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#### WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS OF THE SOVIETIZATION IN THE WESTERN REGIONS OF UKRAINE IN THE CONDITIONS OF STALIN'S REGIME

**Summary.** *The aim of the research is to show the ways and methods of the Bolshevik-Soviet authorities to involve women in the process of Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine. The research proposed contains two storyline components: 1. Using the examples of women sent to western regions – the party and Soviet officials it is aimed to display the conditions of their work, life and regional leadership's attitude to them; 2. Using the examples of local activists involved in party-public work by so-called «the Zhenotdely» of the relevant committees of the CP(B)U to trace the specification of their participation in the process of collectivization. The methodology of the research is based on several methodological approaches: 1. The determination of the Soviet political system of the Stalin's period as a classical totalitarian model; 2. The investigation of women's experience in the post-war period in terms of manifestation of the gender policy by Soviet power at the micro level. The scientific novelty is that basing on archival sources the role of female officials sent to the western regions of Ukraine by the Central Committee of the CP(b)U in the process of Sovietization, as well as the conditions of their life and work is shown for the first time in historiography. The gender component of the Soviet policy of agricultural collectivization in the region is analyzed. Namely, the using of local women as propagandists in the collective farming system by party-Soviet authorities. Conclusions.* *The process of Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine in the first years after the liberation of the region from the German invaders became a kind of mainstream for the implementation of the gender policy by the Bolshevik authorities. Under the leadership of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) «the Zhenotdely» were created. They were special bodies aimed to attract the women to active social and political life. The Party-Soviet authorities mobilized women's resources, on the one hand, as helpful workforce for the reconstruction of economic objects and, on the other, as a repeater of communist ideas and slogans. The image of a Soviet female worker, «stakhanovka», an ideological encourager for revolutionary transformations which was formed in the 1930s was actively exploited by the Bolshevik ideologists in the public propaganda discourse and used by them as one of the instruments of Sovietization of the region.*

**Key terms:** Sovietization, «the Zhenotdely», gender policy, Bolsheviks, western regions of Ukraine.

## ЖІНОЧИЙ ДОСВІД УЧАСТІ В ПРОЦЕСІ РАДЯНІЗАЦІЇ ЗАХІДНИХ ОБЛАСТЕЙ УКРАЇНИ В УМОВАХ СТАЛІНСЬКОГО РЕЖИМУ

**Анотація.** *Мета статті* – показати способи та методи залучення більшовицько-радянською владою жінок до участі в процесі радянзації західноукраїнського регіону. Пропоноване дослідження містить дві сюжетні складові. На прикладі: 1. відряджених до західних областей жінок – партійних і радянських посадовців – ставимо за мету продемонструвати умови їх роботи та побуту, ставлення до них регіонального керівництва, 2. Аналізуючи роль місцевих активісток, залучених до партійно-громадської роботи так званими «жінвіділами» при відповідних комітетах КП(б)У, прослідкувати специфіку їх участі у процесі колективізації. **Методологія** дослідження ґрунтується на засадах кількох методологічних підходів: визначення радянської політичної системи сталінського періоду як класично тоталітарної моделі; дослідження жіночого досвіду в умовах повоєнного повсякдення крізь призму прояву гендерної політики радянської влади на мікрорівні. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що вперше в історіографії на основі архівних джерел показано роль у процесі радянзації західних областей жінок-посадовців, відряджених сюди ЦК КП(б)У, умови їх життя та праці. Проаналізовано гендерну складову радянської політики колективізації сільського господарства регіону. А саме використання партійно-радянською владою місцевого жіноцтва як пропагандистів колгоспної системи. **Висновки.** Процес радянзації західних областей України в перші роки після звільнення регіону від німецьких загарбників став своєрідним мейнстрімом для реалізації більшовицькою владою гендерної політики. Під керівництвом ВКП(б) створювалися «жінвідділи» – спеціальні органи, зорієнтовані на залучення жінок до активного суспільно-політичного життя. Партійно-радянська влада мобілізувала жіночий ресурс, з одного боку, як допоміжну робочу силу для відбудови господарських об'єктів, а з іншого – ретранслятора комуністичних ідей та гасел. Сформований у 1930-ті рр. образ радянської жінки-трудівниці, стахановки, ідейного натхненника революційних перетворень активно експлуатувався більшовицькими ідеологами у публічно-пропагандистському дискурсі і використовувався ними як один із інструментів радянзації регіону.

**Ключові слова:** радянська, жінвідділи, гендерна політика, більшовики, західні області України.

**The statement of the problem.** The history of the Soviet state during the period of Stalinism attracts attention of researchers as during this period the formation of a political system that accumulated all the classic features of totalitarianism was completed. In order to establish absolute control over all spheres of life the party – state used both, instruments of physical violence and various kinds of moral, psychological and ideological pressure on society in general and on separate social groups, in particular. An important role in the process establishing Soviet power in the USSR was given to women. The Bolshevik emancipation project was focused on the active involvement of a woman in the social and political, economic, cultural and educational space equal with a man. During 1920 – 1930s the project was tested on the territory of Soviet Ukraine and in the post-war period – in western regions of Ukraine.

**The analysis of recent researches and publications.** The subject of our research is the gender policy of the Stalin's regime and the policy of Sovietization in the western regions of Ukraine in the first years after its liberation from the German invaders. Therefore, the range of historiographical works and sources used by us while writing the article is quite diverse. In contemporary national historiography the problem of the role and place of a woman in the process of Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine is paid a little attention. Among the researchers of this issue along with the author of this article there are also R. Popp, H. Chornii, M. Smolnitska. Considering the issue of political and ideological work of the Bolshevik Party in the western regions of Ukraine R. Popp focuses on the activities of women's organizations in this direction. She states that «female associations directed the work, first of all,

on the formation of a «correct» civic stand of women» (Popp, 2018, p. 147). Analyzing the position of a Soviet woman during the period of Stalinism M. Smolnitska emphasizes that a woman was considered by the authorities, first of all, as «the labor resource that was mobilized by the state to perform various tasks» (Smolnitska, 2011, p. 162). H. Chornii has quite similar opinion. The researcher discovers the process of creating so-called «the Zhenotdely» (woman's departments) in the Lviv region and emphasizes that «the task of these women's centers was to form a «conscious» civic position of as many women as possible and actively involve them in the production process» (Chornij, 2017, p. 15). V. Ilnytskuy and N. Kantor consider the peculiarities of the status of the woman of western Ukrainian regions in terms of the combat of Soviet power against «not only direct participants of the liberation movement, but also their families» (Ilnytskyi, Kantor, 2018, p. 179).

The works of Ukrainian and foreign researchers of gender policy of Soviet power during the period of Stalinism also complement the methodological basis of this research. In the context of mentioned above the scientific discoveries of M. Voronina and K. Kobchenko are also important. They deal with the female aspect of the official policy of the Bolsheviks in the 1920s – 1930s. M. Voronina sees the reason for the increased interest of the Bolshevik Party in the women's issue in its «desperate attempt to try to imitate the constitutional state and expand its electoral base» (Voronina, 2017, p.111). K. Kobchenko stresses that the Soviet ««gender project» of the Stalin's period can be considered as successful only partially. Ensuring equal rights for women can be considered to be realized only from formal point of view» (Kobchenko, 2016, p.69). In her dissertation Barbara Agnieszka Nowak distinguishes common features of gender policy of the communist power in post-war Poland and Stalin's regime. The researcher notes that the Polish League of Women («the Liga Kobiet») was created to mobilize women as a social base of the communist regime. However, it «was not merely an anomaly of the communist era. The organization was not controlled absolutely by central League and party authorities. It manifested elements of both central control and localism, receiving directives from above and initiating programs from below, working both for the state and for women» (Barbara A. Nowak, 2004, p. 65). The majority of researchers consider gender policy of the Bolshevik power as a way of gaining authority both, within the country and on the international arena. Choi Chatterjee emphasizes that «The rhetoric about women in the Soviet Union served primarily as a means of legitimation for the regime» (Choi Chatterjee, 1999, p. 3). Providing women with significant legal preferences the Bolsheviks «wanted to turn women into argnet defenders of the new order to prevent them from undermining the men's revolutionary ideals» (Alice Shuster, 1971, p. 261). Generally, the question under discussion is still lack studied and requires comprehensive research.

**The purpose of the article** is to show the ways and methods of the Bolshevik-Soviet authorities to involve women in the process of Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine. The research proposed contains two storyline components: 1. Using the examples of women sent to western regions – the party and Soviet officials it is aimed to display the conditions of their work, life and regional leadership's attitude to them; 2. Using the examples of local activists involved in party-public work by so-called «the Zhenotdely» of the relevant committees of the CP(b)U to trace the specification of their participation in the process of collectivization.

**The statement of basic material.** There was a positive attitude towards the role of a woman in the Soviet state in the official Bolshevik discourse of the second half of the 1930s – 1940s. Using all the powerful instruments of the propaganda apparatus the authorities imposed the stereotype of the official model of the «Soviet woman» on the society in various ways, whose

basic parameters were constructed in the 1930s. Soviet propaganda intended «Women were praised for their sense of sacrifice and their capacity for resistance. In the official speeches they were presented as pillars of the family» (Martine Mespoulet, 2006). In addition to the traditional show-model image of a female worker («stakhanovka», foremost of the socialist competition), in the conditions of the personnel lack of postwar years in the western regions of Ukraine the image of a politically conscious public female activist was popularized.

The party officials sent here from the eastern regions of the Ukrainian SSR were a peculiar model of such type of a woman. In general, they formed rather small percentage of the total mass of Soviet party officials in the region. Despite gender equality which was officially declared by the authorities, in the offices there was a tacit rule that women should not be assigned to key positions. So in Ternopil region, on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1946, there were 763 employees, only 89 (11.6%) of them were women. A year later, this figure decreased to 9.2% (SATR, f. P-1, d. 1, c. 655a, p. 4). «On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1947, among 718 leading staff of the Lviv region there were only 58 women, which was 8% of the total number of officials. The women's sphere of management was limited to the posts of the lower sections (secretaries of village, town district councils, v.c. of heads or chiefs of a certain department or management body, etc.) or certain state-economic spheres - education, medicine, culture» (Starodubets, 2018, p. 75)

A striking example of the peculiarity of the gender approach to the solution of the personnel issue is the situation with comrade Romanchuk who was sent by the personnel department of the Central Committee of the CP(B)U to the Ternopil Regional Committee of the CP(B)U in order to appoint her as the chairman of the executive committee. Indignant woman wrote in a letter to O. Kyrychenko the secretary of the Central Committee of the CP(B)U on personnel: «During the conversation with the third secretary of the party's regional committee T. Zozuliev on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1945 he told me that the people of the Central Committee are out of their mind, since they send a woman to work here. I would never appoint you for the chairman position in my life. You need to consider that you are a woman and you can never be compared with a man at work. We need a man to work here, he must be able to hold the gun in his hands. Currently we are working exclusively against banderivtsi and what will you do here?» (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 46, c. 395, p. 152). As we see, the propaganda slogan of the Bolsheviks about gender equality remained empty words in practice. A female officer even on a fairly high level, was forced to prove her professionalism while the man was considered as the best professional «by definition» even if the quality of his work was subject of sharp criticism. It was quite frequent fact in the period under determination.

In addition to gender discrimination in the professional sphere the level of domestic conditions and material position did not contribute to raising the authority of the female manager. As a rule, in the first postwar years it was so low that women could not stand the pressure and tried to leave the western regions of Ukraine in every way and return to their previous place of work or residence in the eastern regions of the republic. For example, the instructor of the Oleksandriya district committee of the party in Rivne region comrade Shmargun the mother of a four-year-old child. «She always went to the villages of the district, did a lot of work with the local people but the secretaries of the district committee did not provide enough assistance to her, did not support her initiative in the work, despised her and neglected her remarks. She was not helped with household issues even with fuel supplies. As a result, Shmargun began to look for reasons to get out of work and asked to let her leave the region» (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 75, c. 61, p. 16). Moreover, the difficult material and everyday situation was amplified by the frankly unfavorable attitude of the locals who also suffered from both,

the consequences of the German occupation and the permanent continuation of armed confrontation. However, the local population unlike the party nomenclature did not feel any social protection from the state.

The following cases were nearly normal: «newly arrived employees were not granted with the apartment to live for a long time. In particular, the instructor of the Tlumach district committee of the Komsomol in Stanislav region Galych was assigned to an apartment on the outskirts of the city that is why she lived in the Komsomol district committee for one and a half months. The instructor of the Komsomol district committee Ostrovska and the party district instructor Irkina lived in unheated apartment all winter» (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 1, c. 300, p. 165). In the end, desperate women threatened to leave their jobs without any permission even if they would lose a party ticket as a result. For example, a propagandist of one of the district committees of the party T. Zubytska was ready «to leave the party job by her own even if she wouldn't be let to» because «the representative of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U deceived her while mobilizing her for work in western regions of Ukraine. He said: you will have party work until the end of the war and then we will let you work as a teacher in the eastern regions of Ukraine» (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 46, c. 1612, p. 25). Consequently, the personnel policy of the Bolshevik power regarding the formation of a higher management structure of the western regions of Ukraine in the first years after the liberation had a vivid gender aspect: the percentage of women among high officials was negligible in average – about 10.

A year after the deployment of the process of Sovietization the leadership of the republic and the region obviously faced the lack of personnel. It was clear that without recruiting local people to work in party-Soviet institutions any successful reconstruction or development of the region and, moreover, suppressing of the national liberation movement could not be reached. Due to the little social base of Stalin's regime support, the Communists sought for the support among the certain social layers trying to split it into separate segments: «peasants – poor people», «party-Soviet activists», «youth», «women» and others.

Under such conditions the involvement of local women in active public and political work was one of the most important tasks of the regional party nomenclature. For its realization the authorities used the experience of the creation and activities of women's organizations in the Ukrainian SSR during the 1920s – early 1930s. In 1919 in order to attract apolitical women to socialist construction the so-called «the Zhenotdely» as a structural subdivision inside the party was formed to deal with problems of the women. Not only Communists but also non-party women who, in fact, were the overwhelming majority of the women were covered by its professional «care». The key tasks of the «the Zhenotdely» were the work in direction of eliminating of «the illiteracy of women with the help of «likneps», involvement of the women in «cultural and social line (school, household, sanitation, houses for reading, organization and taking care for nurseries, etc.)» (SAZHR, f. R-277, d. 98, c. 98, p. 112). The special attention was paid to agitation and propaganda work, as well as to spreading the legal education among women so that every woman could understand «that the victory of socialism is turning the woman worker, like the man, into the conscious creator of her own life» (Clements, Barbara E., 1997, p. 211). In the early 1930s «the Zhenotdely» were eliminated, however, they played an important role in raising the level of self-consciousness, political and social activity of women. Actually, the ruling party in the western regions of Ukraine in the first post-war years faced the similar tasks.

The core ways of work with women were determined by the decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1945. According to the established

algorithm of actions of the Soviet bureaucratic management system the departments on work among women were urgently created in April 20s in the regional committees of the CP(b)U and female organizers were appointed in the district committees of the CP(b)U to realize the basic provisions of this document.

At «the Zhenotdely» on the level of districts and village councils there were several sections. Their directions reflected the specific tasks assigned to the female activists. Among the main tasks were: school, club (cultural and educational), cooperative, and sanitary. The considerable attention was paid to the work with youth and on eliminating of low literacy and illiteracy. It should be noted, that the newly established «the Zhenotdely» monopolized the work with local women. The practice of absolute subordination of the civil movements to the communist party, the establishment of total control over their activities at the same time extended beyond the borders of the USSR to the countries with so-called national democracy. «By forcibly creating one mass women's organization in each of the newly formed party-states within Eastern Europe, party leaders and women activists homogenized women's needs, responsibilities, and roles. At the same time, these organizations took on a wide range of initiatives and goals, ranging from charitable endeavors and programs for women to the spreading of political propaganda» (Barbara A. Nowak, 2004, p.79–80). Actually, the involvement of women in agitation and propaganda, first of all, among women was one of the most important tasks of «the Zhenotdely». Under conditions of a disastrous lack of professional agitators in the district and regional committees of the CP(B)U in the first post-war years the using of female activists as horns of Soviet power on a voluntary basis was a fairly common practice. Thus, the women voluntarily/forcedly joined the process of creating of a new socialist reality.

An extremely important component of the process of Sovietization was the agricultural collectivization. The state could not apply the experience of creating collective farms in Ukrainian villages gained in 1930s to the western regions of Ukraine. The local people supported by the armed units of the UPA and the rebel underground stubbornly resisted collectivization for a long time. Therefore, the process of creating collective farms was moving quite slowly until 1947. Nevertheless, state policy in the field of agriculture remained the same as the collective farming was considered as a non-alternative way of labor organization of peasants. The Soviet power could not find a reliable support in the face of a western Ukrainian peasant. That is why women continued to remain the target audience of party agitators and propagandists for a long time. Similar to the Polish Liga Kobiet «the Zhenotdely» «served as an important potential bridge between the party and masses of women», and their activities were a likely directed to «focusing their attention specifically on increasing women's, not all citizens', political and social consciousness and including women in reaching party goals» (Barbara A. Nowak, 2004, p. 89).

One of the guiding work targets of «the Zhenotdely» especially since 1946 was agitation and propaganda activity both, in the direction of attracting the residents of western Ukrainian villages to the process of collectivization and the direct participation of female activists in the creation of collective farms. We can find a lot of information in official party reports proving this. For example, in the Stanislav region in 1947 «there in Kutsky district a collective farm «New Life» was organized on the initiative driven by the women's council (head – Slavytska Hanna and members – Boichuk Vasylyna, Radysh Ievdokiia, Dedo Iustyna, Andruks Olena)». In general, by 1947 «44 collective farms with 1823 female members» were created in the region (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 23, c. 4581, p. 182). The official reports of the party-Soviet bodies

of regional authorities dated 1946 – 1948 are full of information about the «victory of the collective-farming system» in the western regions of Ukraine.

The main form of agitation of the peasantry to join the collective farms was various kinds of lectures, talks, reports, etc. The topics of the speeches of the Bolshevik propagandists were not distinguished by the special originality: «On the advantages of the collective farming system over the small individual peasant domestic economy», «Women Participation in the implementation of the economic plan for bread supply», «The regulations of selkhozartili – the law of collective farm life», «The role of Lenin and Stalin in the preparation and carrying out the October Socialist Revolution» (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 23, c. 298, p. 166), «The care of the Soviet power about the mother and the child», «Ukrainian-German nationalists - the worst enemies of the Ukrainian people» (SARR, f. 400, d. 3, c. 76, p. 3), and so on. It should be mentioned, that not only party officials of the relevant departments of the committees of the CP(b)U but also female activists were the speakers. Quite often these were simple female peasants with low educational level but with high level of acquaintance with the bases of communist ideology and will to spread it widely.

It is clear that during the active phase of the deployment of the policy of collectivization in the western Ukrainian village the topical issue of the lectures was the establishment of collective farms. However, a certain peculiarity of thematic selection of propaganda speeches is noticed: the problems of the legal status of a Soviet woman and granting her as a mother with many children or working mother with a complex of preferences, in particular, was an obligatory part of this «set». In this way, the Bolshevik authorities tried to gain the commitment of the politically passive part of women, to attract them with a series of «social privileges», a kind of bonus offered to them in return for the legitimization of the collective farming system.

The practice of public appearances of successful women who came from the locals took an important place in the propaganda arsenal of Soviet power, as well. «Through their lifestyles, employment, and social and political activism, they were also to act as role models for other women by providing a good example of citizenship and patriotism» (Barbara A. Nowak, 2004, p. 84). As a rule, the main issue of their speeches was to draw parallels between the «Past» (backward and anti-national) and «Current» (modern, with the reign of equality of all working people). The Soviet identity was created as a counterweight to the imaginary European identity, both liberal and fascist. Soviet achievements have often been praised versus the flaws and limitations of more «advanced» Western Europe. In this dialogue the «new Soviet woman» emerged as the embodiment of the Soviet belief in gender equality and state policy of general welfare» (Choi Chatterjee, 2015, p. 120). Traditionally, the focus was on the poor, weak and difficult position of a woman «in pre-revolutionary Russia» or «lordly Poland» and how bright and beautiful it became due to the activities of the Bolshevik Party and, personally, comrade Stalin.

A compulsory outcome of such meetings was the solemn decision making «for women to take concrete commitments of successful preparation for spring sowing and agricultural collectivization» (SALR, f. p-3, d. 1, c. 107, p. 60).

The speech of the deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Uliana Yefymchuk-Diachuk to the delegates of the regional meeting of women of the Rivne region in 1946 is a typical illustration of using this kind of propaganda techniques. The woman proudly emphasized that «in 1939 I did not know how to sign and during the war she worked as deputy chairman of the district executive committee. I was not taught to work. My mother was poor, I was taught only to work for lords. And today I am managing a big work and studying. I became

experienced, I have a practice of Soviet work and I work. So are you, in the near future you also will be able to manage a lot of work» (SARR, f. 400, d. 1, c. 97, p. 74). It is significant that illiteracy is not interpreted as a negative fact. This official points out that in a Soviet state a woman can achieve high career levels through good work and education is not an important factor. The essence of Yefymchuk-Diachuk's speech, as well as other women activists', was to demonstrate to ordinary women that the Bolshevik Party is taking care of each of them. However, the potential for their career growth and material well-being is directly dependent on how much they are ready to serve the political ideals of the Bolshevik revolution and to put them above their own interests. The idea of such kind of speeches was the idea that a female farmer feels herself truly free only working in a collective farm.

Why did the authorities try to get the support from women in this issue so eagerly? In addition to the demographic crisis caused by losses during the Second World War, armed confrontation between the Ukrainian insurgents and Soviet power, the subjective factor should also be taken into account. The practice of planting of the Soviet power in Ukraine has demonstrated that women in their masses often showed greater conservatism than men which was manifested in the desire to preserve the traditional foundations of rural life and activities. There are a lot of examples when party officials appealed to the female audience in order to persuade them to become active participants in the collective farming movement. Addressing to the delegates of the republican assembly of women of the western regions of Ukraine in January, 1947 M. Khrushchev said: «Agitate your husbands to join the collective farms as you return home» (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 23, c. 4579, p. 41). The first secretary of the regional committee of the CP(b)U Begma, speaking in 1946 in front of the participants of the regional meeting of women of Rivne region emphasized that «in the organization of collective farms the greatest role belongs to women more than men, because many men are listening and thinking: «It's good that the collective farm is organized, let's see what's going to happen next». A man wants to go to the collective farm and the woman says: «Why do you need to go to the collective farm?»» (SARR, f. 400, d. 1, c. 97, p. 94). Expanding this topic the official claims a thesis about the enormous role of the Bolshevik party in providing women with a wide range of rights. Taking into account the general social and political background that was formed in Ukraine in 1946 (third famine) Begma's statement that the work on the collective farm «which made the woman free with its «trudodni» and made her independent» became a serious counterweight to the hard work of women «on Polish lords» or «kulaks» sounds a bit cynical. In the opinion of the regional communist leader the essence of «the release of a female peasant is that she is now working not on her father while she is a girl, not on her husband when she is married, but, first of all, she is working on herself. This is the collective farming system, which makes a woman labor, equal to any man» (SARR, f. 400, d. 1, c. 97, p. 94).

Having strong levers of influence on the local people of western regions of Ukraine the authorities did not need to apply here exclusively violent repressive methods of collectivization (like the Holodomor in 1933). It tried to convince the people that «a collective farm village is a way of salvation of the peasant and especially female peasant» (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 23, c. 4579, p. 28). Thus, the legal status of a Soviet female peasant was directly determined by her desire to become a collective farm worker.

The speeches of the delegates on regional and republic meetings (as a rule, in roles of representatives of the rural activists) who shared their own success in launching the collective-farm construction abundantly complementing their words with praise of the Soviet

government and party leadership were so called addition to the noble party slogans about the need to enter the collective farms. For example, comrade Barysh the head of the women's council of the collective farm named after Koniev from the Lviv region at one of the republican meeting of women of Ukraine pathetically stated that «now the farmers are convinced that it is much better to work on the collective farm, that only through collective farms we will soon be able to build a rich and happy life» (SALR, f. P-3, d. 2, c. 107, p. 59). As we can see, the women were imposed by the idea that their social status and success are directly dependent on the process of Sovietization, in particular, in the part of collective farming construction.

**Conclusions.** Thus, the process of Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine in the first years after the liberation of the region from the German invaders became a kind of mainstream for the implementation of the gender policy by the Bolshevik authorities. Under the leadership of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) «the Zhenotdely» were created. They were special bodies aimed to attract the women to active social and political life. The Party-Soviet authorities mobilized women's resources, on the one hand, as helpful workforce for the reconstruction of economic objects and, on the other, as a repeater of communist ideas and slogans. The image of a Soviet female worker, «stakhanovka», an ideological encourager for revolutionary transformations which was formed in the 1930s was actively exploited by the Bolshevik ideologists in the public propaganda discourse and used by them as one of the instruments of Sovietization of the region.

The subject of the research given is female activists, supporters of the Bolshevik Soviet power. However, the other groups of the population of western regions of Ukraine have their own experience of living in the process of Sovietization: apolitical female peasants, members of the Ukrainian rebel groups, youth and women of middle and senior age. It is obvious that research of this problem in such aspects is waiting for its investigator.

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