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Memoirs of Serhiy Yefremov: stages of struggle for the Ukrainian word

The article is devoted to the study of diaries and memoirs of the prominent Ukrainian figure of the early twentieth century Serhiy Yefremov. Yefremov was one of the active figures in the creation of Ukrainian periodicals, having worked in the magazine *Kievskaiia starina*, and was an active member of the Old Hromada. His literary works were subjected to strict censorship, which he tried to avoid. Serhiy Yefremov became the founder of the Ukrainian publishing house 'Vik', where he conducted active educational activities. He became the founder of the first Ukrainian newspaper, despite the oppression by the authorities and strict censorship of all print media. The diaries and memoirs of Serhiy Yefremov contain many literary portraits of prominent people of that time and analyze the cultural life of that time.

One of the most prominent Ukrainian humanitarians of the early twentieth century was Serhiy Yefremov (1876–1939). His scientific interests were multidirectional and included monographic studies of the classics of Ukrainian literature. The scholar left a significant mark in publishing, journalism, politics, state-building. In his youth he wrote fiction.

The ego-documents of Serhiy Yefremov are the diaries of 1895–early 1896 (Yefremov 2011: 37–180) and 1923–1929 (Yefremov 1997), as well as the memoirs *About the past days (memories)* (Yefremov 2011: 181–620). They contain a variety of records relating not only to the autobiography of the scholar, but also

shed light on his scientific, journalistic, publishing and editorial work. The memoirs of Serhiy Yefremov reveal many events of the surrounding reality, to which the author was involved at the turn of the XIX – XX centuries. The most important of them are the work in the journal *Kievskaiia starina*,¹ his participation in the creation of the publishing house 'Vik' and the foundation of the first Ukrainian-language publications in tsarist Russia.

¹ Monthly magazine that published articles on history, ethnography, literature. It was published in Kyiv during 1882–1907. Initially published in Russian, since 1906 it was published in Ukrainian.

Serhiy Yefremov's interest in the journal *Kievskaiia starina* arose in the late nineteenth century, when its editor was V. Naumenko. During his work, *Kievskaiia starina* underwent a significant evolution, turning from a popular scientific publication into a stronghold of Ukrainophilia. The struggle for the Ukrainian word, the development of literature in the native language, the publications analyzing the political situation in the sub-Russian part of Ukraine, as well as in Halychyna and Bukovyna, which were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, can be clearly traced on the pages of the journal. In Serhiy Yefremov's opinion, the 'revival' of the journal is connected with the arrival of a younger generation to the editorial office, a prominent representative of which was V. Domanytskii (pseudonym Viter). The memoirist admits that 'we were sure that no one would be lucky enough to breathe a living spirit into this dead creature,² and we chastised Viter for not respecting his work and time in a friendly manner' (Yefremov 2011: 389). However, V. Domanytskii's stubbornness won. He not only gained a foothold in the editorial office, but

² The author here means the *Kievskaiia starina*.

also gradually began to involve his friends, in particular S. Yefremov, in the work of *Kievskaiia starina*. The latter saw that his materials were not superfluous in this journal because 'in Ukraine, these chronicle notes, as well as the corresponding department in the *Kievskaiia starina*, which Domanytskii tried to start, were replacing the newspaper, and he sent them more and more, especially since 1899, gradually pushing the narrowly informational lines to purely journalistic ones' (Yefremov 2011: 443-44).

S. Yefremov in his memoirs makes a small excursion into the past of the journal, connecting its activities for a long time with the Old Hromada:³

Formally, the publisher of *Kievskaiia starina* was the Old Hromada, an organization that had existed for many decades because it grew out of the Hromada that was founded in the late 50s by then young students Antonovych, Mykhalchuk, Rylskii, Zhytetskii and others, although the former, since

³ The organization of Ukrainian intellectuals in Kyiv, engaged in social, cultural and educational activities, operated from 1859 to 1876, when it was banned by the Ems Decree.

the time I joined the editorial staff and the Hromada, was no longer a member of it, having left due to some misunderstandings with Naumenko, and the latter also almost never visited the Hromada due to old age and weakness (Rylskii also did not live in Kyiv) (Yefremov 2011: 500).

On the recommendation of E. Chykalenko, S. Yefremov became a member of the Old Hromada. Sometimes the author of memoirs had misunderstandings with the leaders of *Kievskaiia starina*. In particular, not everyone liked the article published in Lviv, where he criticized *Kobzar*,⁴ which was published by the editorial board of *Kievskaiia starina*.

S. Yefremov described in detail the circumstances under which he unexpectedly became one of the leaders of the *Kievskaiia starina*: '[...] V. P. Naumenko fell ill and [...] had to go to the Crimea, *Kievskaiia starina* was losing its secretary⁵ and editor. None of the then members of the editorial board had the time, and probably the desire, to take

on these troublesome and thankless duties, at least the technical side of the case we had to look for a person on the side' (Yefremov 2011: 498). At the suggestion of E. Chykalenko, S. Yefremov was appointed secretary of the editorial board. From the end of 1901 he officially became the secretary and temporarily, until Naumenko returned, the technical editor of *Kievskaiia starina*. Before his departure V. Naumenko introduced S. Yefremov to the course of business, told about his duties, the specifics of working with the printing house. At the same time, he disliked the young and ambitious journalist, but, handing over the affairs to him, in no way hinted at his dislike. With the arrival of S. Yefremov to the leadership, the number of subscribers increased from 300 to 700 people: 'The figure itself, of course, is small, but it is too symptomatic for the growth of Ukrainians in those times' (Yefremov 2011: 499). After all, in those days it was not possible to create a separate Ukrainian edition due to obstacles from the Russian tsarism, and therefore, in the opinion of S. Yefremov, *Kievskaiia starina* managed to compensate for this loss, especially with its literary and journalistic departments. 'When the Ukrainian press was born, *Kievskaiia starina*

⁴ *Kobzar* is the title of the first book of poetry by Taras Shevchenko.

⁵ V. Domanytskii resigned from the post of secretary.

was falling down, because that press had stripped it of its staff, readers, and even the small funds it had been living on for 25 years' (Yefremov (2011: 500). The memoirs contain many interesting historical facts related to the activities of the editorial office of the magazine, which was located on the second floor of the house number 58 on Mariinsko-Blagovischenska Street. Editorial meetings were held every Monday evening. S. Yefremov describes the duties he had to perform: 'The department of current life was the responsibility of the secretary, who also looked through newspapers, selecting from them news and notes interesting for the journal' (Yefremov 2011: 501). Editorial board meetings were conducted mainly in Russian, but E. Chykalenko and junior staff tried to speak Ukrainian. 'In general, the editorial staff was clearly divided into two parts – old and young – and there was always a struggle between them' (Yefremov 2011: 501). The elders tried not to accept the innovations of the youth and were indifferent, which sometimes led to conflicts in the editorial office. The author of the memoirs gives examples of serious disagreements in the team, but they did not reach extremes: '[...] we did not quar-

rel and did not scatter to different sides, it was only because both sides still valued in *Kievskaiia starina* the only way of legal Ukrainian – even half, even a quarter – publication, and both sides did not want to contribute to its decline, nor let it completely out of their hands' (Yefremov 2011: 503). Administrative duties burdened the author of the memoirs, and he writes frankly that he soon managed to distance himself from them: 'However, I did not stay as a secretary for long: leaving for the summer of 1902 to Sytkyvtzii,⁶ I handed over my duties to F. P. Matushevskii and never returned to them, remaining only a member of the editorial board and an employee' (Yefremov 2011: 498).

Memoirs showed that S. Yefremov was a good physiognomist. They contain a number of detailed portrait sketches of leading employees of *Kievskaiia starina*. Of course, the author put in the forefront V. Naumenko, whom he considered the real head and creator of not only the journal, but the entire Old Hromada: '[...] We must put in the first place V. P. Naumenko, who, not at all in accordance with his character, so tragically ended his life in 1919. He was the

⁶ A village in Podillia.

real head and creator of *Kievskaiia starina* and the whole community' (Yefremov 2011: 503).

Describing this figure, S. Yefremov tries to outline not only the features of his appearance, but also the peculiarities of his character, in particular V. Naumenko's tendency to compromise:

Intelligent, with soft movements, rounded, affectionate speech, he had a habit of fixing everything, reconciling everything, erasing sharp horns and smoothing the path for that moderate Ukrainophilism, of which he was the best advocate and representative. Incapable of a drastic act, he managed with the reputation of a Ukrainophile not only to hold on to his official position, but also to remove the glory of one of the best teachers, which he really was (Yefremov 2011: 504).

The author of the memoirs perfectly understood the role of V. Naumenko in the Old Hromada and the editorial office of the journal: '[...] in his group, in the Old Hromada, in the editorial office of *Kievskaiia starina*, everything was held by Naumenko,

until new elements squeezed in and opposed him' (Yefremov 2011: 504). The memoirist believes that the main feature of V. Naumenko's character was compromise: 'For the sake of caution, he never put the Ukrainian question, or any other, on the table; for the sake of caution, he compromised in everything' (Yefremov 2011: 504). Younger employees of the *Kievskaiia starina* became a kind of opposition to V. Naumenko, and, given his caution, they called their leader 'Fox Mykyta' behind his back: 'With his right hand he was always destroying what he did with his left, and vice versa, and being cautious, he went his own way into such unclimbable muds from which it was impossible to get out' (Yefremov 2011: 505). Trying to give an objective description of the director of the journal, S. Yefremov sought to show all the complexities of his nature:

Without leaning clearly on our, younger, side, he, however, defended the power of *Kievskaiia starina* and thus helped us a little, although he could in some important matter and at a crucial moment so turn the case that we remained on ice. We did not trust him, we treated him cau-

tiously, with reservations, but we considered it possible, under the circumstances, to work together, although it was sometimes hard and disgusting in this atmosphere of principled compromises, timidity, softened insincerity and convenient cunning (Yefremov 2011: 505).

The direct opposite of V. Naumenko was E. Chykalenko:

I remember very well this short, squat figure in a checkered jacket, with an open face, free manners and a loud voice. [...] Extremely sharp of tongue, truthful to the point of harshness, frank and sincere, passionate about the Ukrainian cause 'not only to the depths of his soul, but also to the depths of his pocket', as he sometimes jokingly said about people, Chykalenko quickly took an original place among Kyiv citizenship. [...] He lived extremely simply and modestly, although his house was always open to people of all kinds (Yefremov 2011: 506–07).

S. Yefremov noted the generosity of this man who voluntarily took upon himself the duty to help Ukrainians by financing fiction and journalism, promoting the development of young talents: 'Attaching extraordinary importance to literature in the matter of our national development, Chykalenko began to pay for Ukrainian fiction, and later journalism, at his own expense in the *Kievskaiia starina*, enthusiastically following all the appearances in our writing, and especially the literary youth' (Yefremov 2011: 507). Other employees of the *Kievskaiia starina* and the Old Hromada received much shorter descriptions in S. Yefremov's memoirs.

Much space in the memoirs is given to the characteristics of his own scientific and journalistic works that were published in the journal:

At first, as secretary, I offered brief notes and news from daily life, from newspapers and magazines. I had already done some similar work for three years before that on my own initiative for the *Literaturno-naukovyi visnyk*⁷

⁷ The first all-Ukrainian literary, scientific and socio-political journal, published from 1898 to 1932. It was founded on the initiative of Mykhailo Hrushev-

and now divided it between the two publications, albeit briefly. My first original work here was the article 'In the struggle for enlightenment', originally published in 1902, is an overview of the struggle of Ukrainian students in Halychyna for their own university, which then took on very sharp forms and ended in the memorable 'secession' at the end of 1901 (Yefremov 2011: 515).

An important place among the publications is occupied by the article 'In search of new beauty', which caused a discussion among Ukrainian literary scholars and critics:

In the summer of 1902, while in Sytkyvtzii, I wrote a considerable work on modern literary creativity and trends, which was entitled 'In search of new beauty. Notes from a reader' and appeared in the second half of the year... The reason for these notes was the talks and competitions about the non-

skii. It was published by the Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society. The journal published the best Ukrainian writers and scientists.

placement of Kobylanska's works in 'Vik', and then the whole issue of Ukrainian modernity. I took the works of Khotkevych, Kobylanska, and Iatskov and tried to show the negative features of the so-called new trends in our writing based on them (Yefremov 2011: 517).

Some Ukrainian writers and critics did not accept S. Yefremov's negative opinions about modernism in Ukrainian literature, which clearly declared itself at the turn of the XIX – XX centuries. As a reaction to his publication, S. Yefremov calls 'a long series of curses and slanders from Khotkevych, articles by O. Y. Yefymenkova, Hryhoriy Hryhorenko' (Yefremov 2011: 517). The controversy lasted for several years. S. Yefremov recalled that when he 'arrived in Lviv in February 1903, they [...] asked if I had arrived there "in pursuit of new beauty"' (Yefremov 2011: 517).

Since the works of S. Yefremov owing to their acuteness and political relevance were under special control of censorship, the head of the *Kievskaiia starina* V. Naumenko always worked hard on them, removing what seemed to him politically or ideologically unacceptable. However, even

after such processing of texts, there was still something to do for the censor. In this case, S. Yefremov himself went to Vynohradna Street, defending his own position:

It should be noted that even before printing, my articles attracted the sharp attention of the censor's eye with their contemporary content and even, as censors told me, headlines passed through editorial censorship, and Naumenko sometimes did a good job of cleaning them up, throwing out what seemed obscene to him. But there was still some work left for the censor, and as an author I had to go to Vynohradna Street to 'bargain' (Yefremov 2011: 525).

The *Kievskaiia starina* published 'Reader's Notes' ('On a Dead End', 'Literary Bonaventure'), as well as reviews and bibliographical reviews, which caused a number of indignant materials sent to the editorial office, in which the author of the memoirs was accused of monopolizing critical thought: 'In addition to the above-mentioned literary notes, I also published literary texts and purely journalistic works in *Kievskaiia starina*.

Among the first I will mention here the work about Franko, *The Singer of Struggle and Contrasts*, for which I collected material while in Halychyna' (Yefremov 2011: 519).

Work in the *Kievskaiia starina* took more and more time from S. Yefremov, and he was gradually forced to abandon active cooperation with Lviv publications, in particular the *Literaturno-naukovyi visnyk*, as stated in the memoirs: 'The work in *Kievskaiia starina*, which took up the time I had left for publishing and public affairs, drove me away from more active cooperation in the *Literaturno-naukovyi visnyk*, to which I had a weakness, because it was my first truly literary arena' (Yefremov 2011: 520).

Censorship restrictions on Halychyna publications also contributed to the fact that the author of the memoirs paid more attention to publications in *Kievskaiia starina*, avoiding the hassle of sending materials to Lviv. In addition, due to the difficulties of getting such publications into the sub-Russian Ukraine, their relevance was significantly lost:

During the same time of rest, in 1905 I wrote reviews for *Kievskaiia starina* under the title *Notes on*

current topics. Such reviews, which would cover the events of current life from the Ukrainian position, have long tempted me, but the censorship was so strict that it was impossible to think about it. At least, this should be said about *Kievskaiia starina*; in *Literaturno-naukovyi visnyk* they were less useful because even then the censors did not allow it to us, and there was a lot of trouble with sending urgent articles abroad, and they were systematically late (Yefremov 2011: 520–21).

S. Yefremov's memoirs reveal his work as a publisher and one of the organizers of the publishing house 'Vik', which functioned in the late 90s of the XIX century – early XX century. While studying at the Kyiv Theological Seminary, S. Yefremov realized that educational activities occupy an important place in the awakening of the national consciousness of the Ukrainian people, and for this purpose it is necessary to provide them with cheap books in their native language:

The seminary community prioritised the publication of books for the people,

because in our educational activities in the village we felt a terrible lack of Ukrainian books. Some even tried to do something, for example, Skochkovskii published a book, *Whose Work is Harder* (in Kyiv, 1891) at public expense, and came to an understanding with such publishers as Nagolkin, Homolynskii, etc. Especially these publishing plans were revived when Ol[eksandr] I[vanovych] Lototskii⁸ appeared in Kyiv with his fascination for books and energy. On the other hand, B. Hrynchenko's publishing initiative in Chernyiv showed us that even in the crazy times of censorship terror, something can still be done (Yefremov 2011: 384).

The memoirs of S. Yefremov convey unique descriptions of the beginning of the publishing house. The author lists in detail the participants of the meeting at which it was decided to create the publishing house. He mentions their names, accompanying some of them with concise

⁸ Here the patronymic of Lototskii is mistakenly written. It is Hnatovych, S. Yefremov wrote Ihnatovych.

portrait characteristics: 'In addition to the host, a slim young man Domanytskii, then a freshman, Lototskii and me, I remember the brothers Pylynskii, Denys and Kostia, and the bearded figure of Ol[eksandr] S[erhiiovych] Hrushevskii, also a freshman, in the window' (Yefremov 2011: 385). O. Hrushevskii, recalled S. Yefremov, 'attracted our attention as the brother of our hope and pride Mykhailo Serhiiovych, whom only a year before we had sent to Lviv and often corresponded with him, receiving all kinds of orders and orders of literary and scientific content' (Yefremov 2011: 385). The author of the memoirs did not forget about O. Konyskii, who was not physically present at the meeting, but 'was invisibly present, [...] whom we considered our honorary member and collaborator: after reaching an understanding with him, we began our work' (Yefremov 2011: 385). According to S. Yefremov, during the meeting they made quite a specific decision: it was instructed to rewrite and submit to the censorship office the manuscripts of the classics and to create brochures of popular scientific content. It was also decided to publish the first book. It was a work by the initiator of the publishing house O. Konyskii, *At a close woman*: 'It

seems to have already had censorship permission' (Yefremov 2011: 385). Highly appreciating the role of V. Domanytskii in the process of establishing the publishing house at the beginning of its activity, S. Yefremov emphasizes the difficult working conditions, as the formation of the publishing house was too slow, during the first years of its existence 'three or four brochures were published, and even then they did not know what to do with them' (Yefremov 2011: 386). Especially valuable is the information in the memoirs of people who were involved in the work of the publishing house:

The publishing house, initially, in the first period of its existence, had no name and it began to work quite energetically. We gathered every week, it seems ... mostly at Domanytskii's (a room with a separate passage from Kuznechna Street or on the mezzanine) and at Dm[ytro] ('Fly') Antonovych, who was soon drawn to our society by Domanytskii; sometimes at Konyskii's. In general, we had a lot of people, mostly students who were comrades of Domanytskii: I remember Ol. Rahozytskii, Davydov,

Prymachenko, O. Havrysh, once or twice even V. Chahovets was there in a healthy smush hat. But this audience was somehow too fluid, casual and did not stick together for a long time: having taken a job and not done it, a man soon left and disappeared; so disappeared, for example, Chahovets, who promised a lot, but found himself in a year or two among the Russian-patriotic company. When the two Pylynskiis left Kyiv, only Lototskii, Domanytskii and I remained the permanent and unchanged employees of the publishing house, until later a sincere and inseparable group of employees was formed. But that formation was already later, in 1898–99, when the second period of work began, already with the company 'Vik' (Yefremov 2011: 386).

Some of the students involved in the activities of the publishing house turned out to be casual. Having failed to cope with their obligations, they gradually withdrew from the activity, and sometimes turned to the opposite side. S. Yefremov mentioned in this regard the name of a stu-

dent of Kyiv University, V. Chahovets, who later found himself on the side of the Russian Black Hundreds. Later, in the diary of the 20s, he appeared as an active Bolshevik.

'Vik' became a literary refuge for S. Yefremov. In addition, there were his friends nearby, whose positions were similar in many ways: 'Lototskii and Domanytskii were already connected with us not only by similarities in views and plans, but also by those personal sympathies that bind the strongest and, over time, grow stronger and turn into a friendly attachment, into a deep friendship' (Yefremov 2011: 444). They often thought about the future of their publishing house:

With all the changes in our publishing circle, the three of us remained unchanged and often, meeting somewhere at O. Y. Konyskii's or Lototskii's, he had already graduated from the academy and served or was serving in the Control Chamber, dreamed of how to expand our publishing house... I remember with what joy, and at the same time with envy, we published the brochure *About how to invent a car. About Yurko*

Stephenson. About Yurko Stephenson in Ukrainian! Well, if it is possible to talk about Yurko Stephenson, then why is it not possible to talk about Dante, Gutenberg and all the luminaries of humanity, and about all the things that humanity lives by and to which we so much wanted to involve our Ukrainian people? (Yefremov 2011: 444–45).

S. Yefremov's memoirs acknowledge Fedir Pavlovych Matushevskii, a future Ukrainian journalist, lawyer, politician, diplomat, and then a teacher from Cherkasy, whom the author of the memoirs met during a party in Kyiv dedicated to M. Hrushevskii's farewell to Lviv. This acquaintance helped S. Yefremov and his friends in the work of the publishing house:

During one of his visits, Fedir Pavlovych informed us that there is a printer in Cherkasy, his teacher friend, V. Kolodochka, who is looking for a printing job and can even give unlimited credit. And as our publishing finances were too small, we decided to use a printer from Cherkasy. Naturally, Fedir

Pavlovych became our intermediary, assistant and proofreader in Cherkasy and thus became a member of our publishing circle long before he settled in Kyiv (in Cherkasy were printed 5 [...] national publications of 'Vik'), and then joined it immediately as a tried and close employee. This was helped by his extremely good, cordial, gentle nature, which in many ways resembled the nature of Vasyľ Domanytskii, but without his shyness. In the person of Matushevskii 'our regiment received' good comrades and friends, connected ideologically and personally (Yefremov 2011: 393–94).

A significant breakthrough in the work of the publishing house occurred in 1897. It was at that time that the idea to create an anthology of Ukrainian poetry spanning 100 years appeared. S. Yefremov recalled:

The idea of this publication, as far as I remember, belongs to O. Y. Konyskii. In 1897, believing that the next year would be the 100th anniversary of the first edition of Kotliarev-

skii's *Aeneid*, he once suggested that we start compiling a collection of Ukrainian poetry spanning 100 years. As a model, he searched for and extracted, compiled and censored his old textbook *Pashnytsia*, from the '70s, with samples of poems and biographies of authors (Yefremov 2011: 446).

S. Yefremov and his friends analyzed the manuscript of *Pashnytsia* and saw that it was quite outdated at that time, but they liked the idea of publishing an anthology. Together they developed a plan for the publication, selected the authors, each of them was instructed to read the poets assigned to them, choose the best works, weighing the possibility of their passing through censorship. It was decided to add to the poems some brief information from the biographies of the authors. Since there was a lot of work and little time, it was decided to involve a few more people. S. Yefremov, in this regard, mentions the name of V. Bachynskii, a graduate of the Kyiv Theological Seminary, who then served in the Control Chamber. In his memoirs, the author noted:

For a whole year we worked, gathering weekly, or even more often, to discuss individual verses. Everyone brought what they had chosen during the week to the meeting, and then we re-read them together and finally decided whether to accept or reject them. We gathered at Konyskii's place, and when he went to Crimea for the winter, at Lototskii's or Bachynskii's place (Yefremov 2011: 446).

The work on the anthology brought the team of authors together. Meetings to discuss the materials were the best rest for S. Yefremov and his friends. It was a reward for selfless work. The memoirs reveal the technology of work on the book, attempts to bypass censorship, the chosen artistic principle of presentation of the material and its violation:

No matter how hard we tried to clean and iron out all the obscene things, the very idea of such a collection was, as for those times, quite obscene; no matter how we hid with it, the needle came out of the bag, especially since we could not avoid some spe-

cific temptations of our time. Thus, when choosing authors and their works for the collection, we generally set ourselves an artistic principle (Yefremov 2011: 447).

In fact, the anthology not only provided samples of Ukrainian poems for the whole century, but it was also a kind of textbook or even a textbook which, at that time, could be in the history of Ukrainian literature. The final work to prepare the book for printing was entrusted to S. Yefremov:

I gave the manuscript to rewrite to seminarians-citizens who helped the publishing house with re-writing manuscripts for free, took it to be bound, alone, without consulting anyone, because the members of the circle were away for the Christmas holidays, gave it the title *Vik* and with a broken heart sent it to the St. Petersburg censorship in late December 1898 (Yefremov 2011: 447).

Three months later, the news was received from St. Petersburg that the publication of the book *Vik* had been authorized. Then

came the idea to add to the text an appendix, which was mainly worked on by O. Lototskii. The manuscript of the appendix was sent to St. Petersburg about a month later. While the appendix was being considered in the capital, the members of the publishing house team were engaged in technical work, since they had never had to prepare a solid book, large in volume, for publication.

The memoirs honestly recreate the financial difficulties faced by the publishing team. All improvements required funds, and, of course, considerable ones. The Council of the Ukrainian Organization, of which Lototskii was a member, helped with two hundred karbovanets. Everyone understood perfectly well that this money was not enough. When Lototskii showed S. Yefremov and other elders the agreement with the printer S. Kulzhenko for the amount of thousands of rubles, everyone was scared:

It occurred to us then to issue notices for the first time, as far as I know, ... in the Ukrainian publishing business, and to notify, also for the first time, on the 'Vik', and together with the story Levyskii's *Old World Fathers and Moth-*

ers, which was allowed to be printed. We hoped to collect another two or three hundred in this way, and the rest we relied on the grace of God and Cooper's philosophy 'somehow it will be'. With these thoughts in mind, we wrote notices and sent them by the hundreds to the addresses from the 'catalogue of Ukrainians' and the Charitable Society's newsletter, and to those who gathered in our public bookstore, and to the members and communities of the organization. Several information notes were also sent to newspapers. The results were beyond anything we had imagined in our wildest dreams. Subscriptions, to our surprise, went very well, both members of the organization and people completely unknown to us signed up and sent money. Even those 'elephant' (4 karb.!) copies, which we never expected to buy, were bought. We had to increase the number of copies from 1200 to 1600, and half of them have already been provided by subscription. We raised so much money that we were

able to pay for the publication of both *Vik* and Levyt'skii's story (Yefremov 2011: 449–50).

The success that came after the release of the poetry collection *Vik* made the members of the publishing circle think about the second, improved edition. And since there were free material resources, S. Yefremov and his friends decided to make *Vik* the first volume of the anthology, where the second and third volumes would be devoted to Ukrainian prose, and the fourth to drama (although the last volume was never published). Their plans did not end there, they decided to publish a series of works by Ukrainian writers, 'Ukrainian Library'.

The death of the experienced advisor O. Konyskii, O. Lototskii's move to St. Petersburg and F. Matushevskii's move to Dorpat, at first glance, significantly weakened the group of publishing house employees. However, the funeral of O. Konyskii, which S. Yefremov considers 'the first public manifestation of national content in Kyiv' (Yefremov 2011: 456), led to the fact that in the autumn of 1900 the publishing circle significantly replenished its losses and had more than a dozen active employees. The

memoirist names them: G. Berlo, Y. Shulhyn, Ol. Hrushevskii, M. Oppokov, M. Pavlovskii, M. Strashkevych, V. Prokopovych, Y. Kvasnytskii.

In autumn 1900 S. Yefremov and his friends began to collect material for the prose *Vik*. The author of memoirs remembered that O. Konyskii shortly before his death managed to write a biography of Yu. Fedkovych for this purpose. S. Yefremov received a scrapbook from the old writer, which contained the text of the biography of the Bukovynian. This red scroll was used by the centuries for biographies of other writers. The methodology of forming the two-volume book remained the same as it was tested when creating the volume of poetry: first, they made a list of authors, divided among themselves and chose texts that would be suitable for the *Vik*, and then re-read them together. Much of this work fell on the author of the memoirs, he also got all the editorial work. The same members of staff compiled the first of a series of periodical collections, which later appeared in a censored form, dedicated to the memory of O. Konyskii. However, as S. Yefremov admitted in his memoirs, 'still the most attention was attracted and the most work was required by *Vik*. And it caused

us a lot of trouble and again raised passions in literary and Ukrainian circles in general. Especially much indignation was caused by the incident with the non-placement of our modernists with Kobylanska at the head in *Vik*' (Yefremov 2011: 456).

The *Vik* was prepared in the first half of 1901. It consisted of three large binders and was sent to St. Petersburg to O. Lototskii, who was already working in the Russian capital at that time. The latter submitted the three-volume manuscript for censorship. At that time, the centenarians already had considerable experience of working with this institution. Their experience with censors had taught them something. They knew that thicker manuscripts had a better chance of passing censorship,

and so we deliberately added all sorts of junk, which we then threw away before printing. The story of *Vik* was actually interesting from a censorship point of view. Censor Turchynskii, seeing the terrible folios and examining them superficially, said to Lototskii: 'I wonder why and for whom you have to print this nonsense' and allowed this 'nonsense'.

Then, when he saw that 'nonsense' published, he had to change his mind and admit that he had missed something that should not have been allowed (Yefremov 2011: 457).

S. Yefremov in his memoirs noted:

All three volumes of *Vik* sold very well both by subscription and on sale and brought us our own material basis for the publishing house. Everything that came out next was paid for by the profits generated by *Vik*, and the years 1901-1905 can be considered the apogee of our publishing house (Yefremov 2011: 458).

The events of 1905 in the Russian Empire gave hope to the Ukrainian intelligentsia for the appearance of the native word in newspapers and magazines in the Dnipro region of Ukraine, because before that it practically did not exist in the press. S. Yefremov noted in his memoirs that at first one of the options was journalism in Ukrainian. The author of memoirs recalled with great pride his first journalistic work in his native language,

which was published on the pages of *Kyivski Otklyky*. S. Yefremov was proud that 'an issue of a newspaper with a Ukrainian article was paid for 5 karb. each, a price unheard of then' (Yefremov 2011: 607). This publication of the author's memoirs had a powerful public response not only in the Dnipro region of Ukraine, but also abroad: 'F. P. Matushevskii, who was in Lviv, said on his arrival what an impression this first Ukrainian word made abroad: he read it loudly in the Scientific Society in front of a group of casual listeners of Franko, saying everything: "So that's how they write now in Russia!"' (Yefremov 2011: 607). After this publication, several more articles were published in Ukrainian. However, S. Yefremov considered all these facts as local and accidental. He and many other conscious Ukrainians faced an urgent task: 'Not to go to the neighbors, but to lay the foundations for our own house' (Yefremov 2011: 607). At a meeting at Ye. Chykalenko's house, they decided to found a newspaper, the publisher of which should be he himself. The assistants were V. Symyrenko and V. Leontovych, who had leverage over V. Symyrenko, who was his uncle. The memoirist noted: 'We all agreed that we should publish a newspaper.'

There were thoughts about a weekly and a daily' (Yefremov 2011: 608). S. Yefremov was entrusted with the task of becoming the future editor of the newspaper, and for this purpose it was necessary to draw up an estimate of the newspaper, come up with its name, select employees, and solve many different economic problems. The author of the memoirs himself admits that 'technically, I was not very familiar with the newspaper business at that time, because I only occasionally wrote in newspapers, but I had never been closer to the business' (Yefremov 2011: 609). He had to visit the editorial office of *Kyivske Slovo*⁹ to get acquainted with the work of the editorial staff, office and printing house. The consequences of these trips were repeatedly discussed at meetings. There was a problem with the name of the new edition. After analyzing several variants of the name, we decided on *Hromadske Slovo*.

S. Yefremov recalled that his heart was not in the newspaper, he did not want to be its editor. After long discussions, the following was decided:

⁹ Russian-language daily newspaper, published from 1886 to 1905 in Kyiv.

Editor was Matushevskii, secretary was Kozlovskii, who seemed to us a model of accuracy, daily staff were Hrynchenko, Levytskii, Chykalenko, Slavynskii and me were for introductory political, literary articles, etc. V. Yaroshevskii was for reviews of foreign life; V. Samoilenko was for a feuilleton on the evil of the day; M. M. Hrynchenko was to submit factual material, news from newspapers; M. Vynohradova was hired as a translator of telegrams' (Yefremov 2011: 609–10).

F. Matushevskii was a well-known journalist. S. Yefremov knew him from his joint work at the publishing house 'Vik' and *Kievskaiia starina*. The first Ukrainian newspaper 'was to be printed in the printing house of S. Borysov, my old colleague at "Vik"' (Yefremov 2011: 610). Immediately after returning from Lviv F. Matushevskii quickly set to work. A room was rented for the newspaper and journal at 7, Mykhailivska Street, and 'appointed people began to arrange it' (Yefremov 2011: 610). On behalf of the community, S. Yefremov wrote the program of both publications.

On November 12 1905, the ‘Temporary Rules on the Press’ appeared, which significantly strengthened the position of censorship in tsarist Russia. S. Yefremov immediately remembered the prophecy of censor Sidorov, who said: ‘You will regret the previous state censorship’ (Yefremov 2011: 611). However, the necessary documents for permission to publish *Hromadska Dumka*¹⁰ and *Nove zhyttia* were immediately submitted to the governor. However, the permission was not granted. The reason for the refusal was a paragraph of the temporary rules, which allowed banning publications that called for a change in the existing order in the state. When S. Yefremov spoke with censor Sidorov about the grounds for refusal, he said: ‘Yes, you see that your language itself is somehow rebellious, revolutionary. Well, in Russian is “struggle” [...], “struggle” for yourself, and that’s it. And you have “bo-rot-ba”! As you wish, but it sounds too revolutionary! It’s ugly, no, whatever you want to say, but it sounds ugly...’ (Yefremov 2011: 612).

¹⁰ The first daily Ukrainian socio-political, cultural and educational newspaper. It was published in Kyiv from the end of December 31, 1905 to August 18, 1906, closed by the authorities after a gendarme search.

The request for permission to publish the newspaper and magazine had to be submitted for the second time, and V. Leontovych was named as the publisher, and the names of the publications were slightly changed: *Hromadska Dumka* and *New Hromada*. Taking advantage of the invitation of his old friend O. Lototskii, S. Yefremov came to St. Petersburg at the end of November 1905, using this opportunity to obtain permission for Ukrainian publications: ‘The political “spring” with its sweet words and promises gave some hope that eventually a Ukrainian periodical could be published’ (Yefremov 2011: 559).

S. Yefremov’s memoirs reveal his steps aimed at achieving permission for Ukrainian publications: ‘Now upon my arrival, I went to the Ministry of the Interior and made an appointment to see the Minister of Books (Sviatopolk-Mirskii) to submit to him a request to authorize the publication of a Ukrainian periodical’ (Yefremov 2011: 560). Then the memoirist recalls his conversation with the all-powerful Minister, trying to convey all the details of the dialogue as accurately as possible:

‘How can I serve you?’ I heard the stereotypical question.

– I appeal to you, Your Excellency, with a request to allow the publication of the magazine in Ukrainian, – I said briefly.

He looked at me, apparently surprised.

- But the law prohibits it, – he said quietly, as if hesitating.
- No, – I said, – there is no such law and there never was. There were administrative bans and it is entirely up to you, Your Excellency, to cancel them.
- Well, okay... – the minister hesitated again – I’ll talk... I’ll consult with the Head of the Cabinet Office press and then I’ll give you an answer. You have a request in writing?

I gave him a special request with the program of the journal and all the documents required by the censorship office, and I realized that the audience had finished. When I returned home, I recorded this conversation (Yefremov 2011: 561).

S. Yefremov concluded from the audience that the Minister did not understand anything about

the Ukrainian issue. However, it is unknown whether the results of the conversation with the Minister and other high-ranking officials gave a positive result or not, but shortly before the New Year V. Leontovych managed to get permission to publish a newspaper and journal. The first issue of the newspaper was scheduled for December 31 1905. It had to be edited by a group, articles were read aloud, polishing various technical details. The preparation of the Ukrainian-language newspaper was perceived by the team as a holiday: ‘[...] the first issue was interesting, informative’ (Yefremov 2011: 613). S. Yefremov received the corrected proofs of the newspaper, he wanted ‘to correct the articles himself before the publication of the first issue’ (Yefremov 2011: 613), which he did, and ‘indeed the first issue of *Hromadska Dumka* was published on December 31’ (Yefremov 2011: 613), but without S. Yefremov. On December 29, 1905 he was arrested.

Hromadska Dumka, for the publication of which was directly involved S. Yefremov, became the first daily Ukrainian-language newspaper, which was published in Kyiv from December 31 1905 to August 18 1906. After another gendarme search, the authorities banned it. The successor of

Hromadska Dumka was the newspaper *Rada*, which was published in Kyiv from 1906 to 1914. Its editor was the same F. Matushevskii. While S. Yefremov was in prison, it was possible to establish the publication of the literary and scientific monthly *Nova Hromada*. It was published in Kyiv during 1906 (12 issues in total). Among the editors, along with V. Leontovych and Ye. Chykalenko, was the name of S. Yefremov.

S. Yefremov's memoirs reveal his vision of the development of Ukrainian in tsarist Russia at the turn of the XIX–XX centuries. The considered episodes of the author's work in the journal *Kievskaiia starina*, publishing house 'Vik', creation of the first Ukrainian-language newspaper *Hromadska Dumka* are the stages of the struggle of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the memoirist himself for the right of the Ukrainian people to their own language in periodicals and book publishing. Autobiographical moments of memoirs are vividly combined with episodes that reflect generalized pictures of the struggle of Ukrainians for their right to education and culture in their native language. Objective and subjective are organically

intertwined in the author's narrative. The memoirs reveal the figures of several comrades whose Ukrainian-centric views helped S. Yefremov in the struggle for the future independent Ukraine.

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