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## Childcare and Educational Activities of Religious and Public Organizations in Western Ukraine in 1900-1930

Ilona Dychkivska<sup>1</sup>, Olena Ionova<sup>2</sup>, Olena Druhanova<sup>3</sup> and Svitlana Luparenko<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor, Rivne State University of Humanities, Rivne, Ukraine.

<sup>2,3,4</sup>Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, Kharkiv, Ukraine.

### Abstract

The article presents the study of childcare and educational activities of religious and public organizations which existed in Western Ukraine in 1900-1930. These organizations were Maris Squads, Catholic Action, Ukrainian Catholic Union, Prosvita, Shevchenko Literary Society, M. Kachkovskiy Society, Russian Pedagogical Society, P. Mogila Society of scientific presentation, Society of Galician Greek Catholic priests (Russian protection, Ukrainian Regional Society of Children's Protection and Youth's Tutelage, Russian Conversation, Citizens' reading room, Fedkovich Russian National House, Russian School, O. Dukhnovich Society. They were aimed at child's harmonic development and children's protection and social secure. The religious and public organizations established such children's institutions as preschool establishments (children's ward, nursery schools, Frebel gorodets), tutelary-educational establishments (orphanages, shelters, vacation houses, special establishments for blind, deaf and dumb, mentally disabled and abandoned children, American kitchens for homeless children, consultations for mothers), school establishments (state and private gymnasiums, schools). The directions of childcare and educational activities implemented by religious and public organizations have been characterized. They are organization of preschool education and expansion of a network of preschools and schools; care for sick, poor and destitute children and orphans; financing of primary and secondary schools. These organizations promoted the development of Ukrainian culture and renewal of activity of national schools.

**Keywords:** Children, Childcare, Educational activities, Development, Religious and public organizations, Western Ukraine.

### 1. Introduction

At the present stage of development humankind has come to realize the great adults' responsibility to children. But although children (as a social-demographic group) are considered to be rather unprotected members of society and they are provided with protection of rights from birth, children's rights have declarative character in real life. That's why society (government, public organizations, private individuals, etc.) acknowledges childhood as the most valuable period in human life and the necessity of real work on childcare and children's education, directs its attention and activity to creating conditions for children's full development, their education and childhood protection.

However, a state could not always ensure children's full development throughout the history, and religious and public organizations took some of its functions in children's protection and development. For example, in the 1900-1930th the educational system in Western Ukraine had multicultural character and was characterized by unsatisfactory state of the Ukrainians (a low cultural and educational level of the Ukrainians, not enough quantity of educational establishments with the Ukrainian language, etc.). That was caused by the fact that Western Ukraine was under the rule of different countries (Austro-Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic) during the analyzed period, and so these countries propagandized and imposed their national educational systems. In turn, that caused cultural and educational revitalization of religious and public organizations which aimed at increasing the level of the Ukrainians' national consciousness and spiritual culture, ensuring children's full development, their education and protection. Having raised the slogan of spiritual renewal, public initiated extensive educational, social-cultural and charitable activity.

Thereby, the study of childcare and educational activities of religious and cultural-educational societies in Western Ukraine in the 1900-1930th is of current interest.

## 2. Literature Review

The analysis of historical, psychological-pedagogical literature has shown that modern scientists investigated certain aspects of the activity of the religious and cultural-educational organizations in Western Ukraine during the analyzed period. For instance, I. Myshchysyn [13], B. Savchuk [14] studied the public activities of the church and the societies. S. Badora [1], N. Fedorak [4], V. Stuparyk [18] investigated tutelary activity of the cultural-educational societies. N. Dmytryshyna [3] in her works revealed the development of preschool education. L. Derevyana [2], M. Galay [5], L. Genyk [6], N. Ihnatenko [8], V. Horodyska [7], N. Kosheleva [10], I. Kurliak [11], L. Malyar [12], L. Slyvka [17], V. Stynska [20], S. Vdovych [26], R. Zozulyak [27] studied primary and secondary education with involvement of cultural-educational societies. Nevertheless, the question of children's protection and development activity of the religious and public organizations has not been under careful consideration yet.

The aim of the paper is to reveal the direction of childcare and educational activities implemented by the religious and public organizations on the territory of Western Ukraine in 1900-1930.

## 3. Method

A complex of methods was used to conduct this research. The general scientific methods (retrospective, historical-pedagogical analysis, generalization, chronological) were the basis for investigation of the substantive and procedural components of the state reforms in Western Ukraine at the beginning of the 20th century. The historical and genetic method enabled to analyze the genesis of ideas of childhood in the studied period, people's attitude to children and health maintenance. The comparative method provided the opportunity to compare the scientists' ideas about childcare and children's protection and development, to distinguish similar and different ideas. The retro-praximetric method made it possible to analyze the experience in implementing childcare and educational activities. The problem-target method enabled to compare documentary sources and archive materials which revealed the development and implementation of childcare and educational activities in Ukraine in the studied period. The axiological method contributed to substantiation of value attitude to children and the need for childcare and educational activities. The prognostic method enabled to outline the perspectives of creative use of the generalized experience in implementing childcare and educational activities of the past in modern educational practice.

The archive materials, legislative documents of the period of 1900-1930, scientific and pedagogical sources of the funds of the state and university libraries, information of periodicals of the studied period, original works of the scientists who worked in educational, social and medical sectors in Ukraine in the studied period, memoirs and autobiographical literature were the main basis for writing this article.

## 4. Results

### Reasons for emergence and activities of the religious and public organization in Western Ukraine

The increased activity of the religious and public organizations was caused by Ukrainians' needs for material and moral support and children and youth's tutelage [13]; and this activity was carried out on the basis of Christian morality, national values and humanistic ideas of children's development, namely [13; 26]: education should highlight a child (it means to develop him/her fully); education should maintain his/her inner harmony, develop creative inclinations; the educational process should be organized with a focus on children's natural talent; educational process should form and develop children's interests and creative abilities; creation of the opportunities for developing children's activity, free own statements and creativity in educational process; the necessity of children's comprehensive development (physical, sexual, esthetic, etc.).

On the whole, Ukrainian society directed its efforts to solving such tasks: creation of the conditions for children's physical and spiritual development; children's protection; moral-religious education, the increase of the level of Ukrainians' knowledge, education and civic consciousness and expansion of charitable activity (charitable, educational and religious activity in the interests of society and certain individuals). It is necessary to admit that public organizations actively cooperated with church for providing childcare and children's development, and they founded different establishments for children:

- preschool establishments (children's ward, nursery schools, Frebel gorodets, etc.);

- tutelary-educational establishments, namely: orphanages, shelters (the first Ukrainian shelter for children was founded in December, 1915 in Lviv due to mutual activity of Ukrainian pedagogical society, Prosvita and other public organizations. About 220 children were there till its closure in 1920 [4]), vacation



houses, special establishments for blind, deaf and dumb, mentally disabled and abandoned children, American kitchens for homeless children, consultations for mothers where doctors examines mothers and children, vaccinated them, gave medicines, food, underwear, gave medical advice free or at discount prices. For example, Lviv consultation for mothers worked the most actively. It examined 1-1,2 thousand babies regularly. It had dairy stations which gave children more than 5 thousand liters of milk yearly. It also had a section of orphanages mothers that had 40 city departments and took care of 5 thousand Ukrainian children. The consultation had a special library and conducted children's weeks and different mass actions [4], etc. Different kinds of orphans lived, namely: orphans and half-orphans, social orphans (children who had parents, but they became orphans because of their divorce, elopement, imprisoning or moral degradation) and psychological orphans (educationally abandoned children who did not have necessary care because of their parents' reluctance to educate them);

- school establishments (state and private gymnasiums, schools).

#### Characteristics of activities of the religious and public organizations

Thus, such religious and public organizations were in Western Ukraine [7; 22; 23; 24; 25]: *Maris Squads* (they started their work in Western Ukraine in the 17th century), *Catholic Action* (since 1931), *Ukrainian Catholic Union* (since 1931), *Prosvita* (since 1868), *Shevchenko Literary Society* (it started its work in 1873; in 1892 it started to name *Shevchenko Scientific Society*), *M. Kachkovskiy Society* (since 1874), *Russian Pedagogical Society* (it was founded in 1881; in 1912 it started to name *Ukrainian Pedagogic Society*; in 1926 it changed its name to *Native School*), *P. Mogila Society of Scientific Presentation* (since 1908), *Society of Galician Greek Catholic Priests* (since 1816), *Russian Protection* (since 1900), *Ukrainian Regional Society of Children's Protection and Youth's Tutelage* (since 1917) and others, *Russian Conversation* (since 1869), *Citizens' Reading Room* (since 1880), *Fedkovich Russian National House* (since 1884), *Russian School* (it was founded in 1887, but in 1908 it changed its name to *Ukrainian School*), *O. Dukhovich Society* (since 1923) and others.

*Maris Squads* were the first religious organizations to start their work in Ukraine. They consisted of the sections which had their own specific functions. For example, Eucharistic section worked on holding and promotion of religious practices, children's spiritual tutelage. The members of abstract-press section spread religious literature, founded reading rooms and libraries, periodicals. The members of charitable section had such tasks: visiting poor families, providing financial and moral assistance, organization of free meals, placing orphans in shelters, organization of the courses for illiterate people, etc. The members of hospital section were involved in visiting ill people in hospitals, collecting money and food for them, organizing correspondence with their relatives. The members of charitable section had a wide range of tasks: organization of clinics for mothers, hospitals, support to poor school youth, foundation of theological seminaries, professional workshops, providing medical and financial support.

*Catholic Action* in 1931 became an impulse for creating same societies and quick increase in number of members. The society acted on the basis of harmonious cooperation of different apostolates. The introductory apostolates, the apostolate of spiritual mercy, groups of charitable activity, philanthropic support and the apostolate of secular leaders' education were among them. *Catholic Action* was an initiator of creating *Ukrainian Catholic Unions* which attracted a lot of people and united the representatives of different age groups [13].

*Ukrainian Regional Society of Children's Protection and Youth's Tutelage* in Lviv also made a great contribution in the realization of the idea of children's tutelage, education and protection. Ukrainian children and youth's protection, particularly Ukrainian war orphans' tutelage [22, p. 2] were the aims of the activity of this society. It has also a lot of tasks, namely: spread of the idea of children's protection and youth's tutelage in periodicals, organization of professional courses and holding conferences, establishment of branches and groups, providing them with financial support; establishment and maintenance of children's wards, professional schools, orphans' shelters, etc., monitoring the work of establishments which took care of children; registration of children who needed care, identifying the cause and preventing the cases of abandonment of children, establishing the relationships with other societies that took care of children, making suggestions to legislation and government on the problems with Ukrainian children and youth's protection and education.

The society had different commissions which solved different problems. For example, Revision commission monitored all the work of the society. The Commission of building camps was created for

preparing for children's summer rest. Its task was to organize repairing of old camps and building new holiday camps. The commission of youth's educational houses and travelling organized from 9 to 12 camps for children and youth yearly where some hundreds of children could have a rest.

The members of the society organized 35 branches, but ten of them were closed by the government in 1930. The branches took care of nearly 1800 children and had 1200 members, 9 children's wards, 2 theological seminaries, 5 libraries, 1 consultation for mothers, 1 dental ambulatory and 1 dairy farm. There were children (ages 2 to 14) from poor and morally degraded families and war orphans in the children's shelters. But the assistance was provided to a small number of children who needed it (because of the lack of money and state support).

The society *Ukrainian Children's Ward* (1902) controlled the development of preschool education. It gave financial support to other societies (Native School, The Society of Public Schools, The Society of Holiday Houses) for founding educational establishments, solved the problem with staffing at this establishments.

In 1916 *Ukrainian Eparchial Committee of War Orphans Tutelage* was founded for the purpose of helping settlers from the area of hostilities during the First World War. The committee carried out its activity in Lviv, but when a number of refugees increased, district committees were founded in many districts. In this regard, on the 6th of October, 1916 Lviv city committee was transformed into Regional Committee which spread its activity all over Galichina; it had 18 shelters [4; 18]. The committee stopped its activity on the 31st of July, 1919.

*Regional School Union* was founded for the purpose of resistance to Polish school policy and government and directed its efforts to uniting all educational initiatives in the same hands. The organization had the tasks to spread education in all segments of our society in order to attract a necessary amount of intellectuals, and then to collect funds for developing the first direction [16, p. 61]. *Regional School Union* adopted a resolution according to which a position of school inspector was introduced. This inspector had the tasks to monitor private schools and to give pedagogical advice to teachers; to look for teachers for private schools; to give grants to students and teachers who prepared for qualifying examination with the obligation to work at private schools for two years; to take part in different people's demonstrations; to organize holidays at schools [21].

The society spent most of its money on Ukrainian private gymnasiums. Not having the opportunity to satisfy these needs in state Ukrainian secondary schools as Polish school government impeded their foundation in proper quantity by all means, the Ukrainians had to start founding private secondary schools [16, p. 61]. Thus, in 1912-1913 *Regional School Union* patronized 8 gymnasiums, 2 teacher-training seminaries, several public and other schools and preparation courses for gymnasiums [16].

*Native School* was another Ukrainian cultural-educational society which functioned in Galichina and then in Volyn and dealt with the issue of children's development. At first it aimed at publishing books for school youth, improving ABC-books which existed there. Then it published journals for teachers (Teacher) and for children (Bell), made petitions for protecting the rights of the Ukrainian language of learning at schools, Ukrainian school textbooks.

In 1891 the society spread its activity in provinces and began to found its branches there. For example, in 1900 there were 12 branches in Galichina. Besides, the society founded the first Ukrainian school for girls named after T. Shevchenko, established theological seminaries and patronized a theological seminary for girls St Olga Girls' Institute. In 1906 the branches of the society got the right to establish pedagogical groups in rural area. Due to this, before the beginning of the First World War the quantity of public schools in Eastern Galichina increased to 2496 schools (almost each village had its own school). The quantity of secondary schools also increased. There were 8 Ukrainian gymnasiums, 2 state teacher-training seminaries and 8 utrakvistic schools in Galichina.

After the First World War, when the territory of Western Ukraine was under Poland rule, the society expanded its activities. In 1920 the society became a supreme head of all Ukrainian private preschool and school education on the basis of the decision of the representatives of all Ukrainian central societies and Ukrainian political parties [25].

A great role in organization of education in Western Ukraine had a society *Prosvita*. At the beginning of the 20th century it published journals, popular books for people and founded educational societies in many places. Although they were not able to develop their activity widely: some of them stopped their

activity because they were not active, some of them were closed because of their too active work, harmful direction [9, p. 57]. The activity of the rest of branches had to be a bit still, and they only sometimes organized performances or parties.

At the end of 1912 the society had such results: 74 branches, 2468 reading rooms, 540 stores, 339 cash registers, 14 thousand members and more than 120 thousand participants-readers. The society patronized economic schools and gardening school in the village of Mylovan, a school for housewives in the village of Ugertsi, a commercial school, a library and a book-borrower room in Lviv; it supported 43 scholarship recipients, established courses for illiterate people, cash register, commercial and household courses, etc. [15].

But the occupation of Galichina (first by Russia, then by Poland) during the First World War caused substantial damage to *Prosvita*. Its reading rooms and libraries were destroyed; its active members were subjected to repression. In 1918 the activity of the society was renewed, but it was always under pressure from the Polish authorities. At the same time, within 5 after-war years the quantity of its branches increased to 96, the quantity of its reading rooms increased to 2934. In 1928 the society had 2934 reading rooms and 12508 members on the territory of Galichina under Polish rule.

The attack on Ukrainian culture, which was initiated by the Polish government in the 1920-1930th, led to sad consequences, namely: the quantity of libraries, reading rooms and members of *Prosvita* decreased; the debt of the society increased sharply. Nevertheless, the society did not stop its activity, and in 1934 it had 3064 reading rooms and nearly 500 thousand members. In the second half of the 1930th the activity of the society improved. For example, in 1936 *Prosvita* had 83 branches, 3209 libraries with the fund of 688186 books, 3210 reading rooms, 2185 drama groups, 1115 choirs, 138 orchestras, 550 groups of self-education, 86 courses for illiterate people and 262 groups of young people who spread the ideas of education.

But in 1937-1939 it was a hard time for *Prosvita*: at first the Polish authorities closed its reading rooms; then Soviet authorities destroyed its archive, valuable historical documents and manuscripts and printed materials in the central house of the society (they did the same with the branches of *Prosvita* in other cities and villages); German authorities did not allow to renew the work of *Prosvita*. Since then *Prosvita* existed only outside the territory of Ukraine.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

The main purpose behind conducting this study was to examine the effect of using ...

Other institutions also provided children's social protection and development. For example, in Lviv there was Ukrainian Craft and Industrial Seminary (since 1898) where tens of children found protection and education, learnt to be craftsmen and merchants (nearly 200 students left it until 1920). Ukrainian shelter for children's protection in Lviv (since the 12th of December, 1915), which aimed at full maintenance of orphans, also carried out great work on children's protection and development. In 1920 there were 200 children, 60 nurses and attendants there [18, p. 58]. Some other national (Jewish, Polish) societies paid attention to children's protection, too.

So, Ukrainian educators created an alternative school system which aimed at formation of fully developed personality on the basis of national-moral educational content. A clear structure of the religious and public organizations, democratic working style created, original forms and methods of work of the societies, strict adherence to the Christian moral norms in their activity provided their participants' intellectual growth, formation of the Christian worldview and full harmonious development. These organizations promoted Ukrainian culture, protected Ukrainians' rights to renew the activity of national schools, to introduce the achievements of the national and world cultures into school work, to extend the network of educational establishments due to the activity of these organizations, to spread the idea of children's protection and tutelage, to develop children's Ukrainian periodicals, which strengthened Ukrainians' desire to get national education and accelerated the process of national-cultural revival.



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