

## Ukrainian Academy of Economics in Poděbrady

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*The article highlights the Czech-Ukrainian educational and economic dialogue in the context of development of the agricultural technology education in Western Ukraine and the activities of the Ukrainian Academy of Economics in Poděbrady. The analysis of the cooperation of the Ukrainian Academy in Poděbrady with the Ukrainian economic institutions in Halychyna, in particular with the company “Silskyi Hospodar” and the Greek Catholic Metropolitanate of Halych has been carried out. The works of such scientists and economists as V. Domanytskyi, S. Borodayevskiy, M. Kholevchuk, Ye. Khraplyvyi, who were the theorists and practitioners of economic education development, were reviewed.*

Key words: *Poděbrady; dialogue; Western Ukraine; economic education; Ukrainian economic academy; vocational education institutions; Ukrainian Technical Economic Institute*

The first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked with the significant changes in the training of professional staff in European countries and the U.S.A.; the system of professional schooling was refined, which was caused by the development of agriculture, technology and new lines of industry. Similar processes were taking place in Western Ukraine as well, but much slower, which was caused by the peculiarities of the political, social and economic development of the region and the traditions of economic management.

Vocational education differed from general education provided by comprehensive schools or higher educational establishments. In professional schools learning process aimed at formation of a competent person, who possessed theoretical as well as practical knowledge and skills. Structurally, vocational and economic education in Western Ukraine was formed by trading, industrial and agricultural educational institutions, whose activities combined both local features and European experience.

The system of Ukrainian vocational education in Western Ukraine was mainly private. Foundation and activities of vocational education institutions were under control of Ukrainian associations and institutions like “Prosvita”, “Ridna Shkola”, “Revision Union of Ukrainian Cooperatives” (hereinafter – RUUC), “National Trade”, “Silskyi Hospodar”, and “Maslosoyuz”. The Silskyi Hospodar society played a particularly important role in spreading agricultural knowledge and introducing the latest technologies into agriculture and households. Organization of the

students' cooperatives and introduction of the theoretical course on cooperation were some of the lines of activity of "Ridna Shkola" community in the field of trade and cooperative education. Economic societies "National Trade" and "Maslosoyuz" focused on training skilled personnel for their own needs. RUUC performed informational and coordinating functions in the process of dissemination and implementation of cooperative learning.

There were no Ukrainian higher schools of polytechnic type in Western Ukraine in the interwar period. The only institution of such type was functioning in Poděbrady – the Ukrainian Economic Academy (hereinafter – UEA), founded in 1922 as a scientific and vocational education institution. UEA trained young people in economic and technical work in the fields of agronomy, forestry, hydrotechny, economics, statistics, and cooperation. Poděbrady Academy had three faculties: agronomic-forestry, economic-cooperative and engineering, in the structure of which there were more than 50 departments. In 1932, the Ukrainian Technical Economic Institute of Extramural training (hereinafter – UTEI) was set up at the UEA, where students were trained to work independently in various fields of industry, cooperation and commerce. UTEI had economic-cooperative, agronomic-forestry and chemical-technological departments, Ukrainian studies courses and the school of political sciences. As a rule, extra-mural student were teachers, craftsmen, government officials and cooperators.<sup>1</sup>

UEA and UTEI closely collaborated with the cultural, educational and economic institutions which functioned in Halychyna. In 1928, the "Committee on work of the travelling academic departments in Western Ukraine" was formed in Lviv upon the initiative of the "Silskyi Hospodar", RUUC and UEA in Poděbrady. In the summer Committee members organized "days of field trips" to villages, towns and cities of Western Ukraine for carrying out educational and scientific as well as economic and organizational work among urban and rural intelligentsia, especially among teachers, priests and cooperative activists. They visited Volhynia, Kholmshchyna, Polissia and Halychyna areas, namely the towns of Ternopil, Stanislaviv, Przemysl, Drohobych, Kosiv, Kolomyia, Myluvannia, Zalishchyky, Yanchyn and Dolne. Representatives of the agronomic-forest and economic-cooperative faculties of the UEA, whose intention was to attract attention of the most important Ukrainian cultural, educational and economic institutions to their campaign, were actively involved in the work of the Committee.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hipters S. (2005). The economic education of young people in Halychyna in the early twentieth century. In *Pedagogics and psychology of vocational education: scientific and methodological journal*, Lviv, No. 2, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Central historical archive of Ukraine in the city of Lviv (hereinafter – CSHAL), Fund 302, Series 1, File 283 (Letter of the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Poděbrady with the decision of the Senate of the Academy to send representatives of the department to Halychyna to give a lecture on agriculture, 1928), sh. 3.

The most successful was the cooperation of UEA with the “Silskyi Hospodar” society. In the structure of the given society there was a division that provided assistance to the Ukrainian Economic Academy, and the rector of the UEA, Professor Borys Ivanytskyi, visited it on some occasions. The members of this division promoted the educational process at the Academy by distributing leaflets among agronomists in Halychyna and publishing some information in the press, namely, in the periodicals of the RUUC – “Economic-Cooperative Journal” and “Life and Knowledge.”<sup>3</sup> In 1933, 4000 UTEI posters were published, 3600 of which were sent out with the periodical “Economic-Cooperative Journal”; 2000 “flyers” informed about the course of Ukrainian studies, 1,400 of which were sent out with the journal “Life and Knowledge.” Through the “Farmer” society UEA students and UTEI learners were trained in economic institutions and organizations which functioned in Halychyna.

The Assistance Division of the Ukrainian Economic Academy within the “Silskyi Hospodar” society was preparing for publication and publishing educational materials on the Ukrainian Studies course for students of UEA and UTEI; it was also engaged in the exchange of books. Particularly, in 1935 the Division organized an exhibition of the UTEI publications during the general meeting of the “Riy” cooperative. Members of the Division demanded the creation of the sections aiming at providing assistance to higher schools within the framework of T. Shevchenko Scientific Society or “Ridna Shkola.” However, this task could not have been fulfilled as it contradicted to the statutory norms of scientific and educational organizations.<sup>4</sup> The scholarship fund of the “Silskyi Hospodar” society, supported by the UEA in Poděbrady, provided scholarships for Ukrainian young people to study abroad, in particular in Belgium,<sup>5</sup> Denmark and the Netherlands.<sup>6</sup>

Representatives of the “Silskyi Hospodar” society and the Poděbrady Academy urged trainee students to actively participate in agricultural work abroad and apply the foreign experience they gained in Ukraine in order to improve the economic situation of the Ukrainians. They emphasized the importance of maintaining contact and reporting on work abroad: “While being in Denmark, we kindly ask you not to lose touch with our Society, and by means of regular correspondence

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., File 118 (Report of the division of assistance to the Ukrainian Economic Academy in the Czechoslovak Republic established within the Committee on work from September 28, 1932 to June 5, 1935), sh. 1–6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., sh. 4–6.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., File 717 (Statements of employees on the appointment of a scholarship to continue studying abroad in order to obtain qualification of an agronomist, 1937), sh. 8, 10, 20; File 718 (The request of employees for the appointment of a scholarship to continue studying abroad in order to obtain qualification of an economist, 1937), sh. 8–10.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., File 280 (Private correspondence concerning obtaining agricultural practice abroad, 1921–1922), sh. 7.

keep us informed of the progress of your work. Updates and notices submitted by you, after being edited, will be published in our 'Economic-Cooperative Journal' in the form of articles."<sup>7</sup>

The dialogue concerning the functioning of the UEA in Poděbrady between the Metropolitan of the Greek Catholic Church Andrey Sheptytskyi and Czechoslovak government officials was extremely productive as well. In the early 1930s, when the economic crisis deepened, the Academy was under threat of being closed. On this particular issue, Metropolitan A. Sheptytskyi corresponded with the Minister of Czechoslovakia Ya. Shramek. In one of the letters the archbishop pointed out the importance of this institution for the Ukrainian people: "The Ukrainian School of Economics in Poděbrady has tremendous cultural and scientific significance not only for the Ukrainian emigrants, but also for the whole nation, as it is the only Ukrainian high technical school on this land." The Metropolitan stated that "the Ukrainians, being stateless people, feel today's crisis far more sharply than the Czechoslovak people. Although we are very much dependent on the fact that the Poděbrady Academy would exist in the years to come, our nation, unfortunately, cannot hurry now with really substantial material assistance that would ensure the further development of the Academy."<sup>8</sup> Andrey Sheptytskyi and Czechoslovak officials came to a compromise. The Ministry of Agriculture of the Czechoslovak Republic added the Economic Academy to the list of budget-funded institutions in 1933, and it continued its activity for some time.<sup>9</sup> Metropolitan Andrey personally awarded scholarships and material assistance to students who studied at the Poděbrady Academy, as well as to young people doing agronomic and economic courses at the Catholic University in Leuven (Belgium) and other educational institutions abroad.<sup>10</sup>

The Poděbrady Academy was not only a higher educational institution, but also a scientific institution where famous economists worked, namely a historian and an expert on cooperation, a social activist from Sumy region Serhiy Borodayevskiy (1870–1942).<sup>11</sup> According to the cooperative activist Illia Vytanovych, S. Borodayevskiy, along with M. Tuhan-Baranovskiy, was "the most famous figure in the scientific circles and in the international cooperative world." This scientist and economist was actively engaged in scientific and pedagogical activities at UEA, where he was awarded the title of the professor of history of

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., sh. 7.

<sup>8</sup> CSHAL, Fund 358, Series 3, File 227 (Correspondence of Sheptytskyi A. with the Minister of Czechoslovakia Shramek concerning the financial assistance for the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Poděbrady, 1932), sh. 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., sh. 15.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., Series 1, File 125 (Letters of the Regional Economic Society "Silskiy Hospodar" in Lviv, Lutsk, Kolomyia, etc. to Sheptytskyi A., concerning their activity, 1912–1938), sh. 14–15, 22.

<sup>11</sup> Vlasenko V. (1999). Serhiy Borodayevskiy. In *Ukrainian cooperatives. Historical Essays, Book 1*. Lviv: Published by "Ukooposvita", Lviv Commercial Academy, pp. 201–210.

cooperation and credit co-operation. In 1928–1931 he held the post of the dean of the economic-cooperative faculty in UEA; he also worked in UTEI, Ukrainian Sociological Institute and Ukrainian Free University in Prague. S. Borodayevskiy was in touch with the well-known figures of cooperation (Sh. Zhid, G. Kaufman, E. Puanson and others). He wrote a number of books in the field of economic science, in particular “The history of cooperation”, “The history of cooperative credit”, “Theory and practice of cooperative credit” and “Cooperative credit” aiming at students of UEA and UTEI.

The Poděbrady Academy was also a place where a scientist and economist Viktor Domanytskyi (assistant, associate professor, head of the department of grain cultivation, dean of the Faculty of Agronomy, rector) worked – he closely collaborated with the “Silskyi Hospodar” society and other economic institutions. Taking into account the experience of European countries, V. Domanytskyi developed an organizational model of agriculture in Western Ukraine, which covered agronomic assistance of the peasantry, the development of Ukrainian agrarian science and education, and the activities of agricultural societies and cooperatives. V. Domanytskyi, as the associate professor in UEA in Czechoslovakia, during the First Western Ukrainian Crop Growing Congress in Lviv in September 1929 in the report “Basic Principles of the Organization of Ukrainian High School of Agriculture” put emphasis on the national character of agricultural school whose task was to educate exemplary citizens in the spirit of national consciousness, sacrifice, self-help, democracy, justice and universal morality: “One of the most pressing problems of modern Ukrainian life on the other side of the Zbruch and the Dnister, as well as on this side, is the proper organization of a Ukrainian high agricultural school that would function in the interests of Ukrainian people – in the new post-war life in Europe and the whole world.”<sup>12</sup> Comparing the system of agricultural schooling in Europe and the US, Viktor Domanytskyi came to the conclusion that the higher agricultural school in Ukraine should not be limited to training specialists in Economics only, but should be organized like in the US, where school is “actually a unit of state and public agronomy, and the rector and professors of a high agricultural school are trustworthy and responsible leaders of the whole agriculture in their state, who are accountable to the state and the people.”<sup>13</sup> In his opinion, the modern higher agricultural school in Ukraine should have been organized not as a “triune agronomic center” in the U.S.A; (higher agricultural school, research station, extension service), but as a “fourfold federated center” (agricultural school, scientific research institution, social agronomy, cooperation). The main ideas of V. Domanytskyi were presented in the research papers, such as “The most important tasks in the field of raising the agricultural culture”, “The main

<sup>12</sup> CSHAL, Fund 302, Series 1, File 606 (Reports and articles of Domanytskyi V.), sh. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., sh. 2.

principles of organization of the Ukrainian high school”, “For agronomization of our cooperation”, “Traditions of Ukrainian agricultural science”, as well as in the textbooks for economic schools.<sup>14</sup>

Mykhailo Kholevchuk, an agronomist engineer, veterinarian, zootechnician, veterinary medicine doctor, who studied at the Agricultural Academy in Děčín-Libverda, Higher German Technical School in Prague and vocational courses in Austria and Czechoslovakia, played an important role in promoting the agronomic education and economics in Western Ukraine. In 1923–1929 he worked as an assistant and a researcher in the Higher Veterinary School in Brno (Czechoslovakia). Holding the post of the director of the “Silskyi Hospodar” society, in 1929–1935 – being a zootechnician in the “Silskyi Hospodar” society, and in 1935–1939 – being the director of the Ukrainian Agricultural Lyceum in the village of Chernytsi, he stayed in touch with the Czech and Slovak scholars and economists.<sup>15</sup>

In the UEA Ukrainian economists had an opportunity to carry out some researches and receive academic degrees. For example, in 1933, in the UEA Yevhen Khraplyvyyi defended his doctoral dissertation “The View of the Cultivation of Cattle in Eastern Halychyna in the 1880–1930s” under the supervision of Professor Kost’ Matsiyevych.<sup>16</sup> Yevhen Khraplyvyyi was one of the initiators of promoting economic education and establishing farming school in Western Ukraine; he also was the director of the “Silskyi Hospodar” society, the Society of Ukrainian Agronomists and the State Agricultural Lyceum in the village of Chernytsi. The honorary doctor of economic sciences (*honoris causa*) of the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Poděbrady (1931) was Tyt Voynarovskyyi,<sup>17</sup> who also was a general administrator of the estate of the Greek Catholic Metropolitanate, an economist and expert on cooperation, and an deputy to the Vienna Parliament from the Ukrainian National-Democratic Party.

The scientific and educational activity of the UEA was a model for the establishment and functioning of economic educational institutions in Halychyna:

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<sup>14</sup> Babenko L., Aliman M. (2001). Viktor Domanytskyi. In *Ukrainian Cooperatives. Historical Essays*, Book 2. Lviv: Lviv Commercial Academy Publishing, pp. 294–308; CSHAL, Fund 302, Series 1, File 606 (Reports and articles by Domanytskyi V.), sh. 1–55.

<sup>15</sup> CSHAL, Fund 302, Series 1, File 761 (Personal file of the Society member Kholievchuk Roman, 1931–1932), sh. 1–3; Heley S. (2007). Mykhailo Kholevchuk. In *Ukrainian Cooperatives. Historical Essays*, Book 3, Lviv: Lviv Commercial Academy Publishing, pp. 154–167.

<sup>16</sup> Khraplyvyyi Ye. (1933). *Nurturing cattle in Eastern Halychyna. Essay covering the period from 1880 to 1930*. Lviv: the publication of the “Silskyi Hospodar” society, 40 p.; CSHAL, Fund 302; Series 1, File 762 (Personal file of the Society member Khraplyvyyi Yevhen, 1921), sh. 1–11.

<sup>17</sup> Sokhotskyi I. (1951). *What was given by the Greek Catholic Church and the clergy to the Ukrainian people*. Philadelphia: America, p. 74.

the Agricultural School in the village of Myluvannia (Mylovane), State Agricultural Lyceum in the village of Chernytsi, Professional School of Household for women in the village of Uhertsy Vyniavski, Economic School for women in Shybalyn, not far from Berezhany, and others. In 1933, the “Silskyi Hospodar” society filed a petition to the government concerning the establishment of the Ukrainian Higher Agronomy-Cooperative School in Poland. This decision was caused by several factors, in particular the lack of qualified professional forces for agronomic and cooperative labour and the threat of liquidation of the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Poděbrady. Since the government did not comply with the requirements expressed in the petition, the “Silskyi Hospodar” society provided young people with professional training through the activities of the “Agrarian Youth Training” organization, which embraced secondary and lower vocational education institutions.<sup>18</sup>

Ukrainian cultural, educational and economic institutions, in particular the “Silskyi Hospodar”, co-operated not only with the UEA in Poděbrady, but also with the “Association of Ukrainian Agrarian Students” and the “Rillia”<sup>19</sup> society in Prague, within which the “Union of Ukrainian Agrarians” functioned. It is worth mentioning that the “Union of Ukrainian Agrarians” set the task “to unite and take care of all peasant emigrants in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, to find suitable work for them, to organize agricultural courses, to issue an economic magazine.” The activity of the Union was supported by Czech officials and from time to time they provided a state subvention.<sup>20</sup>

Theoretical educational and economic experience was put by Ukrainian, Czech and Slovak scholars and economists in practice. For instance, in 1932 the “Farmer” society and the Ukrainian Technical Society in Lviv organized the First Congress of Ukrainian Engineers. The event was attended by representatives of the economic institutions of Halychyna, the UEA in Poděbrady (V. Domanytskyi, M. Synilnyk, V. Sheremetynskyy, etc.), the Ukrainian Engineers’ Association in Prague, the Union of Ukrainian Engineers in Bratislava,<sup>21</sup> who addressed a number of issues concerning the improvement of the economic situation of the West Ukrainian lands, in particular in the field of agriculture.

<sup>18</sup> Kovalchuk O. (2002). Peculiarities of staff training in cooperative societies in Halychyna (end of the nineteenth – first half of the twentieth century). In *Pedagogics and psychology of vocational education: scientific and methodological journal*, No. 6, pp. 395–396.

<sup>19</sup> CSHAL, Fund 302, Series 1, File 281 (Correspondence with an agronomist Kosar Volodymyr from Uzhhorod concerning the establishment of the household school in Transcarpathian region of Ukraine and undergoing agricultural training in Czech schools, 1922), sh. 5–8.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., File 280 (Private correspondence concerning obtaining agricultural practice abroad, 1921–1922), sh. 10.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., File 223 (Materials on the preparation and work of the First Congress of Ukrainian Engineers in Lviv (program, draft statute, correspondence, etc., 1932), sh. 32–34, 50–51.

Thus, functioning of the UEA in Poděbrady in the 1920–1930 s is a vivid example of the Czech-Ukrainian dialogue in the educational, scientific and economic aspects. Poděbrady Academy was the only Ukrainian higher technical educational institution funded by the Czechoslovak government. The academy employed many Ukrainian and Czech scholars and economists who trained qualified engineers: agronomists, technologists, economists and cooperators.