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Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytsky and first Ukrainian Nature Reserve of the Carpathians

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ABSTRACT

The article highlights an important aspect of the diverse activity of Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytsky - protection of the nature in the Halychyna region. As proven by the author, the Metropolitan made an important contribution to establishment of the first Ukrainian Cedar Reserve in the Carpathian Mountains; the author also indicates that his nature protection activity was aimed at strengthening of national revival in the region. The article contains a number of archival documents, describing the mechanism of creation of the first National Nature Reserve of the Carpathians on the lands of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in the 1930s. Due to the intense industrial development in the late XIX - early XX centuries, the Cembra pine (*Pinus cembra* L.) was cut down all around in the Carpathians for its valuable wood and original texture; this phenomenon became particularly rampant in the 1920s. The scientists of Halychyna drew attention of the public to that problem for many times. In the end, in May of year 1931, the members of the Commission for Nature Conservation of the Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society appealed to Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytsky with a petition to allot a cedar plot at the territory of the estate "Perehinsko of Stolovykh Dibr" of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and to grant the status of a national reserve to it. On August 12, 1934 the first Ukrainian Cedar Reserve of 255 ha was opened in the Gorgany Mountains near Osmoloda settlement and it was named after Andriy Sheptytsky. The event was of great significance for the social life of Halychyna of that time, as in those difficult years the Ukrainian local community could promote the idea of love for the mother land among Halychyna inhabitants through the propaganda of nature protection. Popularization of such ideas formed the ecological culture of the nation in Halychyna at that time, strengthened the possibility of Ukrainian idea development in the depths of people's mind and ensured the national identity of the people.

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1. Introduction

Today the global ecological crisis is upon all humanity and it threatens the existence of a man on the planet. Therefore in the present context there is an actual problem of developing the society's ecological

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culture and studying the ways of its solving in the past.

2. Analysis of recent research

Nowadays, natural resources management and nature protection are studied as aspects of the man's activity by various scholars; in particular there are works of S. Vasyuta (1994), A. Begeka (1996), V. Boreyko (2002), V. Verbytskyy (2003) and others. Among the researchers studying the contribution of Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in this context M. Goroshko and V. Dudko (1994) should be marked. However, from the historical studies the researches of nature conservation activity of various institutions was almost absent. Due to this the sphere of our scientific interests is outlined as studying the nature conservation activity of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and creating the first National Nature Reserve at its lands.

3. Statement of research objectives

The research aim is to study the background and mechanism of creation of the first National Nature Reserve of the Carpathians on the lands of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. According to the research of the work the following research tasks have been set out:

- to study the problem of *Pinus cembra* L. protection in the Carpathians;
- to find out the background of organizing Cedar Reserve in Gorgany;
- to examine the main stages of this Reserve forming;
- to show the significance of creating the first National Nature Reserve in the social life of Halychyna at that time.

4. Results

TCembra pine (*Pinus cembra* L.) or Carpathian cedar, called by local people, has a strong and original texture of wood, highly valued at the international market. Due to the intense industrial development in the late XIX – early XX centuries, the Cembra pine was cut down all around in the Carpathians; that phenomenon became particularly rampant in the 1920s. The scientific community defended this valuable wood species (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, 1907-1938).

In May, 1931 in Stanislov the Regional Natural History Convention took place (Boreyko, 2002), where the issues of protection of valuable natural objects, including Cembra pine, were discussed. Ukrainian scientists, members of the Commission on Nature Conservation of Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society Vsevolod Levytskyy, Bohdan Luchakovskyy, Olena Mryts, Volodymyr Brydiger and other appealed to Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytskyy with a petition to allot a cedar plot at the territory of the estate "Perehinsko of Stolovykh Dibr" of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and to grant the appropriate status to it. That plot, the biggest by size, was the forestry "Lyolynske Yaytse" near Osmoloda settlement. The Metropolitan

permitted the creation of Nature Reserve; the Central Administration of Metropolitanate informed officially the Vaivode in Stanislov about that (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, P. 115).

On March 3, 1932 in Central Council* in Lviv the meeting was held where the issue of allotting the Cedar Reserve plot in the estate "Perehinsko" (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 169); after that a letter appealing to prepare the proposals on that issue was sent to the Board**of Perehinsk (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 189). The Board officials made the corresponding proposals (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 188) and sent the study where it was noted: "in the estate Perehiske we are going to create the Cedar Reserve...Entrance is permitted to strangers only by a special permit of Municipal Council..." (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 186).

(*Central Council of Metropolitanate Stolovykh Dibr is the central body managing the household activity of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church estates. It was situated in Lviv city on Svyatoyurka Mountain. The head of Central Council was the General Administrator. For a long time (from 1913 to 1938) that position was held by the father-mitrat Tit Voynarovskiy.

**The Board of Metropolitanate Stolovykh Dibr is a governing body of household activity in some estates of Metropolitanate. The Board Head was a governor. The Board of the estate "Perehinsko" was in the settlement of Perehinski and it was governed by a forestry engineer Joseph Saltz those years).

Since 1933 the rearrangement of Nature Reserve started; the borders of wood lots were marked; direction signs were set; a drive way and paths were improved etc. For making the scientific grounding of the Nature Reserve the Lviv scholar Andriy P'yasetskyy and Doctor Vsevolod Levitshkyy were invited (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 156).

On September, 1934, Sunday, a solemn opening of the Nature Reserve took place; Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytskyy, Greek-Catholic Church, scientists from Lviv, Stanislov, members of Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society, representatives of Ukrainian Household Academy from Podebrad (Czech lands), Theology Academy, Polish League of Nature Conservation, members of community-based organizations "Prosvita" and "Sil'skyy Hospodar (Farmer)", touristic and sporting associations "Play" and "Chornohora", hunting unions "Tur" and "Vatra", representatives of District authorities, Austrian-Hungarian firms "I.F. Glaziger", journalists of journals "Dilo", "Novy chas", "Nova Zorya", numerous guests were present there (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 164).

The feast day started with a holy service, after which there were speeches of Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytskyy, the Head of Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society, Doctor Vsevolod Levitshkyy, the Head of Polish League of Nature Conservation, Professor Volodymyr Schafer; a report on Nature Reserve by the scientist Andriy Pyasetskyy was announced. Then there was a trip of the festive participants to the place of "L'olynske Yaytse" and a look-over of the Nature Reserve (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 164).

The Nature Reserve work was planned thoroughly. The trends of further researches were outlined by the scholars of Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society, in particular the inventory of trees, rare plants, animals and soils study were planned etc. The obtained results of the researches had to be published as a special monograph (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 97). For the perspective of tourism development in the Nature Reserve interesting nature objects were specified (Central State Historical

Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 108), accordingly the territory was developed (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 125). The rules of conduct for tourists was developed: there were prohibitions to litter the territory, make inscriptions on trees, pick up flowers, break branches, dig out plants, kill forest animals, speak loudly, sing, play musical instruments or shoot etc. (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 126). Entrance into the Nature Reserve was free and only on foot, "...entry on horse is only by the marked route by a special permit of the Nature Reserve Governer" (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 126). There was a fine for violation of Nature Reserve rules during a visit.

According to the decision of Stanislav Voivode from September 20, 1934 that plot *Pinus cembra* L. was officially recognized as the Nature Reserve (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 141).

The first Ukrainian Nature Reserve opening at the territory of the estate "Perehinsko" of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Gorgany, afterwards named after Andriy Sheptytskyy, became a prominent event and was of great significance for the social life of Halychyna of that time. Realizing the essence of the problem, Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytskyy announced a letter at V Convention of Naturalists and doctors and remarked: "As creating special nature reserves out of valuable plots of our land is of a great importance for science, culture of Ukrainian people...we created Cedar Reserve at the territory of the estate of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church Metropolitanate (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv, p. 141). Popularization of nature conservation ideas by Church formed the ecological culture of the nation, strengthened the possibility of Ukrainian idea development in the depths of people's mind in Halychyna.

Later, through the spectacle of the known events, there were serious obstacles in the work of the Cedar Reserve. On September 17, 1939 the Western Ukraine was occupied by Soviet troops; at the end of June 1941 German-Hungarian troops occupied the Carpathians. Fascists set "the new rules" aimed at unmerciful exploitation of natural resources. Occupants cut down the surrounding woods at large scale and sent the valuable Carpathian wood to Germany (Collection, 1963).

During the first post-war years a great demand of the USSR in wood caused a great expansion of logging (History of towns..., 1971). Soviet government was interested in the raw region of the Carpathians: even in April 1943, when hard fights against Hitlerites took place in the lines, the destiny of the Carpathians forests was being solved in Moscow offices. According to Resolution of USSR People's Commissaries from April 23, 1943 (N 430) all woods of the region were referred to the group of "exploitable forests", i.e. all local nature reserves were liquidated and became subjects to cutting. Cedar Reserve was under threat of destruction, but the plot difficult access (height of 1600 m above the sea level, absence of drive ways, a considerable remoteness from Osmoloda settlement – 16 km) preserves it from the total cutting down, though some part (approximately 70 ha) of reserve cedar was cut down. Only years later due to the efforts of Ukrainian scientists the reserve status for that territory was re-established by Resolution of Ministry's Council of Ukrainian Soviet Socialistic Republic from October 28, 1944 (N500). Today the reserve with area of 263 ha is located in Mshanskyy Forestry area of Osmolodskyy logging enterprise; it is of a great importance for the nature conservation as due to the wisdom of Metropolitan A. Sheptytskyy a rare population of relict species of the Ice Age from Ukraine's Red List exists, the valuable forest tree – *Pinus cembra* L.

5. Conclusions

On August 12, 1934 the first Ukrainian Cedar Reserve of 255 ha was opened in the Gorgany near Osmoloda settlement and was named after Andriy Sheptytsky. The event was of great significance for the social life of Halychyna of that time, as in those difficult years the Ukrainian local community could promote the idea of love for the mother land among Halychyna inhabitants through the propaganda of nature protection. Popularization of such ideas formed the ecological culture of the nation in Halychyna at that time, strengthened the possibility of Ukrainian idea development in the depths of people's mind and ensured the national identity of the people.

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