

UDC 379.85(477.85/.87)“20”  
doi: 10.15330/jpnu.1.2,3.50-52

## MICHAEL GORBOVY AS AN ORGANIZER OF THE SCOUTING MOVEMENT IN GUTSULSCHINA (THE BEGINNING OF THE XX CENTURY)

IRYNA DIDUKH

**Abstract.** The Ukrainian scouting movement on western Ukrainian territories reached the highest level during the interwar period. Despite the relative integrity it had its own features in Galicia, Volyn', on Bukovyna, Transcarpathia. As living conditions turned out to be peaceful, old plast centres started to form in schools. "Plast" in Galicia was an example of inheritance and incentive to the development on other western Ukrainian territories and in emigration.

The figure of famous Hutsul plastun Michael Gorbovy (1896 – 1941) is very interesting and multidimensional. Indeed, it is a symbolic name in the history of Ukrainian scout organization. He was a member of many national public organizations. With his name economic and cooperative activities of "Plast" in Gutsulschina are connected. He was the organizer of craft departments of "Plast". The unicity of this disjoint person is expressed in his great love for Ukraine and responsibility for its future. Gorbovy considered physical, moral and national-patriotic education of children and youth as his main task. He strived to spread the idea of Ukrainian scouting among wide groups of people. For this work on 22th of May, 1924 he was awarded with a plast title of a scoutmaster. Michael Gorbovy formed national consciousness, high spirituality, love of God and Ukraine among youth for the "great aim" which is to build an independent Ukrainian nation.

Experts qualify current spiritual and moral state of the Ukrainian society as "crisis". School is not able to fill the educational vacuum which has appeared after the elimination of the Pioneer and Komsomol organizations. No new alternative children's institutions have been suggested. In such a difficult situation the experience of the activity of the Ukrainian scouting movement may be useful. Creative and practical achievements of "Plast" leaders as key figures and main carriers of the plast's educational methods are especially important. These include a figure of the leader of the Ukrainian Scouting movement in Gutsulschina, Michael Gorbovy.

**Keywords:** scouting movement, Plast, alternative children's institutions.

The historiography of "Plast" may be called various. A number of modern detailed investigations of the "Plast" history (V. Okarinsky, B. Savchuk etc.), theoretical and methodological principles of the "Plast" development made by the leaders of the organization (O. Vahnyanyn, B. Kravtsiv, J. Starosolsky, O. Tysovsky etc.), different aspects of the organization's activity (L. Bachynsky, I. Bobersky, E. Pelensky, A. Richynsky, P. Franko etc) were analysed. However, educational process of "Plast", its principles and experience of educators are still ignored by scientists.

The Ukrainian scouting movement on western Ukrainian territories reached the highest level during the interwar period. Despite the relative integrity it had its own features in Galicia, Volyn', on

Bukovyna, Transcarpathia. This is due to both its own national creative process, gained traditions and experience and the fact of being ruled by different political regimes.

Galicia is still the centre of Ukrainian plast movement. As living conditions turned out to be peaceful, old plast centres started to form in schools. In general, "Plast" accepted "dominance" of schools, but at the same time it took the responsibility for the education of youth. Plast organization closely collaborated with Greek Catholic Church. In 1930 the Ukrainian scouting movement in Galicia didn't shut down, but changed. It develops secretly and is led by "Plast Center". Plast discipline continues being semi-legal, and scout methods of education are being widely used by other youth organizations. "Plast" in Galicia was an example of inheritance and incentive to the development on other western Ukrainian territories and in emigration.

The figure of famous Hutsul plastun Michael Gorbovy (1896 – 1941) is covered with a legend. Indeed, it is a symbolic name in the history of Ukrainian scout organization. Michael Ivanovich Gorbovy was born in 1896 in Kosiv, into the family of a weaver. There were five children in their family. The boy had to be able to cope with all difficulties since early childhood. Being a child, Michael assumed the functions of an adult. Being a young man he joined cultural and educational work.

The unicity of this disjoint person is expressed in his great love for Ukraine and responsibility for its future. He participated in many fights of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen. After the proclamation of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic M. Gorbovy became Ukrainian Galician Army soldier and one of those who were establishing Ukrainian authority in Kosiv<sup>9</sup>.

Through the efforts of M. Gorbovy on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, 1922 the first plast workshop appeared in Kosiv. In August 1922 he took part in plast course for educators<sup>4</sup>; was a member of the 1st camp of the Order of Plastuns-Seniors in Pidlyuty (1930), member of the 1st hovel of the Order of Plastuns-Seniors of S. and O. Tysovsky<sup>10</sup>; he was an author of the memoirs "Plast in Kosiv on Gutsulschina. The chronology of the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> plast hovels' activity in 1922-26".

Gorbovy considered physical, moral and national-patriotic education of children and youth as his main task. Travelling, singing patriotic songs, concerts, physical exercises "ruhanka", reading abstracts, chats with young people, collecting books, learning Ukrainian history - these and many other activities made up a list of work of the young pedagogue. Michael Gorbovy strived to spread the idea of Ukrainian scouting among wide groups of people. His plastuns were travelling from village to village and explained the idea of Plast to farmers<sup>11</sup>. After some time many similar to Plast centers appeared.

The 1920<sup>th</sup> was a very effective period in the lifetime of Michael Gorbovy and his work on Ukrainian scouting<sup>7</sup>. For this work on 22<sup>th</sup> of May, 1924 he was awarded with a plast title of a scoutmaster. The same year (the 12<sup>th</sup> of October) he created the hovel of boys and girls named after M. Pavlik by combining two plast camps of Kosiv. Michael Gorbovy formed national consciousness, high spirituality, love of God and Ukraine among youth for the "great aim" which is to build an independent Ukrainian nation. His work drew government's attention. He was threatened, brought to justice, his literature was confiscated, he was not allowed to make speeches in public, several times he was arrested and in 1930 (that year "Plast" was prohibited) he was imprisoned for long six months. In prison he declared hunger strikes in protest<sup>1</sup>.

However, persecutions, prohibition of scout activity and arrests continued in 1922<sup>8</sup>. The 26<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> regiments of artisans in Kosiv, led by Gorbovy, were constantly repressed too. But, even after the prohibition and shutting down one plastuns' home, they found another one, and after arresting one circle another one was activated. The work continued even after imprisoning the guardian and educator of Kosiv plastuns, Michael Gorbovy, who had been taken to Kolomyia<sup>8</sup>. After the prohibition of "Plast" M. Gorbovy tried to establish effective work with children and youth<sup>9</sup>. Different sources give different images of tragic events in 1939: according to some data, M. Gorbovy was arrested and sent into exile where he died in a short while. In other materials we can read: "Arrested on 19.12.1940 and condemned on 29.03.1941 for 10 years of imprisonment".

Diaspora publications note, that M. Gorbovy "in 1939 was taken away by bilshoviks and died soon"<sup>5</sup>, "during Second World War was killed by a Polish bullet"<sup>6</sup>. According to documentary, he was arrested on the 11th of February, 1941 as a member of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists,

"Prosvita", "Lug", "Kamenyari" societies, sports organization "Plast" (case 2981, archives of the Security Service of Ukraine in Ivano-Frankivsk region). It is still uncertain what happened to M. Gorbovy after he had been arrested. But we know, that on the 12th of February, 1964 he was rehabilitated<sup>2,3</sup>.

The figure of Michael Gorbovy is very interesting and multidimensional. He was a public political figure, the leader of the Ukrainian scouting movement on Gutsulschina, scoutmaster, one of the organizers of Village-Plast. He also proved himself in the national social work. He was a member of many national public organizations. With his name economic and cooperative activities of "Plast" in Gutsulschina are connected. He was the organizer of craft departments of "Plast". However, most of all he proved himself as an educator of "Plast" youth on his homeland. Plast hovel named after M. Gorbovy continues his educational work.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Arsenich P. Michael Gorbovy as Ukrainian Sich Rifleman and public political figure. *Ethnology Notebooks*, 1-2 (2009), 106.
- [2] Burnashov G. *Posthumously Rehabilitated*. Ivano-Frankivsk, 1992.
- [3] Burnashov G. *Rehabilitated by History: Ivano-Frankivsk region*. Lileya-NV, Ivano-Frankivsk, 2000.
- [4] *Gutsuls in liberation movement: memoirs Sich Rifleman Michael Gorbovy*. Historical Club «Holodny Jar», Vinnytsia-Kyiv, 2009.
- [5] Martynuk O. *Michael Gorbovy*. Available at: <http://kosivart.if.ua/>.
- [6] Okarynsky V. *Ukrainian Scouting Movement (1911-1944)*. Rada, Ternopil, 2006.
- [7] Pelypeyko I. *Kosiv: people and fates. Regional Directory*. Pysanuy Kamin, Kosiv, 2001.
- [8] Pelypeyko I. *The town of Ribnitsa*. Pysannuy Kamin, Kosiv, 2004.
- [9] *Plast: formation of personality. Methodological manual*. Pedagogical thought, Kyiv, 2007.
- [10] Savchuk B. *Ukrainian Plast 1911-1939*. Lileya-NV, Ivano-Frankivsk, 1996.
- [11] Svidzynska O. *For the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a terrible extermination of political prisoners in Ukraine*. Available at: <http://100krokiv.info/2011/06/do-70-h-rokovyn-zhahlyvoho-znyschennya-politychnyh-vyazniv-potyurmah-ukrajiny>.

**Address:** Iryna Didukh, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, 57, Shevchenko Str., Ivano-Frankivsk, 76025, Ukraine.

**E-mail:** [dija30975@gmail.com](mailto:dija30975@gmail.com).

**Received:** 23.07.2014; **revised:** 15.10.2014.