ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF WOMEN IN WESTERN UKRAINE DURING THE SECOND STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE UKRAINIAN WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

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The Western Ukrainian region was the first, in comparison with the Naddnipryansk Ukraine, where the Ukrainian women’s movement acquired organizational forms. For example, in 1893 the Women’s Club was established in Lviv, and the Club of Rusyns in Kolomyia. A year later, in the city of Gorodenets, women organized the “Women’s Society”, and the “Society of Russian Women” was founded in Bukovina. In 1896, the “Women’s Circle” was founded in the city of Ternopol. In 1901, the Women’s Reading Room association appeared in the city of Dalin. In 1903, the “Circle of Ukrainian Girls” appeared in Lviv. Also at that time, women's societies appeared in cities such as Berezhany and Rogatyn [3, 272].

The aforementioned women’s societies were secular in nature and were considered the leading centers of intellectual life. Through their activities, they encouraged women to social life in the Western Ukrainian region. For example, they advocated access of women to higher education and political activity on a par with men, were imbued with the issue of their self-realization, seeking to expand the scope of the application of female labor in society [1, 264]. Moreover, they, like public organizations of the Naddnipryansk Ukraine, maintained schools, libraries, kindergartens, organized concerts, evenings and children’s events [7, 168]. That is, by their actions this type of women’s organizations demonstrated to the Western Ukrainian public a clear transition of the Ukrainian women’s movement in Western Ukraine from passive to active participation in the struggle for the expansion of women’s civil and political rights.

As at the previous stage of its development, the Ukrainian women’s movement in Western Ukraine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was dominated by social and charitable societies. For example, during the indicated period, the Society for Guardianship of Servants and Workers, the Society for Guardianship of Children and Youth, the Society for Russian Burial, the Society of Vacation Homes, the Mariinsky Ladies Society, the Society of Orthodox Rusyns, as well as “myrrh-bearing”. These and other women’s organizations were religious and charitable. They were engaged in philanthropic and humanitarian activities, as well as in the spiritual and religious life of the female population of Western Ukraine [2]. It is necessary to pay attention to the fact that membership in this type of public organizations did not contribute to the destruction
of traditional gender stereotypes in them and the formation of new views on the role of women in society [4, 77].

Among the charitable organizations were those dealing with an important public problem at that time – trafficking in women and prostitution. For example, in Lviv, the "society of St. Raphael" [1, 265].

One of the prominent roles in the history of the Western Ukrainian women's movement of the early twentieth century belonged to the "Ukrainian Girls club". We are talking about the first female students of Lviv University (since the end of the 19th century, women in Western Ukraine have gained access to higher education, in particular the right to study at Lviv University), namely: D. Shukhevych, S. Danilevich, N. Budzinovsky and A. Okhrimovich having received the support of the academic community of students and representatives of the older generation of the Russian-Ukrainian Radical Party. The appeal of the "Club of Ukrainian Girls" was published in 1900 in the press organ of student youth "Young Ukraine" [5, 19].

If an intermediate line is drawn, it should be noted that both secular and religious charitable and educational women's organizations were dominated by women from urban families of the liberal intelligentsia. In the late XIX – early XX century female workers and female peasant women did not show significant interest in participating in the above types of women's associations [3, 273].

However, at the same time, women's societies are emerging, the members of which are mostly peasant women. In particular, in 1892, a women's society was created in the village of Kupchintsy in the Ternopil region, which was engaged in the issue of women's education and the dissemination of the latest ways of conducting peasant farming. The Russian-Ukrainian Radical Party, which took the women's association under its care, had a significant influence on the activities of this women's association [6, 194]. Therefore, the further activities of the Kupchinsky Sorority were closely intertwined with the work of the Russian-Ukrainian Radical Party.

The activities of the above organization turned out to be not the only example of social activity of peasant women in Western Ukraine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, in 1908 in the village of Tselievoe, also Ternopil region, a women's gathering was held, which was attended by more than four hundred participants. The agenda of the meeting of women peasants included issues related to changing the social status of women, the economic situation of the region, general political requirements, namely passive and active suffrage, transformation of the local government system [4, 78].

One of the important factors in the development of the Ukrainian women's movement in Western Ukraine in the political direction was the dissatisfaction of women with their political position, because the legal support for this provision was primarily declarative rather than practical [7, 170].

In addition, political parties that supported the idea of equality between women and men began to take an active interest in the problems of the women's movement [1, 268]. The patronage of women's organizations by political associations, in particular the Russian-Ukrainian Radical Party, was discussed above.

Another point worth paying attention to is that women who did not have membership in party associations during the indicated period, nevertheless had their own representation in the cultural and educational society of the Russian-Ukrainian radical party – "Postup" [5, 21].

In general, the women's issue has troubled the Russian-Ukrainian Radical Party [4, 79]. In particular, its policy documents contained requirements for equality between men and women in society. The fact that this issue was among the main ones for party
members is evidenced by its regular coverage in the pages of the party press and the encouragement of women to act as correspondents [3, 274].

During the second stage of its development, the Ukrainian women’s movement in Western Ukraine not only acquired organizational forms, but also attempted to consolidate it. In particular, the second meeting of socially active women at the All-Ukrainian Women’s Congress in Lviv, which took place on April 10, 1892, received a wide response. This evening, delegates were women not only of Ukrainian, but also of Polish and Jewish nationality [1, 269]. As for men, two members of the Russian-Ukrainian Radical Party – M. Pavlik and I. Franko – managed to attend this women’s meeting, the first as a delegate and the second as a photographer [5, 22].

Summing up, we can say that the West Ukrainian region turned out to be the first, in comparison with the Naddnipryansk Ukraine, where the Ukrainian women’s movement moved to a higher level of its development – organizational. In the late XIX – early XX centuries, along with the classical (charitable) types of women’s organizations in Western Ukraine, societies appeared that began to specialize in problems that were relevant at that time (the struggle for the political rights of women, with prostitution and trafficking in women). Being only members of public organizations, activists collaborated with Ukrainian political parties, which, being interested in the “women’s issue”, supported women in their aspirations.

References: