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**CONTENT AND DIRECTIONS OF WOMEN ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES IN VOLYN
(the second half of the 1940s – beginning of the 1950s)**

Abstract. *The purpose of the research is to reveal the specifics of women's organizations formation in the form of “women departments”, “women delegate meetings”, “women councils” in Volyn region during the first postwar years; to elucidate the content of their activities through the prism of political and propaganda work and participation in the process of the collective farm system formation in the region. The methodological basis of the research is the principles of historicism, scientificity, a combination of systemic and regional approaches, an authorial objectivity, a moderate narrative constructivism, as well as the use of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, generalization) and special historical (historical genetic, historical typological, historical systemic) methods. The scientific novelty consists in the fact for the first time in the historiography of the Ukrainian women movement on the basis of previously unknown archival documents there has been elucidated the topic of women's participation in the Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine during the first postwar decade, in particular, in Volyn; there has been highlighted the policy of the Bolshevik government's use of women as an effective*

tool for forming the collective farm system in the region; the dynamics of the quantitative growth of members of women's organizations has been elucidated. The construction of the image of a woman activist by Stalinist propaganda has been illustrated; controllability of the process of women activation by the party structures; the scale of work of "women departments" and "women councils" through the organization of women forums, meetings; rhetoric of speeches of women delegates. **The Conclusions.** After the liberation of Volyn region from the German occupiers, the campaign was launched there to restore the institutions of the Soviet power. In 1945, women department was established in the structure of the CP(b)Ukr regional committee, and women organizers were appointed in the district committees. These bodies coordinated and supervised the work of women's organizations, which were necessarily created en masse in institutions, organizations, villages, and later – in the collective farms of the region. Their main task was to mobilize women's resources for the process of economic life reconstruction and development in the region. In addition, they partially took care of the social problems of the region – the elimination of illiteracy and poor literacy of women, guardianship of orphans, the disabled, mothers with many children, the improvement and landscaping of villages and towns, and etc.

Key words: women, women departments, women councils, Volyn, Sovietization.

ЗМІСТ ТА НАПРЯМКИ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ ЖІНОЧИХ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙ ВОЛИНИ (друга половина 1940-х – початок 1950-х рр.)

Анотація. Мета дослідження – розкрити специфіку формування жіночих організацій у формі "жінвідділів", "жіночих делегатських зборів", "жінрад" у Волинській області в перші повоєнні роки, показати зміст їх діяльності крізь призму політико-пропагандистської роботи та участі в процесі становлення в регіоні колгоспної системи. **Методологічною основою** дослідження є принципи історизму, науковості, поєднання системного та регіонального підходів, авторської об'єктивності, поміркованого нарративного конструктивізму, а також використання загальнонаукових (аналіз, синтез, узагальнення) та спеціально-історичних (історико-генетичний, історико-типологічний, історико-системний) методів. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що вперше в історіографії українського жіночого руху на основі невідомих раніше архівних документів з'ясовано тему участі жінок в процесах радянізації західних областей України у перше повоєнне десятиліття, зокрема на Волині, розкрито політику використання більшовицькою владою жінок як дієвого інструменту насадження в регіоні колгоспної системи, динаміку кількісного росту учасників жіночих організацій. Показано конструювання сталінською пропагандою образу жінки-активістки; керованість процесу активізації жінок з боку партійних структур; масштаб роботи "жінвідділів" та "жінрад" через організацію жіночих форумів, зборів; риторіку виступів жінделегаток. **Висновки.** Після звільнення Волинської області від німецьких окупантів тут було розгорнуто кампанію з відновлення інститутів радянської влади. У 1945 р. в структурі обкому КП(б)У було створено жінвідділ, а в райкомах – призначені жіночі організатори. Ці органи координували та курували роботу жіночих організацій, які в обов'язковому порядку масово створювалися в установах, організаціях, селах, а згодом – і в колгоспах області. Основне їх завдання полягало в мобілізації жіночого ресурсу на процес відбудови та розбудови господарського життя області. Крім того, вони частково опікувалися соціальними проблемами регіону – ліквідація без- та малограмотності жінок, шефство над сиротами, інвалідами, багатодітними матерями, благоустрій сіл і містечок тощо.

Ключові слова: жінки, жіночі відділи, жіночі ради, Волинь, радянізація.

The Problem Statement. For a long time, gender history, in particular, the problems of the place and role of women in the state formation processes, have remained beyond the attention of historians. However, the study of women's experiences, practices of their lives and activities in the environment dominated by a male masculinity, is an essential condition for building the society based on gender tolerance. **The topicality** of the issue under analysis is also enhanced in connection with broadening the opportunities for modern women to

realize themselves as a politician, public figure, specialist in economics, science, law and, etc. Rethinking the role of women in the processes of Sovietization of the Western Ukrainian region, through the study of their activities in women organizations, will contribute to the destruction of the established gender stereotypes.

The Analysis of Sources and Recent Researches. The historiography of the “women’s issue” during the period of Stalinism is quite representative. During the last decade, the problem of the emancipation of the Soviet women, which began during the 1920s, when a course was taken to solve the “women issue”, the creation of the Bolshevik Party women’s departments and women’s sectors within the committees is debated on the pages of the Ukrainian and foreign scientific publications. However, there is still beyond researchers’ attention the topic of women’s participation in the processes of Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine during the first postwar decade.

Gender strategies of the Bolshevik government under the conditions of Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine and Belarus in 1944 – 1946, women’s experience of participation in the process of Sovietization of the western regions of Ukraine under conditions of the Stalinist regime are considered in a number of articles by Professor Halyna Starodubets (Starodubets, 2020). The researcher expresses the opinion that “by initiating the creation of women’s organizations under the full control of the CP(b)Ukr, in this way the Bolsheviks gave the women movement structure, which simplified its management system” (Starodubets, 2018, pp. 73–79). The specifics of women organizations functioning under the Stalinist regime gave grounds for a domestic researcher, Natalia Oliynyk, to single out “a specific type of “the Soviet patriarchy”, when the main mechanism of women discrimination was not men, but a totalitarian state built on the principles of force and aggression, disregard for the interests of the individual” (Olijnyk, 2015, p. 149).

Myroslava Smolnitska analyzes indirectly the topic under research (Smoljnicjka, 2012, pp. 85–94). Comparing the state-sponsored image of the Soviet woman of the USSR during the first postwar decades with the realities of women’s everyday life, the author concludes that the Soviet woman was a powerful labour force mobilized by the state to perform various tasks. For the effective realization of all its possibilities, in the public consciousness the emphasis was made on the image formation: the Soviet woman – an active and equal “builder of the socialist society” (Smoljnicjka, 2011, p. 172).

The topic of women’s departments functioning in the western Ukrainian region is also raised in the regional context. Ruslana Popp, a researcher from Drohobych, states that “the policy of the Soviet system towards the women of Drohobych during the first postwar years was aimed at involving women into the reconstruction, production and socio-political processes in the region. A whole system of an ideological treatment and repressive measures has been developed to control and influence the women’s environment” (Popp, 2017, p. 332). Halyna Chornij interprets the creation of a wide network of women associations in Lviv region during the postwar period – delegate meetings and women councils with different sections as one of the ideological and practical means of the Bolshevik influence on the local population (Chornij, 2017, p. 202). She also thinks that “the policy of the Soviet government towards women in the process of collectivization of the western Ukrainian village was exploitative. Women were the main labour force used by the totalitarian system in rebuilding all pre-war agricultural sphere capacities” (Chornij, 2017, pp. 89–99).

Thus, the historiographical analysis of the issue under analysis gives grounds to conclude that the topic of women’s organizations functioning in the western regions of Ukraine during

the postwar period has not yet become the subject of a comprehensive scientific research. The topic of the Stalinist regime's implementation of the Bolsheviks gender policy in Volyn region remained beyond the research interests of modern scholars.

The Purpose of the Article. To investigate the specifics of the women's organizations formation in the form of "women departments", "women delegate meetings", "women councils" in Volyn region during the first postwar years; to elucidate the content of their activities through the prism of a political advocacy and participation in the collective farm system formation.

The Basic Material Statement. The liberation of the western regions of the USSR from German occupation was accompanied by the process of formation / restoring the Soviet political system there. As the Bolshevik government did not have any widespread social support in the region, it was forced to search for allies among various categories of the population. Based on the experience of Sovietization of Ukraine during the 1920s, the ruling Communist Party decided to revive women's organizations, the so-called "women's departments" that functioned in Soviet Ukraine until the beginning of the 1930s.

The Bolshevik government policy of using women as "as catalysts for a political and social change" (Codie, 2016, p. 26) was effective in the process of building the foundations of the Soviet state during the first decades after the October coup. On the one hand, the mobilization of women's resources allowed the Communists to rebuild Ukraine's war-torn economy more quickly and efficiently. On the other hand, the achievements in the Soviet women emancipation were actively used by Bolshevik propaganda both inside the country and abroad. As Sarah Ashwin rightly noted, "women played an important role in the Soviet symbolic system" (Ashwin, 2000, p. 3).

The resolution "On Work among Women in the Western Regions of Ukraine" of the Central Committee of the CP(b)Ukr became a kind of starting point for intensifying the work of the Western Ukrainian party-Soviet authorities in the direction of organizing the centers of women movement. The resolution was adopted on April 5, 1945. The main purpose of creating women's departments was very pragmatic: "to organize women to rebuild the economy" (Starodubets, 2019, p. 179). In no case it was possible for these bodies to have the character of public organizations and to be full-fledged subjects of the socio-political life of the state and to determine the purpose, strategy, forms and methods of their activity independently. Under the Stalinist regime, this was a priori impossible.

The process of forming departments dealing with work among women was organized and managed. During April-May of 1945, women's departments were formed at all Western Ukrainian regional committees of the CP (b) Ukr, and women organizers were appointed in district committees. At each women council, appropriate sections were established, the list of which was determined by the needs of economic and socio-political life of the region. Thus, in 1945, among the most important sections there were school, club (cultural and educational), cooperative, sanitary. Considerable attention was paid to the work with young people and activities aimed at eliminating poor literacy and illiteracy" (Starodubets, 2019, p. 179). Four years later, in 1949, the priorities of the communist government changed somewhat and, accordingly, this was reflected in the change of key vectors of women bodies. It was decided "it is expedient to create such sections – manufacturing, cultural and educational, household, school, sanitary and cooperative" (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 74, c. 6, p. 220).

The department of Volyn regional committee of the CP(b)Ukr for work among women began to function in May of 1945 (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 74, c. 5, p. 126). Due to the staff shortage

in the system of party-Soviet authorities during the first postwar years, the formation of its staff, and, accordingly, district and city departments took a long time. As of January-March 1946, the department of the regional party committee had one vacancy – instead of three instructors there were two, one of whom did not meet the requirements at all and for the first time was involved into the party work. The responsibilities of the officials were divided as follows: each instructor supervised 14 districts and one city, the head of the department supervised two districts and one city. In addition, the deputy head had to be in all areas when it was needed. The management of women departments was carried out by visiting instructors and the head of the department of places where practical assistance was provided to women bodies in their work (SAVR, f. R-1, d. 3, c. 917, p. 2). The regional leadership made considerable efforts to expand the network of women organizations. The so-called women delegate meetings and councils functioned in almost all district and city institutions and establishments, as well as in the villages of the region, and later on – in collective farms.

Table 1

Dynamics of the Number of Women Organizations in Volyn Region in 1945 – 1949
(CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 74, c. 5, p. 127; f. R-1, d. 74, c. 7, p. 34).

Year	Amount of Women Delegate Meetings		Amount of Members	
		in collective farms included		collective farmers included
1945	597		8690	
1946	910		13249	
1947	946		14367	
1948	1081	608	15900	8573
1949	1170	950	175000	14100

The statistic data in Table 1 illustrate the positive dynamics of the quantitative growth of members of women organizations during 1945 – 1949, which were directly managed by the relevant women departments. Thus, during the five post-war years, the number of local women organizations and their members almost doubled. However, we tend to assume that the quantitative indicators do not reflect the essence of the real state of the women movement in the region. Firstly, one should take into account the fact of writing more members than it was in the official reports of local officials. Secondly, the level of activity of the overwhelming majority of delegates was, to put it mildly, extremely low, as the party officials pointed out themselves. In particular, in one of the reports of the regional committee official on this issue it was noted that in a number of districts of the region “women councils in many villages formally exist and do not carry out any work” (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 74, c. 7, p. 75).

One of the most common forms of women work was the organization of meetings at various levels. The participants of these meetings were usually addressed by agitators or propaganda instructors of district committees or city committees of the CP(b)Ukr. Starting from June 14, 1945, when the regional meeting of women activists took place in Lutsk in the presence of 939 participants, such forums began to be summoned annually (SAVR, f. R-1, d. 3, c. 718, p. 1).

The women forum of this format was held for the first time and its organizers aimed at demonstrating the scale of the event to the present delegates and the persuasiveness of the Soviet government positive achievements in the field of gender policy. In the traditional style of the Bolshevik propaganda, the official speeches of the party-Soviet officials alternated with

speeches by “natives of the people”, “ordinary working women”. An eloquent illustration of a “successful woman”, who managed to reach career heights, was the participation in the meeting of Natalia Uzhviy, the native of Volyn, People’s Artist of the USSR (SAVR, f. R-1, d. 3, c. 718, pp. 57–59). Undoubtedly, the emotional performance of the famous woman made a proper impression on the women present in the hall.

It should be noted that the heroic image of the working woman, formed by Stalin’s propaganda during the 1930s, was exploited actively by party propagandists both in the press and in public speeches to audiences of various social groups. American researcher, Choi Chatterjee emphasizes that stories of the Soviet heroines during the 1930s “were constructed around the temporal antiphonies of a prerevolutionary oppression and postrevolutionary liberation” (Choi, 1999, p. 9). The same propaganda methods were used by party officials in the western regions of Ukraine. The year of 1939 became a kind of boundary that separated the “exploited woman of the past” from the “free Soviet worker-collective farmer”. The theme of liberating a peasant woman from the Polish yoke was constantly mentioned in numerous speeches by local activists at all levels, from republican meetings to village assemblies. Thus, at the regional meeting of the regional women’s active in 1946, Denisyuk Antonina from the village of Kusnyscha of the Holovnyansky district stated that “during the Polish rule I barely lived and was a laughing stock <...>. With the advent of the Soviet power, my children go to school, my husband worked as a chairman of the village council <...>. When I return home, I urge everyone present to take the most active part in the implementation of all types of government supplies and to join the collective farm” (CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 74, c. 5, p. 131); the chairman of the women’s council of Ustyluh district, Petruk Varvara, addressing to colleagues from Torchyn district, emphasized that “only the collective farm gave us the opportunity to get out of need and grief” (CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 74, c. 1, p. 29); Pats Anna from the village of Hushcha of Kivertsy district stated: “I came from Poland, where I always felt humiliated, I suffered from the abuse of the Polish landowners. Only here, in the Soviet Union, did I see the truth, equality, respect for the elders” (CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 23, c. 1596, p. 25).

There are many of such examples. The heroization of the woman activist, the collective farmer, took place by contrasting her “poor past” with the “bright present” and contributed to the formation of markers for the image identification of the “Soviet woman”.

On July 2-3, 1946 in Lutsk, there took place the second regional meeting of women active of Volyn region with participation of 800 delegates (744 persons arrived) from 30 areas and three cities (SAVR, f. R-1, d. 2, c. 51, p. 5). The key issue on the agenda of the forum was the discussion of the problem of Volyn women tasks in the implementation of the 4th Stalin Five-Year Plan for reconstruction and development of the national economy.

The main topic of the speeches of women delegates and chairmen of women councils was a report on their work, which usually ended with an invitation to all those present at the meeting to join the social competition for the implementation of the 4th five-year plan. Thus, the head of the women council of the 10th quarter of Volodymyr-Volynskyi district, Lukashevych Vasylysa said that their women council held 25 meetings, organized various clubs, sewed and washed clothes for demobilized soldiers and orphans, women sewed 50 mattresses for the pioneer camp, and a team of women worked on repairing the school. “A lot of work was done by women of the 9th quarter of Volodymyr-Volynskyi district”, – reported the chairman of the women council, comrade Shchurova. “Women dug a telephone trench, the daily norm was fulfilled in 3 hours... A team of 18 women worked on repairing the school. In 1945, women activists sewed 250 sets of underwear for soldiers and planted

58 trees in the city park...”. Prymachuk Lukia, a collective farmer from women delegate, said that collective farmers were committed to harvesting and delivering grain on time. “I urge you comrades to work only in a collective”, – the woman said. One of the key moments of the meeting was the speech of the deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of the USSR, Vasiuta Paraska Varfolomiyivna, who told about her way from a simple peasant woman to a People’s Deputy. Paraska Varfolomiyivna called on women to join the social competition for the Stalinist Five-Year Plan and join the collective farm (SAVR, f. R-1, d. 2, c. 51, pp. 5–7).

Each of the speakers, first of all, focused on their own work achievements, or the achievements of their team members. The rhetoric of their speeches was imbued with pride that they were working for the benefit of the Soviet government. Participation in women organizations was seen as an opportunity to concentrate the energy of the women team and direct it to the Bolshevik Party objectives. As Olena Sapytska remarked rightly, “the Soviet government completely ruled out ‘femininity’ as a feature of the ‘Soviet woman’, considering rural women, first and foremost, as subjects of the economic goals of the state power” (Sapycjka, 2007, p. 170). Stalinist propaganda actively promoted a format of a gender order that modern researchers call ethocratic. In the format, a woman was first a public activist, a collective farmer / worker, and then a mother, wife, or just a person. In turn, women department policy was aimed at “the creation of a “new woman”, whose defining characteristics were independence and activism” (Barbara, 1992, p. 486).

In addition to conducting a political advocacy and mobilizing women’s resources to rebuild / develop the region’s economy, one of the priorities of women departments was to participate in the collectivization process. Women activists acted as agitators of the collective farm system, an influential force in the struggle against peasants individuals.

In Volyn, as in other western Ukrainian regions, the Soviet collective system was treated extremely negatively by the peasants. The authorities were forced to use various tools to influence the local population in order to impose the collective farm system on them. The powerful anti-Soviet armed resistance movement in the form of the UPA and OUN militants, which took place in the region during the first years after the liberation of the territory from German occupation, was a serious deterrent to the collectivization process in 1944 – 1946.

Taking into account the experience of collectivization of the Ukrainian countryside during the 1930s and the specifics of the western regions, the Stalinist regime relied on women who, by means of women departments, were to carry out appropriate propaganda work among the peasants. The result of purposeful work of women departments was “the organization on the initiative of women 150 collective farms in the region, in 1948” (CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 74, c. 5, p. 142), and in “February of 1950 there were already 178” (SAVR, f. P-1, d 2, c. 185, p. 13). “There were 353 women councils in the collective farms, with more than one thousand sections organized, into which up to seven thousand women delegates and collective farm activists were involved” (SAVR, f. P-1, d 2, c. 114, p. 65). This year was marked in the history of Volyn region as “the year of continuous collectivization” (CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 74, c. 5, p. 142).

The unification of small peasant individual farms was caused by extensive mass political, cultural, and educational work among women. In their speeches to fellow villagers, peasant-activists emphasized the advantages of the collective farm system over individual farming, and appealed to their patriotism and the conscious position of a citizen of a great state. Almost always the propaganda symbol of the “collective farm” was associated with a prosperous life as opposed to a poor life during the years of the Polish rule. “Women, comrades”, said Voznevskaya, the farmer of Voroshylov collective pig-farm – only after joining the collective farm path we

felt full, liberated, we learned about a happy life. Under the rule of Polish landowners we were not considered people, we were called cattle, and under the Soviet rule we are respected in the collective farm” (CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 74, c. 7, p. 44). “Chairman of the women council of the village of Myskovets, Paraska, a resident of Olyk district, said that we, the peasants, need to unite in a collective farm, build a cultural and prosperous life. I am the first one to apply to the collective farm. Her example was repeated by Olha Vasylevska, a member of the women council, and in several other farms” (CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 74, c. 5, p. 62).

In order to illustrate the advantages of collective farming over individual farming, it was practiced to conduct excursions of women-peasants to the leading collective farms of Volyn and other regions. Thus, from 18 to 23 November of 1948 there was organized excursion of collective farmers and individual peasants of Volyn to the collective farms of Kyiv region (Yaremchuk, 1980, p. 170). “In June of 1949, Kovel District Committee of the CP(b) Ukr organized an excursion for women-collective farmers of new and weak collective farms to the leading ones. The leading collective farm named after Stalin was visited by a group of women from the collective farm named after Kotovsky, the collective farm named after Kaganovych, the collective farm named after Khrushchov. Such events were propagandistic in nature and the participants of the tours were involved actively into propaganda work later.

As a rule, women council chairmen were the first ones to join collective farms. Thus, in 1949 speaking at a meeting of peasants-individuals, Rudyk Maria, Havryliuk Daria, Saladiuk Melania said: “Look, comrades, collective farms are organized all over Volyn, hundreds of thousands of peasants embarked on the only correct collective farm path, and we have not organized a collective farm so far. <...> Only collective farms can give us a happy, prosperous life, only in the collective farm we, women, will become truly equal” (SAVR, f. P-1, d. 2, c. 185, p. 13). They were supposed to be an example for their fellow villagers to follow.

At the beginning of 1950, 160 000 women worked in 1 075 collective farms in Volyn region, which was 60% of all workers there. At the collective farms, units were organized, which were mainly headed by women (out of 9 380 units, in 8 940 cases, they were headed by women). During this period 12 women of the region worked as heads of collective farms, 23 – leaders of a unit, 1450 women were elected members of the board of collective farms, 38 women – heads of village councils worked, 218 women – secretaries of village councils (SAVR, f. P-1, d. 2, c. 185, p. 17).

It should be noted that the authorities, represented by district committee officials, politicized all measures related to changes or adjustment of socio-economic, cultural, educational, etc., life of the local population as much as possible. An ordinary woman could not be the best worker in any sphere of life. She had to be a “conscious Soviet activist”, the head of a women department or women delegate meeting, or just a woman delegate. The emphasis was laid not so much on her personal human qualities as on political consciousness, loyalty to the ideas of Stalin and the Bolshevik Party. Often, women-activists, with the support of party curators, criticized and subjected women to a moral and psychological pressure who, in their opinion, did not work well in collective farm.

For instance, let’s analyze the conflict situation, which became the subject of discussion at the meeting of the collective farm named after Stalin, the village of Antonivka and the collective farm named after Khrushchov, the village of Kniahyninok, Lutsk district, on March 12, 1949 (CSAPOU, f. R-1, d. 70, c. 1747, p. 38). A farmer, a leader of a unit, comrade Skulynets expressed the opinion that Volyn lands were poor, low-harvesting, that is why, her unit planned lower rates of harvesting beets, corn and grain than the unit of comrade Zinenko.

Repet, the secretary of the Volyn regional committee of the CP(b)Ukr, based his speech on criticism of Skulynets' position, accusing her of "not breaking away from the views of the old, difficult life of Volyn peasants". <...> That she, without realizing it, set out to support the unconscious part of the collective farmers in focusing on the personal individual farm, not the collective farm" (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 70, c. 1747, pp. 38, 40). Under conditions, when the flywheel of Stalin's terror did not slow down in the western regions of Ukraine, such accusations could have extremely negative consequences for both: a leader of a unit and its members. Due to the circumstances, they were forced to accept the position of the opponent.

Stalin's propaganda constructed the image of the Soviet woman-activist, who has equal rights with her husband, can realize herself in all spheres of life and, most importantly, is grateful to the party and Stalin for her happy "present". In the mass media and public speeches, the representatives of women bodies declared loudly their support for Volynians' initiatives of the Bolshevik Party aimed at building the collective farm system. "And in this they rightly see a new vivid manifestation of Stalin's concern for the prosperity of the collective farms, for the good of the people" (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 74, c. 7, p. 47).

The activity of women's bodies in Volyn during the post-war period was not limited to political propaganda work and organizational measures connected with establishing collective farms in the region. An integral part of their work was the protection of motherhood and childhood; conducting a children's health campaign (organization of pioneer camps, children's preschool and school playgrounds); singling out mothers with many children and single mothers; elimination of illiteracy and poor literacy; work on the education of delegates and women-activists, etc. Mandatory items in the annual reports were also: admission to the party and the Komsomol of women in the region; promotion of women to managerial and responsible positions; women's participation in the struggle against "Ukrainian-German nationalists".

The Conclusions. Thus, immediately after the liberation of Volyn region from the German occupiers, a campaign was launched there to restore the institutions of the Soviet power. Due to the fact that the Bolshevik Party did not have a stable social base in the region, its representatives, represented by the party-Soviet nomenklatura, made efforts to involve certain social groups into the process of Sovietization. Social groups – such as women, youth, the rural poor, local activists, etc.

In 1945, women department was established in the structure of the CP(b)Ukr regional committee, and women-organizers were appointed in the district committees. These bodies coordinated and supervised the work of women organizations, which were necessarily created en masse in institutions, organizations, villages, and later on – in the collective farms of the region. Their main task was to mobilize women's resources for the process of reconstruction and development of economic life in the region. In addition, they partially took care of the social problems of the region – the elimination of illiteracy and poor literacy of women, the care of orphans, the disabled, mothers with many children, the infrastructure improvement and landscaping of villages and towns, and etc.

Women departments cooperated with the agitation and propaganda departments actively, which were structural subdivisions of district committees, city committees and the regional committee of the CP(b)Ukr. Women-activists carried out extensive propaganda work to expand the social base of support for the Soviet government policies at the expense of local women. They took part in the formation process of the collective farm system in the region. Authorities used women not only as agitators and direct organizers of collective farms, but also as a propaganda tool. During the first

postwar years, Stalinist propagandists constructed the image of the emancipated Soviet woman as one of the symbols of a new prosperous collective farm life.

The proposed research may be part of a new direction in gender studies of a social history. A regional aspect of the activity and functioning vision of women organizations in Volyn during the 40–50s of the XXth century will be the contribution to the initiation and in future – writing the social history of women during the postwar period; it will provide a deeper understanding of the role and place of women organizations in the western regions of Ukraine in the process of Sovietization of this region.

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