment to ban the activities of the national organization of the Ukrainians. Taking into account the fact that the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia existed only since the end of World War I and failed to win the favour of the majority of Volhynia residents, the Polish authorities tried to prevent the growth of the number of the “Prosvita” societies in the first half of the 20s of the 20th century, and from the turn of the 20s – the 1930s, “Prosvita” was on the way to liquidation. This is not accidental, because the national idea, which was widely promoted by the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies, the upholding of the Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian language and culture, contradicted the statist doctrine of the*

Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: a complete assimilation of the Ukrainians and transformation of Poland into a mono-ethnic state. The purpose of the study is to identify and analyze the peculiarities of the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies liquidation by the Polish authorities during the interwar period, as well as to trace the evolution of the Polish authorities position regarding the activities and existence of the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia. The methodological basis of the article is the principles of the authors’ objectivity, historicism, systematicity and scientificity. Historical and comparative, historical and systemic methods have been also widely used. The scientific novelty of the article is based on the involvement of new archival documents that are being introduced into a scientific circulation for the first time, as well as on the research focus narrowness, because so far no materials have been published that would trace the specifics of the “Prosvita” societies the liquidation in Volhynia during the interwar period. Instead, in the scientific publications there were analyzed the reasons for the liquidation of the “Prosvita” societies and were, rather, of a descriptive nature. The Conclusion. As a result of the research, the authors came to the conclusion that, taking into consideration the lack of a unifying centre among the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies, the Polish state administration managed to relatively quickly liquidate the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia and replace them with public organizations “Prosvitianski Khaty” loyal to the authorities. The process of liquidation of the “Prosvita” societies lasted for five to seven years, depending on the region of Volhynia, the liquidation of the “Prosvita” societies took place chaotically, their duration of activity depended on the leadership’s position (its ability to resist). The biggest problem faced by the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies was the transfer of property and finances.

Key words: “Prosvita”, Volhynia, liquidation, the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, statutory documents, national policy, Polish government.

ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ЛІКВІДАЦІЇ ВОЛИНСЬКИХ “ПРОСВІТ” ПОЛЬСЬКОЮ ВЛАДОЮ У МІЖВОЄННИЙ ПЕРІОД

Анотація. У статті досліджуються особливості ліквідації осередків “Просвіти” у Волинському воеводстві, що її здійснила польська влада у міжвоєнний період. Оскільки “Просвіти” на Волині не мали єдиної централізованої структури, як це було у сусідній Галичині, і діяли за окремими статутними документами, або ж не мали зареєстрованих статутів узагалі, польська влада скористалася цим моментом, аби заборонити діяльність національної організації українців. Враховуючи той факт, що “Просвіти” на Волині існували лише з прикінця Першої світової війни і не зуміли завоювати прихильність більшості волинян, польська влада намагалася перешкодити зростанню численності просвітянських осередків у першій половині 20-х рр. XX ст., а з рубежу 20–30-х рр. стала на шлях ліквідації “Просвіт”. І це не випадково, адже національна ідея, яка широко пропагувалася волинськими “Просвітами”, обстоювання Православної церкви, української мови та культури суперечило державницькій доктрині Другої Речі Посполитої: повній асиміляції українців та перетворення Польщі на моноетнічну державу. **Метою дослідження** є виявлення й аналіз особливостей ліквідації польською владою волинських “Просвіт” у міжвоєнний період, а також простеження еволюції позиції польської влади щодо діяльності та існування “Просвіт” на Волині. **Методологічну основу** пропонованої статті становлять принципи авторської об’єктивності, історизму, системності та науковості. Широко застосовано також історико-порівняльний та історико-системний методи. **Наукова новизна** статті опирається на залучення нових архівних документів, що вперше вводяться до наукового обігу, а також на вузькість дослідницького фокусу, адже досі не було опубліковано жодних матеріалів, які б простежували особливості ліквідації “Просвіт” на Волині у міжвоєнний період. Натомість наявні наукові публікації аналізували причини ліквідації “Просвіт” і мали радше описовий характер. **Висновки.** У результаті дослідження авторки дійшли висновку, що, враховуючи відсутність у волинських “Просвіт” єдиної об’єднавчої структури, польській державній адміністрації вдалося відносно швидко ліквідувати просвітянські осередки на Волині і замінити їх лояльними владі громадськими організаціями – “Просвітянськими хатами”. Процес ліквідації “Просвіт” розтягнувся у часі на п’ять-сім років, залежно від регіону Волині, ліквідації проходили хаотично, їх тривалість діяльності залежала від позиції керівництва (його здатності до опору). Найбільшою проблемою, з якою зіткнулися волинські “Просвіти”, стала передача майна і фінансів.

Ключові слова. “Просвіти”, Волинь, ліквідація, Друга Річ Посполита, статутні документи, національна політика, польська влада.

The Problem Statement. In Volhynia, the first branch of the “Prosvita” society was founded by the Ukrainian Sich riflemen during World War I, and at the time of Volhynia’s accession to the Polish state, the “Prosvita” movement was in its infancy, not gaining such a spread and popularity as in neighbouring Galicia. In addition, in Volhynia the national consciousness was significantly lower compared to the same Galicia or Transnistria. The Polish authorities, with the aim of assimilating the newly annexed lands, as well as to prevent the spread of the national movement from Galicia to Volhynia, divide the Ukrainians of the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth by the Sokal border and decide to eliminate the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies before they gain widespread influence and a mass character.

During the period under analysis, since the Volhynia “Prosvita” did not manage to form a single unifying centre, but operated according to separate statutes or without registered statutory documents, the authors consider it appropriate to use the term “Prosvita” societies as separate national and cultural organizations.

The Analysis of Recent Publications. The Volhynia “Prosvita” societies became the subject of research mostly by local historians and local country studies scholars. However, none of them did the research on the specifics of the liquidation of the “Prosvita” societies educational centres. For example, Volyn researcher Yuriy Kramar (Kramar, 2016) did research on the educational activities of the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies and the reasons for their persecution and liquidation by the Polish authorities. A historian Mykola Kucherepa (Kucherepa, 2001; Kucherepa, 2018) researched the history of the establishment and activities of the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia during the interwar period and analyzed in detail the activities of “Prosvitianski Khaty” – organizations that were, as an alternative, created by the Polish authorities instead of the liquidated branches of the “Prosvita” societies. The publications of Liudmyla Strilchuk (Strilchuk, 2018; Strilchuk, 2019; Strilchuk, Yarosh, 2021, Strilchuk & Dobrzhanskyi, 2021) are among the newest issues of the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies, but they are generalizing and elucidate certain aspects of the organization and activity of the “Prosvita” societies. Svitlana Ponomarenko and Mariana Myts did research on the cultural and educational activities of the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies.

Borys Savchuk, a researcher from Ivano-Frankivsk and Myroslava Filipovych, Lutsk historian should be mentioned among the researchers who analyzed the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies comprehensively. In particular, B. Savchuk analyzed the formation of the “Prosvita” movement in Volhynia, highlighted its stages, singled out the figures of the “Prosvita” activists and various directions of activity of the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies. The monograph of B. Savchuk “Volhynia Volyn “Prosvita” (Savchuk, 1996) became the first comprehensive study on the history of the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia, however, the source base of the monograph and the amount of literature analyzed by the author in the research are quite insignificant, the problems raised are considered only in general terms, without an in-depth analysis, there is no canvas of the historical process, there are omitted issues of the “Prosvita” societies activities.

The monograph written by M. Filipovych “Lutsk “Prosvita” 1918 – 1935” (Filipovych, 2007) is based on a significant layer of archival documents, contains extensive factual material about the cultural, artistic, educational, and church-religious activities of Lutsk “Prosvita”, but is a narrow study, since its subject is only the district “Prosvita” of Lutsk.

The purpose of the article is to identify and analyze the peculiarities of the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies liquidation by the Polish authorities during the interwar period, as well as to trace the evolution of the Polish authorities position regarding the activities and existence of the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia.

The Results of the Research. It is a well-known fact that the “Prosvita” society dates back to 1868, being founded in Galicia, which was part of Austria-Hungary at that time. By the time World War I ended, in Galicia the “Prosvita” society had become one of the most massive social and cultural organizations, covering the entire region with a dense network of its branches. The situation in Volhynia, which was part of the Russian Empire before the war outbreak, was radically different. The national consciousness of Volhynia was much lower than in neighbouring Galicia, and the first societies of “Prosvita” appeared there only at the end of World War I (Kalishchuk, 2020, p. 104), after the Ukrainian Sich riflemen under the leadership of Dmytro Vitovsky founded the first Volhynia “Prosvita” in the village of Matseyiv in Kovel district (Strilchuk, 2019, p. 211). Therefore, at the beginning of the 20s of the 20th century, at the time when Volhynia became part of the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the “Prosvita” societies in the region were at the stage of formation, they did not have a single unifying centre (Filipovych, 2007, p. 54), often (due to the war and lack of authorities formations) did not have a registered statute.

The defeat of the Ukrainian liberation struggle and awareness of an active formation of the Ukrainian nation strengthened the desire of the Polish authorities to carry out assimilation of population of the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth eastern regions as soon as possible. In fact, the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth included two western Ukrainian regions with a striking difference in a national and cultural development, a civic activity and national consciousness (Kalishchuk, 2020, p. 105). The Polish authorities decided to use this fact to divide these two regions within the borders of one state, establishing the so-called Sokal border (Strilchuk, 2018, p. 84), and thereby prevent the spread of the influence of Galicia on Volhynia, which was especially relevant under the conditions of the assimilation policy carried out by the Polish authorities (Strilchuk & Dobrzhanskyi, 2021, p. 221).

Since the “Prosvita” societies were considered by the Poles as influential public organizations that promoted the Ukrainian national idea, education and culture, the societies became the subject of oppression and prohibitions by the authorities (Kramar, 2016, p. 59). Taking into consideration the mass and popularity of the “Prosvita” movement in Galicia, the Polish state administration did not dare to oppose the Galician “Prosvita” openly (Dobrzhanskyi & Strilchuk, 2021, pp. 5–6), but in the case of Volyn, the decision was made to liquidate the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies formally using the lack of statutory documents in the majority of Volhynia branches as the main reason for liquidation (Strilchuk & Yarosh, 2021, pp. 129–130). The statutory documents of those Volhynia “Prosvita” societies that had registration, for example, Dubno, Lutsk, Rivne district “Prosvita” societies, were not recognized, because they were registered during the war years or during the post-war period (Savchuk, 1996, pp. 84–86), before the approval of the Polish state administration.

Among the main reasons that made it possible to liquidate the “Prosvita” societies by the Polish authorities in the Volhynia Voivodeship were the following: an insufficient cohesion of national Ukrainian political forces and public organizations; a low political, national and cultural development in the Volhynia Voivodeship (Kucherepa, 2018, p. 98); the assimilationist, anti-Ukrainian policy of the Polish authorities towards the Ukrainians, in general, and the Volyn “Prosvita”, in particular; inter-ethnic contradictions and complex inter-ethnic Polish-Ukrainian relations during the interwar period (Strilchuk, 2016, p. 272).

The prosecution of the Polish authorities of the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies began in 1927 and was manifested in restrictions and prohibitions on their activities (Kucherepa, 2001, p. 32). Thus, in a letter sent by the Dubno “Prosvita” society to Lviv on July 30, 1928,

we read the following: "...these days, the local Polish authorities, on the basis of the order of the Ministry for Internal Affairs of November or December 1922 Ch-99, completely began to refuse our Society in permits for theatrical performances, motivating the absence of permit at each play, before the performance of each play, there must be a permit given by the Polish authorities that each play is censored (by the Polish authorities) and allowed to be performed on the stage... it was not possible to achieve the cancellation of these permits, because and the theater-amateur movement stopped completely..." (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 2324, p. 9).

Such and similar bans on concerts, parties, activities of the Volhynia "Prosvita" libraries-reading rooms became widespread, which is confirmed by numerous archival materials. For example, in the Central State Historical Archive of the city of Lviv, the authors of the article found the documents that testify that the Volhynia "Prosvita" societies tried to resist liquidation by uniting around those "Prosvita" societies, which had registered statutes in the hope that such society would provide an opportunity for their existence and activities. The Lutsk "Prosvita" society took the initiative to create a single unifying centre. At the end of 1927, the Lutsk "Prosvita" society sent letters to all Volhynia "Prosvita" societies with this proposal. Thus, for example, in a letter from the Lutsk "Prosvita" society to the Kovel "Prosvita" society, dated November 17, 1927, we read the following: "The Council of the Lutsk "Prosvita" dated November 5, 1927, part 746/B in the case of the formation of the "Prosvita" societies centre in Volyn asks, in consideration of this case, to send an answer to the Lutsk "Prosvita" as to whether Kovel "Prosvita" considers a suitable formation of the Volhynia "Prosvita" Central society and the Statute legalization (which was refused by the authorities in 1921 and 1924). And also, do you consider it necessary to consider this situation to convene a meeting of representatives of the district "Prosvita" societies in Volhynia?... It is understood that in the case of a favourable attitude to this issue, the Volhynia "Prosvita" society will gather for a congress, which must be convened for hearing and approval of the final version of the Statute of the Volhynia "Prosvita society"" (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 3492, p. 1).

It is known that the majority of the Volhynia district "Prosvita" societies agreed to this proposal, however, the Polish authorities did not give permission to hold the congress. Therefore, the issue of the formation of the Volhynia Central "Prosvita" society was declared, to a wide audience, at the teachers' congress held in Rivne at the end of 1927, however, no decision was made in this case, as the congress delegates had no authority.

Nevertheless, the issue of unification of the Volhynia "Prosvita" societies was widely discussed and supported by the majority of societies. In particular, in one of the decisions of the Rivne "Prosvita" Society, we read the following: "At the meeting of Rivne "Prosvita" on February 23, 1927 in the case of the "Prosvita" societies unification in Volhynia it was decided: to reply to Lutsk "Prosvita" society that the Council of the "Prosvita" society in Rivne considered the proposal of the Voivodeship and came to the conclusion that in principle it would be desirable to form the Volhynia "Prosvita" Central society so that the formation of such a Central "Prosvita" does not cause disputes and questions.... And if the voices of some "Prosvita" societies were against this formation, then the final solution of this issue should be discussed at a meeting of representatives of all Volhynia "Prosvita" societies. After all, the creation of the Volyn "Prosvita" Central society can protect the "Prosvita" societies from liquidation..." (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 4728, p. 1).

It should be noted that there were also "Prosvita" societies in Volhynia that did not support the idea of creating a single unifying centre of "Prosvita", or at least did not see themselves in such an association. Among them there was "Prosvita" of the town of Kremianets. Thus, in a

letter sent from Kremianets to Lviv on October 21, 1927, we read the following: “In response to letter No. 5833/27, the Council of the Society has the honour to reply that the issue of the creation of the Volhynia “Prosvita” Centre was discussed once again at the Council meeting this year on October 6. It was unanimously decided that the Lviv “Prosvita” should be the only moral and formal centre, and therefore a negative position was taken before the establishment of the Volhynia “Prosvita” Centre. Chairman of the Council Semen Zhuk” (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 3165, p. 2).

Faced with the fact of banning and liquidation, the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies tried to re-register, appearing as new organizations, this state of affairs was often reported by the Polish officials, as evidenced by archival documents of the Warsaw Archives of New Acts. For example, in the information of the Dubno Starostvo, we read: “...in Dubno district branch of the “Prosvita”, there are 112 societies and 3,200 members. The value of the “Prosvita” societies property cannot be determined at the moment... According to the collected information, Ambassador V. Chuchmai (a former head of “Prosvita” in Dubno) intends to establish a new Ukrainian organization (with a different name) as soon as possible, to which he will transfer all the property of Dubno “Prosvita”...” (ANAW, d. 979/64, p. 15).

There is another report by the Polish officials from Rivne: “The head of the liquidated “Prosvita” in Rivne was O. Karpinskyi, a deputy – R. Ishchuk, a secretary – V. Ohiboskyi”. The “Prosvita” society included 104 branches, of which 35 were less developed and active. In total, in the “Prosvita” society there were 1,044 employees before liquidation. The approximate value of property was PLN 30,000.

The liquidation congress of the “Prosvita” society in Rivne is going to renew the society, and therefore intends to transfer funds to the newly formed society. April 26, 1928” (ANAW, c. 979/64, p. 54).

However, neither the plan to create the Volhynia “Prosvita” Centre, nor attempts to re-register the Society were successful, as the Polish authorities refused to register the statutes of the public society categorically, which meant a ban on its activities. Part of the “Prosvita” societies of the Volhynia Voivodeship, already after their closure, tried to find a way out by becoming subordinate to the Lviv “Prosvita” society, and thus resume activity based on the statutory documents of the Lviv “Prosvita” society, however, this idea was not destined to be implemented in practice. In archival repositories, we find many documents that testify to this fact. For example, in a letter sent from the Main Board of the “Prosvita” society in Lviv to Rivne dated January 10, 1933, we read: “In response to your letter of December 16, 1932, we inform you that the activities of the “Prosvita” society on the territory of Galicia are very limited. When changing our Statute, the authorities did not allow us to extend our activities to all Ukrainian lands under Poland.

Therefore, it is not possible to establish new branches or reading rooms of “Prosvita” in Volhynia based on the Statutes of our Society. However, we advise you to establish an independent library on the basis of the new Law on Societies, until the time when you are able to establish a new regional “Prosvita” society. We hope that such time will come someday” (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 4730, p. 1).

There were not rare cases when the “Prosvita” societies continued to operate in Volhynia even after the liquidation meeting. As a rule, this happened more often in small settlements, away from a watchful eye of the Polish officials. In the letter sent by the Kostopil starosta to the Voivodeship government on February 15, 1930, we read: “I report that the Society called “Prosvita” does not officially exist in the starostvo entrusted to me. However, the

Ukrainians create libraries-reading rooms, however, in addition to borrowing literature, the libraries conduct events that were traditionally conducted by the "Prosvita" society. There are six such libraries in the povit. Their detailed characteristics is given below....

I believe that these libraries should be checked, re-registered and taken under state control, this would prevent the cultivation of memories of "Prosvita" and the spread of "Prosvita" ideas by libraries. Starosta Z. Kubitsky" (ANAW, c. 979/64. pp. 92–95).

The Lutsk "Prosvita" society was among those who managed to resist liquidation for the longest time, however, finally on July 1, 1934, in compliance with the order of the Povit Starostva of June 16, 1934, a liquidation meeting of the Lutsk "Prosvita" was held. From the detailed minutes of the meeting of the liquidation commission, we can conclude that the meeting was difficult, it was postponed and postponed several times due to the lack of a quorum, the atmosphere was depressed, the majority of people were against the liquidation of the society. (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 3492, pp. 12–14).

Faced with the inevitability of the "Prosvita" societies liquidation, the Volhynia "Prosvita" members faced another problem: where and to whom to transfer the property they acquired during their short years of existence. The most valuable parts were the books that had been collected with such difficulty by the Volhynia "Prosvita" societies (as gifts from private libraries, bought, exchanged). Among the property of the Volhynia "Prosvita" societies there were also pieces of furniture, sets for theatre and costumes, musical instruments, and documentation kept in each society. Among the archival documents, there are many letters from various Volhynia "Prosvita" societies addressed to the Lviv "mother "Prosvita"" with a request to transfer their property to Lviv. Some of the letters were sent to private individuals who, according to the "Prosvita" members, had the opportunity to take custody of property, such as Oleksandr Tsinkalovskyi from the Volodymyr povit "Prosvita", so that the latter could hide the "Prosvita" library in his house. In particular, in the letter to O. Tsynkalovsky we read; "The main department of the "Prosvita" Society, as a receiver of the property of the dissolved Volodymyr "Prosvita", authorizes you to become the home manager of this property: the library, individual items and the collection of still unresolved debts from the branch of the Volodymyr Povit "Prosvita"... " (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 1637, pp. 14).

Let's quote another document: a letter from the Kovel Povit "Prosvita" society to Lviv, dated June 12, 1929: "Dear Chairman! The day of the funeral-liquidation of our Kovel "Prosvita" society is approaching. It will be this Thursday: 13.06. It will be necessary to transfer the "Prosvita" property to someone at the liquidation meeting. We did not know who to transfer it to and at the meeting we decided to transfer the property to the Lviv "Prosvita". In this regard, we ask you, Mr. Chairman, to send us to Kovel someone to transfer the property on June 13" (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 2902, p. 55).

Another letter sent from Lutsk to Lviv on January 13, 1935: "Dear Mr. Chairman! We cannot write everything in an official letter, so we write privately. Please do everything to ensure that the formal transfer of property, deeds, documents takes place as soon as possible!

Then we would send the Acts and seals to Lviv, and the libraries would be set up somewhere temporarily (in free premises). Let me explain: we are afraid that the fact that all debts have not been collected and can be used by someone (the authorities), and there will be no library..." (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 3492, p. 22).

In the next, last letter sent by the Lutsk "Prosvita" to Lviv on January 21, 1935, it informs about its final liquidation: "The Liquidation Commission of the Lutsk "Prosvita" society was held in Volhynia on January 14, 1935 and concluded liquidation of the "Prosvita" society on

the same day. All copies of the documents sent to the Lutsk povit starostvo, in accordance with the order of the Voivodeship Government.

Notifying about this, the “Prosvita” society refers to: 1) a copy of a blank and balance sheet; 2) a property description; 3) a write-off of creditors. Other documents will be transferred” (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 3492, p. 25).

In the majority of cases, the “Prosvita” societies tried to settle all debts before liquidation: whether it was for renting premises, or for literature bought for libraries, etc. The Central State Historical Archive of the city of Lviv contains many documents that confirm this fact. For example, on January 2, 1931, the Kovel povit “Prosvita” society informs: “We would like to inform you that all the debts of the Kovel “Prosvita”, which the authorities liquidated closed, have been paid” (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1. c. 2902, p. 60).

After the liquidation commission meeting on October 10, 1935, the Kremenets “Prosvita” societies informs the “Prosvita” in Lviv: “...we are sending a list of reading rooms in Kremenets povit, which after liquidation have debts to the Lviv “Prosvita” society for previously issued books. These are reading rooms in Lopushyn, Valashchyntsi, Rynivtsi, Holybizy, Hrynky and Podlistsia...” (CSHAUL, f. 348, d. 1, c. 3165, p. 4).

The Conclusion. Thus, during the period from the end of 1927 to the end of 1935, all the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia were liquidated, and the vacuum created in a social and cultural space of the Voivodship, the Polish authorities tried to fill with the newly created “Prosvitiansky Khaty”, which were under the authorities’ control. As for the specifics of the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies liquidation, it should be noted that the lack of cohesion of the national Ukrainian political and socio-cultural forces and a small mass and activity of the “Prosvita” movement in the Volhynia Voivodeship made possible the liquidation and ban on the activities of the “Prosvita” societies in Volhynia. The absence of statutory documents registered by the Polish authorities and a unifying centre of “Prosvita” in the Volhynia Voivodeship became a formal reason for their liquidation. Attempts made by the Volhynia “Prosvita” societies to submit to the statutory documents of the Lviv “Prosvita” failed because, under the pressure of the Polish authorities, changes to the Statute made in the early 20s of the 20th century did not allow the influence of the “Prosvita” society of Galicia to spread to other territories of the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, in particular to Volyn

All attempts to re-register existing or create new social and cultural centres instead of the liquidated Volhynia “Prosvita” societies ended in failure (Strilchuk & Dobrzhanskyi, 2021, pp. 225–226). The Polish state administration kept a watchful eye on the former “Prosvita” members in every possible way, trying to hinder their activities, conducting audits of reading libraries, often seizing their property, refusing permission to rent premises, and charging fines. In the second half of the 30s of the 20th century, some of the less nationally conscious Volhynians became members of the “Prosvitiansky Khaty”, which finally split the national movement in Volhynia.

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