

***BUILDING A UKRAINIAN PUBLIC SPHERE IN ODESSA,
1905-1917***

By

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Abstract

This project deals with “nationalizing the public” with a special focus on the urban space. The thesis examines the specificity of the public sphere in Odessa, one of the biggest cities in the Russian Empire at the turn of the 20th century. The research aims to determine the level of interaction between the various national publics and to indicate their place in the cosmopolitan space of the city. The case study of the Ukrainian public sphere reveals the distinguishing features of the Odessan public sphere as well as its transformations during the years of the First Russian Revolution of 1905-1907 and thereafter.

The thesis is based on the theoretical concept of the “public sphere” originally formulated by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas. At the same time, later development of the concept is taken into consideration as well. Thus, the emergence of the various national public spheres corresponds with the contemporary theories on the existence of “multiple spaces”. To fulfil the aims of the analysis of the different institutions of the public sphere (such as libraries, associations and cofeehouses) is provided. Special emphasis is made on the press as an unique component of the public debates and an important tool for building a public sphere. It is revealed how the cosmopolitan spirit of Odessa was ruined by the emergence of various national spaces in 1905 and, in particular, by the Ukrainian one.

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Introduction

The subject of this paper is a study of public sphere in Odessa, one of the largest cities of the late Russian Empire, with a special focus on interethnic and national dimension. Nevertheless the theory of “public sphere” emerged in the historical writings rather recently, it gained wide recognition among scholars. The “father of the concept” was Jürgen Habermas who suggested using “the public sphere as a sphere which mediates between society and state, in which the public organizes itself as a bearer of public opinion.”¹ Urban life is usually presented as the core precondition for the formation of a public sphere connected with the transition from early modern to the modern society and the questions of modernization.² Thus, an urban way of life is closely connected with the establishment of cultural and educational institutions (theatres, lecture halls, museums, universities, salons and reading societies, libraries, coffeehouses, taverns and clubs³). Hence, the existence and structure of the public sphere can be better revealed in cases of big urban centers – such as Odessa was in the Russian Empire.

At the end of the 19th century it was fourth largest city in the whole Empire (after St.-Petersburg, Moscow and Warsaw): in 1897 the population was 403,815 inhabitants, in 1914 it raised to 630,000⁴. Odessa was a unique city in many ways. Its reputation as a center of finance and commerce made it one of the most prosperous places in the empire. At the same time, the economic boom was closely connected with cultural development, the spread of educational institutions, libraries, schools, the opening of the University in 1865. In the middle of the 19th

¹ Jürgen Habermas, “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964),” *New German Critique* 3 (Autumn, 1974): 50.

² Rita Kreuger, “Nationalizing the Public,” in *Cultures and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk*, ed. Zvi Gitelman and others (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000), 359.

³ Eley Geoff, “Politics, Culture and the Public Sphere,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* Vol. 10 1 (Spring, 2002): 223.

century Odessa had been already considered as one of the most literate cities in the Russian Empire.

Moreover, another characteristic feature of Odessa was its ethnically-mixed population. Since its founding by the empress Catherine II in 1794 it has been a multinational city where different peoples peacefully coexisted, creating a special “Odessan spirit”. It is often stressed that the variety of nationalities present in the city created a certain balance between them and, accordingly, this led to the impossibility of the total domination of one ethnic group. Thus, according to the 1897 census, the Russian language was used just by 50.78% of all the citizens. Yiddish was also rather spread – it was used by 32.50% of Odessans. Ukrainian was in third place (5,66%), Polish – in fourth (4,48%)⁵. This situation was successfully described by the famous Jewish activist Vladimir Jabotinsky, who wrote that Odessa was:

...not a Russian city in reality. Was not it a Jewish city as well, although Jews constituted, probably, the biggest ethnical community, especially if to take into consideration that the half of so-called Russians were in reality Ukrainians, people so different from Russians as Americans from British or British from Irish⁶.

This thesis aims to reveal the correlation between common Odessan public sphere and national public(s). It is based on a case study of Ukrainians, one of the non-dominant national communities inhabiting Odessa. Under the modern term “Ukrainians” the ethnic group who was officially identified in the Russian Empire as Malorossy (Little Russians) is usually understood. In contrast, referring to Ukrainians and Ukrainian public sphere in Odessa I assume, first of all, those people who perceived themselves distinctively as conscious Ukrainians, bearers and adherents of national ideas. Therefore, “Ukrainian” is meant more

⁴ “Population of Odessa, 1861-1914,” in Patricia Herlihy *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), 234.

⁵ “The Ten Largest Groups by Native Language on the City of Odessa, 1897,” in Patricia Herlihy *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), 242.

often than not as a national rather than an ethnic term (with the exceptions of these cases, where available sources and literature do not allow drawing a distinction between “Ukrainians” and “Little Russians”). I found this distinction very useful, while it permits to analyze how Ukrainians were striving to integrate “Little Russians” into Ukrainian nation by using resources of public sphere; and also how they tried to reach for other ethnic groups than “Little Russians” thus making the Ukrainian identity more inclusive.

Other clarification is needed to be made with the usage of such concepts as “cosmopolitanism” and “multiculturalism”. They are often applied as synonyms in defining the special character of Odessa. At the same time, it is important to make a clear distinction between these terms to understand the specificity of the public sphere here. Odessa was, obviously, a cosmopolis of that epoch. At the same time, the Australian academic Leonie Sandercock suggested to clarify this term by calling such cities “cosmopolitan metropolices, or metropolices that are characterized by significant cultural (racial, ethnic and sexual) diversity”.⁷ Odessa at the turn-of-the-century can be defined in such a way as well. Simultaneously, the cosmopolitan city assumed an existence of so-called “cosmopolitan public sphere”, which emerged when “at least two culturally rooted public spheres begin to overlap and intersect”.⁸ This is close to the classical definition of a public sphere given by Jürgen Habermas who suggested existence of a single sphere with the equal access to it for all participants. At the same time, nowadays more and more scholars stress the multilayered structure of the public

⁶ Quoted in: Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 35. All translations from Russian and Ukrainian into English in this thesis are made by the author.

⁷ Leonie Sandercock, *Towards Cosmopolis. Planning for Multicultural Cities* (Chichester: Wiley, 1998), 163.

⁸ James Bohman, “Citizenship and Norms of Publicity: Wide Public Reason in Cosmopolitan Societies,” *Political Theory* Vol. 27 2 (Apr., 1999): 195.

sphere, arguing that it “needs to become pluralist so it can reflect the diversity of its citizens.”⁹ The progress of the public sphere makes its structure more complicated and miscellaneous. Thus, the political philosopher James Bohman suggested that “the social differences in the distribution of knowledge make it unavoidable that participants in the public sphere enter into public debate with their epistemic roles and location intact.”¹⁰ This allows one to speak about a multicultural public sphere based on the various national spheres the emergence of which “requires a certain degree of social differentiation and institutionalization.”¹¹

The first Russian Revolution (1905-1907) enforced these processes of the separation of national public spheres. Chronologically the thesis covers this period together with the following decade prior to February revolution of 1917 while it permits to analyze the public sphere in the period when it was developed very dynamically. The revolution created favorable conditions for the development of national life in Odessa and was also supportive for the emergence of separated public spheres. It was time of establishment for the various societies and branches of the national political parties, the period of the founding of national periodicals. Ukrainians were one of those who used this opportunity for the realization of their demands. In this sense it is important to indicate to what extent this movement coexisted within the all-Odessan public sphere, was it a part of it, or it was an effort to create a separate Ukrainian public sphere in the multicultural city.

To approach the research aims different groups of primary sources were used. First of all, there are documentary materials which deal with the Ukrainian national life in general and in Odessa, in particular. There are: published administrative decrees and declarations, statutes

⁹ Jude Bloomfield and Franco Bianchini, *Planning for the intercultural city* (Stroud: Comedia, 2004), 45.

¹⁰ James Bohman, “Citizenship and Norms of Publicity: Wide Public Reason in Cosmopolitan Societies,” *Political Theory* Vol. 27 2 (Apr., 1999): 194.

¹¹ *Ibid.*: 196.

and official reports of societies. The narrative sources (such, for example memoirs and correspondence) provide a possibility to reveal a personal perception of the situation by the participants of that event. At the same time, the main group of sources for this thesis is presented by the periodical press (both all-Odessan and Ukrainian national). While I am using All-Odessan periodicals mostly as sources of information, the Ukrainian national newspapers are viewed both as informative sources and objects of study. Studying of the Ukrainian periodicals allows to see whether this press was produced just for the close Ukrainian community itself (if yes, then it is a sign of the existence of a separate Ukrainian public sphere in Odessa), or it was attempting to spread these periodicals on the wider circles of the reading audience. Thus, I focus on how the printed production, which was produced by Ukrainians in Odessa, influenced on the large sphere and was important for the creation of identities in the region. Obviously in this printed production periodicals were especially important, because they were read more often and by a larger audience. At the same time, as the Ukrainians in Odessa formed a significant minority which contrasted with the cosmopolitan city culture. This is why the special emphasis is made on how national leaders tried to find out ways to overcome these difficulties with the help of their periodicals in Odessa.

The thesis is organized into four chapters. The first one, *The Concept of Public Sphere: Analysis of Approaches* provides a theoretical framework for the research and deals with the various understanding of the “public sphere” and the application of this term into the historical writings. The second part, *Meeting Places for the Public Sphere in Odessa*, is dedicated to the main public institutions of Odessa such as libraries, associations, coffeehouses and, finally, the press. This section is aimed to display a structure of the common public sphere of Odessa on which the national spheres were based. Therefore, the next chapter, *Attempts to Create a*

Ukrainian Public Space, is focused on the Ukrainian national life in the city and its specific place within the broader structures. The last chapter is connected with the birth of Ukrainian press in Odessa as a special institution and necessary condition of the existence of any national space.

Therefore, using the concept of the “public sphere” in studying the Ukrainian public sphere in Odessa as a meeting point for the various spheres of national activity in the region allows us to trace the specifics of the public sphere in one of the largest cities of the Russian Empire in the eve of its collapse. At the same time, the existence and the level of access to the public sphere can be considered as an indicator of the degree development or sophistication of the society of an indicated period.

1. The Concept of a Public Sphere: Analysis of the Approaches

The public sphere is a sphere where collective improvements are at stake. It is connected with political liberties and related to political modernization. It emerges as a result of various transformations and developments of the modern society. Accordingly, the idea of the “public sphere” is closely connected with the definition of the “civil society”, and, therefore, with the concept of democratic changes. Thus, “public sphere” assumes the renewal of democratic accountability, which requires “intra-organizational public spheres in political parties, parastatal organizations, and government bureaucracies as well as an arena for interorganizational debate.”¹² It is believed that a system which has limited public participation can not effectively govern and is doomed to failure.

The concept of “public sphere” made an impressive career in recent historical writings. It was launched by the famous German historian Jürgen Habermas in 1962, in his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. He elaborated this concept as a useful analytical tool in describing transformations of German, French and British societies in the 18th century. By the “public sphere” Habermas meant first of all a realm of social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed.”¹³ He points out that the emergence of public sphere has been a result of a tension between state and society based on the private realm.¹⁴ He emphasizes that private individuals

¹² Bob Jessop, “Review: Habermas and the Public Sphere by Craig Calhoun,” *Contemporary Sociology* Vol. 22 4 (Jul. 1993): 515.

¹³ Jürgen Habermas, “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964),” *New German Critique* 3 (Autumn, 1974): 49.

¹⁴ Lawrence A. Scaff, “Review: The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society by Jürgen Habermas, Thomas Burger,” *The American Political Science Review* Vol. 84 3 (Sep., 1990): 967.

create a certain public body, which is necessarily “an educated and well-informed.”¹⁵ Presenting public sphere as a single phenomenon, Habermas, at the same time, differentiates its literary and politic forms. These forms can be defined as stages: the literary one usually precedes the formation of the political public sphere (Habermas calls it a “precursor” or “training ground” of political critique). As soon as the cultural debates between the individuals produce a certain judgment, the literary public sphere becomes a political one.¹⁶

The key idea in this case is that the discussions or public debates are closely connected with the activity of the state. State authority here emerges as an “executor of the public sphere but not part of it.”¹⁷ This is how Habermas comes to the main principle of the public sphere – the principle of public information. This principle assumes the democratic control of state activities based on the public opinion.¹⁸

Habermas’ book was written in German, and for a more than two decades its reading audience was strictly limited to the German-speaking world. The second birth of the theory actually occurred in 1989, when the English translation of Habermas’s book was published¹⁹ and a conference was held on this occasion in September, 1989 (the materials of the conference were published in a special volume²⁰). This gave an impulse to the enormous amount of publications and reviews on Habermas’ theory and pushed further researches on the theory of

¹⁵ Kurt W. Back, “Review: The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society by Jürgen Habermas, Thomas Burger, Frederick Lawrence,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* Vol. 56 2 (Summer, 1992): 257.

¹⁶ Neil Saccamano, “The Consolations of Ambivalence: Habermas and the Public Sphere,” *MLN* Vol. 106 3 (April, 1991): 688.

¹⁷ Jürgen Habermas, “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964),” *New German Critique* 3 (Autumn, 1974): 49.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*: 50.

¹⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).

²⁰ Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the public sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992).

the public sphere As Geoff Eley points out, since then, “Habermasian discussions have broken out all over the map.”²¹

Among the most disputable issues were questions whether and to what extent this theory could be applied to other historical regions and periods. Habermas’ focus on the 18th century Western Europe provoked a serious criticism. Thus, Kurt Back pointed out that public opinion has existed outside these chronological and geographical limits, even if it was not discussed in history: it emerged and functioned everywhere where middle-class groups proposed public opinion as the unique source for public policy.²² The American historian Geoff Eley, who was very instrumental in popularizing Habermas’ theory, suggested placing it in the context of the 19th century.²³ Other authors insisted on a necessity to move beyond “bourgeois” public only. Habermas was accused in stating that “there can only be a single public sphere and that its universal rules of communicative interaction would not possibly exclude other publics.”²⁴ As a result of such a criticism, in 1972 Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge shifted the focus of analysis from the “bourgeois” to the alternative proletarian public sphere.²⁵

Since then, it has become obvious that the concept of the “public sphere” can be applied to the various publics. Thus, according to Geoff Eley, “we now have the black public sphere, the feminist public sphere, professional public spheres, the “phantom public sphere,” the global public sphere, the “indigenous public sphere,” the intimate public sphere, the electronic public

²¹ Geoff Eley, “Politics, Culture and the Public Sphere,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* Vol. 10 1 (Spring, 2002): 222.

²² Kurt W. Back, “Review: The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society by Jürgen Habermas, Thomas Burger, Frederick Lawrence,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* Vol. 56 2 (Summer, 1992): 257-258.

²³ Geoff Eley, “Nations, Publics and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1992), 289-339.

²⁴ Neil Saccamano, “The Consolations of Ambivalence: Habermas and the Public Sphere,” *MLN* Vol. 106 3 (April, 1991): 692.

²⁵ Reter Uwe Hohendahl, “Critical Theory, Public Sphere and Culture. Jürgen Habermas and His Critics,” *New German Critique* 16 (Winter, 1979): 104.

sphere, and so forth.”²⁶ In 1994 Arthur Strum published a detailed bibliography of the concept of the public sphere, pointing out 580 publications existing at that moment.²⁷ Obviously, that since 1994 this number has been increased several times.

Originally formulated as the “Western European concept”, the theory of the public sphere reached Eastern European studies rather late. Apart from academic factors, a raise in popularity of this concept was caused by political reasons: since the collapse of communism, “public sphere” together with the concept of “civil society” was seen as a certain social norm implementation of which reduces costs of post-communist transformation and secures political stability. Even though one can name just a few works related with the public sphere in the Eastern European case²⁸, they revealed that this concept can be successfully used in studying various topics of this region. A characteristic feature of these studies is that in one or another way they focus on the issue of “nationalizing the public”. In that way they follow the venue that was suggested earlier by Geoff Eley. Another interesting innovation was a suggestion to “move beyond the urban” and to show a involvement of rural communities into the public debates with and through the spread of the national movement. As Keely Stauter-Halsted argues:

opportunities for the creation of a free and unrestricted sphere of public debate came to East Central Europe at a time when public opinion was focused on issues of nation forming and when discussion of national emancipation was oriented toward the inclusion of national peasantries in political movements.²⁹

²⁶ Geoff Eley, “Politics, Culture and the Public Sphere,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* Vol. 10 1 (Spring, 2002): 223

²⁷ Arthur Strum, “A bibliography of the Concept Öffentlichkeit,” *New German Critique* 61 (Winter, 1994): 161-202.

²⁸ See: Rita Kreuger “Nationalizing the Public” and Keely Stauter-Halsted “Nationalism and the Public Sphere: the Limits of Rational Association in the Nineteenth Century Polish Countryside,” In *Cultures and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk*, ed. Zvi Gitelman and others (Cambridge, Massachussets: Harvard University Press, 2000), 359-372, 555-568; Yaroslav Hrytsak. *Prorok u svojij vitchysni: Franko ta joho spil’nota* (1856-1886) (A Prophet in His Country: Franko and the Community, 1856-1886) (Kiev: Krytyka, 2006); Ostap Sereda, *Shaping of a National Identity: Early Ukrainophiles in Austrian Eastern Galicia 1860-1873* (Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2003); Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village: the Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

²⁹ Keely Stauter-Halsted, “Nationalism and the Public Sphere: the Limits of Rational Association in the Nineteenth Century Polish Countryside,” in *Cultures and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk*, ed. Zvi Gitelman and others (Cambridge, Massachussets: Harvard University Press, 2000), 557.

She shows numerous ways in which the Polish peasantry was integrated into a nation through public debates in rural press and their increasing participation in mass commemorations. Ostap Sereda in his dissertation presents how the emergence of public sphere in the Habsburg monarchy radically transformed discourses on national identity among Galician Ruthenians/Ukrainians.³⁰

Even though the peasantry and the rural community were integrated in the public sphere, they could hardly be regarded as its creators. More often than not they were rather the objects of the discussion rather than the active participants of the intellectual and political debates. The reasons were obvious. From the definition of the “public sphere”, it is evident that the equal access to information and public debates is of a crucial importance for its normal functioning. Because of low level of literacy among peasants until the beginning of the 20th century in most regions of Eastern Europe, their access to public sphere was limited. Rita Kreuger notices that the public sphere was limited to the rather narrow segment of the population – “educated, reading public – in other words to those with access to the world of letters.”³¹ The biggest concentration of such individuals was, obviously, in the big cities, urban and cultural centers, but not in the villages.

More often than not, the “thickness” of public sphere is measured by the size of reading publics. The circulation of news, the growth of the press and the rise of a reading public were mentioned as specific themes in Habermas’s theory³² – to an extent that he called the press an

³⁰ Ostap Sereda, *Shaping of a National Identity: Early Ukrainophiles in Austrian Eastern Galicia 1860-1873* (Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2003), 62.

³¹ Rita Kreuger, “Nationalizing the Public,” in *Cultures and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk*, ed. Zvi Gitelman and others (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000), 361.

³² Geoff Eley, “Politics, Culture and the Public Sphere,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* Vol. 10 1 (Spring, 2002): 221.

“institution of public itself.”³³ These features were characteristic for the Eastern European issue as well. For example, Kreuger shows on the Czech model the influence of the printing culture on the development of the public, arguing that “the world of letters was at the core of the public sphere; publications and printing constituted a critical contribution to public debate.”³⁴ This idea is also clearly seen in the research of Ostap Sereda on the 19th century Galicia: “With the development of the public sphere, opinions on national culture which previously had only been discussed on correspondence between a few devoted patriots ... could be formulated and institutionalized through the national press”³⁵. Therefore, there is an obvious link between the emergence of the national press and the creation of national public spaces. According to David Bell, it was “the spread of print culture” that “made possible the birth of a single, national public sphere of critical discussion.”³⁶

There are discussions whether and what extent this concept could be applied to the Russian Empire.³⁷ If the public space is a non-state controlled and non-exclusive sphere of communication, then it hardly existed in the empire where government sought to control and limits any expression of public life. Russia in the 19th century was “a state of flux”, and the rise of the typical institutions of the “public sphere” here was much slower than in “the West”. Thus, the increasingly responsible role in this case was undertaken by the press, which became a place

³³ Jürgen Habermas, “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964),” *New German Critique* 3 (Autumn, 1974): 53.

³⁴ Rita Kreuger, “Nationalizing the Public,” in *Cultures and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk*, ed. Zvi Gitelman and others (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000), 360.

³⁵ Ostap Sereda, *Shaping of a National Identity: Early Ukrainophiles in Austrian Eastern Galicia 1860-1873* (Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2003), 59.

³⁶ David Bell, “Review: Recent Works on Early Modern French National Identity,” *The Journal of Modern History* Vol. 68 1 (March, 1996): 95.

³⁷ Rainer Lindner, *Unternehmer und Stadt in der Ukraine, 1860-1914. Industrialisierung und soziale Kommunikation im suedlichen Zahnenreich* (Konstanz: UVK, 2006), 360.

of the public debate and the exchange of the public opinion.³⁸ Therefore, the political structure of the Russian Empire had created a specific public sphere, in which the crucial role belonged more to the press than to the social and political institutions. At the same time, with the course of events caused by revolution of 1905 the Russian “public sphere” acquired new features which were connected with the spread of political parties and civil societies.

Moreover, in the last decades of the Russian Empire the national questions became more topical. This is why the press there can be considered not just as the constructor of the common imperial public space but sometimes the specific national public spheres, as well. Accordingly, it created the situation when certain national ideas did not exist in the reality but were shaped firstly in the imaginative public space. The appearance and the discussion of these ideas in the press had prepared the preconditions for their later realization.

³⁸ Miranda Beaven Remnek, “Russia, 1790-1830,” in *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760-1820*, Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows, eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 224.

2. Meeting Places for the Public Sphere in Odessa

Cultural and educational institutions of the big urban centers such as Odessa are traditionally displayed as meeting places for the public sphere. Reading halls, libraries, coffeehouses and clubs provide a function of accumulation and the free exchange of ideas. These centers, firstly, form the future participants of public life (educated citizens, intelligentsia), and, secondly, become places where public sphere emerges and exists.³⁹ Therefore, the study of the activity of such institutions allows us to see the various paltry of centers for the common Odessan public sphere and to indicate how different national spheres coexist in a multinational city. Hence, in this chapter I concentrate on a few main institutions of the public intellectual debates such as libraries, clubs and societies, coffeehouses and the press.

2.1. Libraries, Reading and Readers

The system of reading and the social structure of readers remain in a special place in studying public sphere. The history of reading, and therefore, of libraries and other places which amass printed materials, seem to be essential. It coincides with the history of ideas as books and the press both provide the function of spreading these ideas into the wide audience and, therefore, have great impact on the minds of intelligentsia as well as everyone whose education opens access to the world of letters.

Thus, in the end of the 19th century N.A. Rubakin suggested that history of literature was not just a history of the appearance of ideas, but also a history of their distribution in the readers mass, history of the struggle of these ideas for their existence and for their predominance in the readers' sphere. Hence, he concluded that

reading public in the broad meaning of the word – this is the arena , where mainly and first of all this struggle takes place, which later involves even, sometimes, half-literate and illiterate masses.

³⁹ Geoff Eley, "Politics, Culture and the Public Sphere," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* Vol. 10 1 (Spring, 2002): 223.

Therefore, nothing characterizes the level of the social development and the level of the social culture better than the level of the reading public in a certain historical moment.⁴⁰

Therefore, the spread of libraries, publishing houses and book trade can indicate the level of the involvement of population of a certain territorial unit into the process of reading, and through it, to the exchange of the new ideas and concepts.

During all years of its existence Odessa tried to carry out an image of a cultural center which apparently meant a well-developed system of cultural and educational institutions. One of the directors of Odessa Public library M. Poprugenko explained the growth of Odessa cultural life by the high proportion of foreigners that came to the city in the first years of its existence. From his point of view, they “had brought here with them broad views on the enlightenment and a wish not to deprive themselves from such things to which they got used in their Motherland.”⁴¹ This is, obviously, just one of the various explanations of the Odessan phenomenon.

Indeed, there are a lot of facts indicating that Odessa followed a unique way in its intellectual development: just two years after the founding of the city censorship was introduced. This signified that the distribution of foreign and Russian books there was organized in a high level.⁴² Another interesting detail was that one of Odessa merchants a certain Shiroev who usually sold dishes, collars and other stuff, admitted that books were things that was profitable to keep in the store.⁴³ This is why he started to subscribe books from Moscow. Obviously, the merchant had just the only interest – to gain income. Hence, that

⁴⁰ N.A. Rubakin, *Etudy o russkoi chitaiushchej publike. Fakty, tsifry i nabliudeniia* (Essays on the Russian Reading Public: Facts, Figures and Notes) (St.-Petersburg: Izd. O.N. Popovoi, 1895), 1.

⁴¹ M.G. Poprugenko, *Odessaika gorodskaiia publichnaia biblioteka, 1830-1910. Istoricheskii ocherk* (Odessa City Public Library, 1830-1910. An Historical Essay) (Odessa: Slavyanskaya Tipografiya, 1911), 1.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 2

books could bring profit showed that the reading public constituted a significant part of Odessa's population.

Therefore, talks about organizing a library took place just after the first years of Odessa's development. There was an objective need for this. For instance, Alexei Levshin, official of general-governor, later – city mayor of Odessa in 1831-1837, wrote to the general-governor M. Vorontsov, February, 1829 in a report:

Odessa in many respects stands equal with the enlightened cities of Europe. Level of education of a significant part of its citizens, direct and quick connection of it with almost all Europe; amount and variety of educational institutions existing here, a museum, publishing of a magazine, societies ... serve as a proof to this...⁴⁴

As a result in October, 1829 a Public library was opened in Odessa which became an important cultural center in the region. The amount of readers grew every year:

TABLE 1. GROWTH OF THE VISITORS IN THE ODESSA PUBLIC LIBRARY (1844-1911)

Years	Visitors
1844	2305
1845	2415
1846	2669
1847	3091
1848	2954
1849	2474
1850	2380
1851	3159
1859	6065
1860	6689
1861	6735
1862	7619
1863	9232
1880	31920
1890	50302
1897-1911	1429609

Source: M.G. Poprugenko, *Odessaia gorodskaa publichnaia biblioteka, 1830-1910. Istoricheskii ocherk* (Odessa City Public Library, 1830-1910. An Historical Essay) (Odessa: Slavyanskaya Tipografiya, 1911), 27, 42, 64, 68.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Although the Public library remained the biggest one, a number of smaller libraries appeared in the city. They were aimed to satisfy the demands of various groups of society because of increasing demands for the literature. Thus, in 1898 a thirty-year anniversary of the Bortenesvsky's private library was celebrated. For this case a famous journalist V. Doroshevych wrote that in Odessa "intelligentsia mostly does not buy books, except calendars, and takes books from the libraries."⁴⁵

At the same time a book was accessible not just to the higher classes. The social differentiation of the readers was various. Popularity of books was so high that even in the barracks among baggers readings of interesting books aloud were held. The price for permission to listen was one kopeck and a candle.⁴⁶

Representatives from the non-privileged groups of the population who had a strong desire to read could use the resources of the free reading hall. For instance, the following table shows the distribution of reading audience in Odessa among the two largest libraries in the 19th century:

**TABLE 2. GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF READING AUDIENCE IN THE ODESSA LIBRARIES
(END OF THE 19TH CENTURY)**

Library	Men	Women	Total
Odessa public library (1892)	4,034	479	4515
Odessa free public reading hall (1891)	6,158	1797	7895

Source: N.A. Rubakin, *Etudy o russkoi chitaiushchej publike. Fakty, tsifry i nabliudeniia* (Essays on the Russian Reading Public: Facts, Figures and Notes) (St.-Petersburg: Izd. O.N. Popovoi, 1895), 88-89.

As one can see, in the Odessa libraries women constitute around 11% of the whole amount of readers. "This is absolutely right – it is the general phenomenon for the almost all libraries of Russia" – explained the author of the report Prof. Yakovlev.⁴⁷ It is significant that in

⁴⁵ Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 153.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ N.A. Rubakin, *Etudy o russkoi chitaiushchej publike. Fakty, tsifry i nabliudeniia* (Essays on the Russian Reading Public: Facts, Figures and Notes) (St.-Petersburg: Izd. O.N. Popovoi, 1895), 88-89.

the free reading halls, where readers mostly belonged to the non-privileged classes, the percentage of women was higher.

With the course of time and increasing of population in Odessa the demand for books grew. In 1905 a new public library with a reading hall was opened. Visiting of a reading hall was free, and a fee of 15 kopecks was established for taking books home. The amount of readers grew every year and just for two years from 1912 till 1914 it increased in five times (from 346 to 1504 persons).⁴⁸ A famous reference book *Vsia Odessa* (“All Odessa”) for the year 1913 indicated that there were 22 libraries in Odessa, including national (Polish, Jewish), and four free reading halls.⁴⁹ At the same time Odessa historians Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk, Oleksandr Yareshchenko mention that in 1914 there were already 68 libraries of different mainstreams. Among them there were 14 private libraries and 3 city libraries which were financed by the city budget.⁵⁰

If these free city libraries were organized for all the citizens of Odessa, various national groups made attempts to organize their own, national, libraries. Thus, one of the biggest such book collections belonged to the Jewish society *Obshchestvo vzaimnoi pomoshchi prikazchikov-evreev* (Society of Mutual Aid for the Jewish Clerks). Its funds constituted 18,000 volumes and there were 1,500 readers registered there.⁵¹

Such national libraries were, first of all, aimed to satisfy the cultural demands of certain groups and, therefore, provided its activity narrowly within these groups. Probably, one of the exceptions was an attempt by a Polish youth to organize a Department of Polish books in Odessa Public library that was planned to be opened for every reader interested in Polish literature. Thus, the group of Polish activists wrote a petition with the request to subscribe to Polish newspapers and magazines. For this they promised to find enough readers interested in

⁴⁸ Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 153-154.

⁴⁹ *Vsia Odessa. Adressnaia i spravochnaia kniga vsei Odessy s otdelom Odesskii uezd na 1913 g.* (All Odessa: Address and Reference Book with the Section for Odessa Uezd for 1913) (Odessa, 1913), 275.

⁵⁰ Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 152, 154.

⁵¹ Ibid., 154.

them, to popularize the library and to attract new readers. From their side, they presented 324 books, and after this two Polish newspapers were subscribed.⁵² This department was functioning for some time but then the amount of readers began to diminish and later ceased at all. The administration of a library explained the main reason of its closing by the impossibility to buy new books and to subscribe new newspapers because of the lack of money. Moreover, with the opening in Odessa a Polish House with its own library the contingent of readers naturally diminished.⁵³ It proved that an attempt to involve to reading different non-Polish groups of the population failed: the Department was, obviously, visited exclusively by Polish readers and had diminished after a library with similar functions was opened in the Polish society.

Hence, one can notice, that the wide spread of reading in Odessa opened auspicious conditions for the introduction of a new ideas, new theories and new vision of the world. For instance, the lists of the readers' demands show that the most popular in Odessa Public library were books on philosophy, political science, world history and literature, language studies and journalism. Therefore, through the information received from these readings the population was able to form its own outlook and to shape its own value system, which was crucial for the incubation of a public opinion in the city. At the same time, in Odessa a situation was created where there coexisted both public libraries for all the population and separate libraries for the various national and social groups.

2.2. Clubs, Societies and Meetings of Intelligentsia

Clubs and societies were traditional meeting places of different groups of Odessa society for spending leisure time and exchanging thoughts on the current events. Usually they were organized on the basis of common professional, social or national interests. A usual visitor

⁵² *Otchet Odesskoi obshchestvennoi biblioteki s 6 fevralya po 31 dekabrya 1906 g.* (Report of Odessa Public Library from February 6, 1906) (Odessa: Tipografiia I. Kopelmana, 1907), 9.

⁵³ Ibid.

of such clubs usually presented a certain type of citizen often described as an *intelligent* (or *intelligentnyi*). This usually meant “a well-educated, well-spoken, properly mannered and respectably dressed middle-class person”.⁵⁴

There were two main aims for the purpose of which clubs were created in Odessa. First of all, the idea was in establishing public spaces for the exchange of opinions by the representatives of Odessa intelligentsia. Secondly, the organizers of such clubs aimed to introduce “cultural life to those who by education and mode of life have not had the possibility to taste the bittersweet fruits of knowledge”.⁵⁵ At the same time, behind this “curtain” of culture and entertainment political debates were often held. Thus, Vladimir Jabotinsky depicted this situation in a following way:

Given the conditions of censorship at that time, our literary circle was an oasis of free speech; none of us ever really understood why the authorities tolerated our circle and didn't close it down. There was never any open sedition; we were all so well trained that words such as “autocracy” and “constitution” had yet to enter our common vocabulary; but whatever we talked about, from the small zemstvo unit to Hauptmann's *The Sunken Bell* – everywhere was the rumble of sedition. Chekhovian melancholy was perceived as a protest against the existing order and the regime; Gorky's intended tramps, including even Malva – as a call to the barricades; why this was the case, I couldn't possibly explain now, but that's the way it was.⁵⁶

Up to 1915 there were more than twenty clubs in Odessa. One of the most famous was *Literaturno-Artisticheskii Klub* (Literature-Artistic Club) which was opened at the beginning of the 1912. The club had its own building, but the activities organized by it attracted so many people that they were often held in the other, broader, halls.⁵⁷ Theoretically, its real members could be exclusively writers, journalists, actors and artists.⁵⁸ But in 1912 the popular Odessa newspaper *Odesskaia pochta* (Odessa Post) published an article, which revealed that there was only one actor among the members of the club. Similar situation was with the artists. One

⁵⁴ Roshanna P. Sylvester, *Tales of Old Odessa. Crime and Civility in a City of Thieves* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005), 9.

⁵⁵ “Gde intelligentsia? (iz pisma v redaktsiiu)” (“Where Is Intelligentsia? From the Letter to the Editorial Board”), *Odesskii listok*, 6 March, 1912 quoted from: Roshanna P. Sylvester, *Tales of Old Odessa. Crime and Civility in a City of Thieves* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005), 11.

⁵⁶ Vladimir Jabotinsky, *The five. A novel of Jewish Life in the Turn-of-the-Century Odessa* (Ithaca: Cornell University press, 2005), 14-15.

⁵⁷ Grigorii Moskvich, *Putevoditel po Odesse* (A Guidebook on Odessa) (Odessa, 1915), 30.

⁵⁸ *Vsia Odessa. Adressnaia i spravochnaia kniga vsei Odessy s otdelom Odesskii uezd na 1913 g.* (All Odessa: Address and Reference Book with the Section for Odessa Uezd for 1913) (Odessa, 1913), 273.

of the members of the executive committee of the club, D.I. Basmanov explained that, on his opinion, artists and actors were not interested in the public activities. Regardless, 75% of the members of the club remained people of different professions and titles but not artists, actors or writers.⁵⁹ Another old club was called *Odesskii Klub* (Odessa Club), but it had also another popular name – the *English Club*. It was the most aristocratic meeting in Odessa with a long history. Aristocracy gathered there to talk and to discuss the current news. It was a rather closed society.⁶⁰ At the same time, *Blagorodnoe Sobranie* (The Noble Meeting) was more open than could be concluded from its title.⁶¹

Simultaneously, there was a number of national clubs and meetings. Their characteristic feature in Odessa was that being established as societies for certain groups of population in Odessa, these clubs were usually open to a wide audience. Officially, there were clubs for spending leisure time, but obviously, there were also places where representatives of national intelligentsia could discuss topical issues.

Thus, *Garmoniia* (The Harmony) was a German club, where different musical and drama evenings and dances were organized. In 1902 the club obtained its own building with a small theatre inside. *Beseda* (A Talk) was a Jewish club opened in 1865. It openly invited also the people of different nationalities and religions. *Omonia* was a Greek club founded in 1903.⁶² Lithuanian meeting *Ruta* (The Rue) was founded in 1906 and existed in 1912 (but it was not mentioned in the guidebook of 1915). The aim was cultural development of the Lithuanians who were living in Odessa. There was also *Latvian Meeting* in Odessa.⁶³

Three Polish clubs operated in Odessa as well. Polish society *Lira* had an aim to spread education and culture among Poles in Odessa, to develop a drama theatre and to provide its members a possibility to gather together for reading and for performing different musical and

⁵⁹ A. Finkel', "Oskolok" ("A Splinter"), *Odesskaia pochta*, 1 February, 1912.

⁶⁰ Grigorii Moskvich, *Putevoditel po Odesse* (A Guidebook on Odessa) (Odessa, 1915), 31.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *Vsia Odessa. Adressnaia i spravochnaia kniga vsei Odessy s otdelom Odesskii uezd na 1913 g.* (All Odessa: Address and Reference Book with the Section for Odessa Uezd for 1913) (Odessa, 1913), 274-275.

dramatic plays. Polish society *Dom Polskii* (The Polish House) was also oriented for the satisfaction of the cultural requirements of the Polish society in Odessa. It had its own library as was mentioned above. The third Polish club was called *Ognisko* (The Fire Steel).⁶⁴

In such a way clubs were performing a function of meeting places for various kinds of activities, and, obviously, they served as important places for discussions and debates. Being organized according to certain interests, they embraced a broad public within Odessa. At the same time, as one can notice, access to the majority of them was not strictly limited; therefore the names and the orientation were mostly used as leading lights in gathering the people of the similar outlooks and interests.

2.3. *Coffeehouses – Centers of the Late Breaking News*

Coffeehouses in Odessa were the same important institutions for the exchange of ideas as libraries and clubs were. Following the European fashion, they were organized as meeting places for journalists, writers, politicians and businessmen.

The two main coffeehouses were *Robina* and *Fankoni*. Thus, the columnist of the *Odessaia pochta* (Odessa Post) with the pseudonym Faust joked that “when an Odessan baby is starting to speak, the first word he pronounces, is – Robina! Especially smart says a phrase: - Robina and Fankoni!”.⁶⁵ The same journalist suggested that “Without Robina and Fankoni half of Odessa could commit suicide. Odessa would sacrifice the monument of Duke, Pushkin and the Public library. Just leave it “the gatherers of the Odessa land” – Robina and Fankoni!”.⁶⁶

Café *Fankoni* was indicated in the famous guide book by Grigorii Moskvich as “a first-rate sweet-shop, which sells excellent quality confectionery, snacks, some food and strong drinks ... The coffeehouse is often visited by the elegant public and businessmen. It is a place

⁶⁴ Ibid., 275.

⁶⁵ Faust, “Dni nashei zhizni” (“The Days of Our Life”), *Odessaia pochta*, 6 August, 1912.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

where different late breaking news is learned...”⁶⁷ In Odessa press it was even a joke that when a reporter has no material for the newspaper rumors, he went to *Fankoni*.⁶⁸

Café *Robina* was a favorite place of a fashionable Odessans, as well.⁶⁹ The typical Robinist was described in Odessa press in the following way:

Thanks to God, I am twenty years old, I also am true to the strict laws: I am eternally replete, provided with shoes, dressed, well-known for everyone, and the entrance to the high society is accessible to me as to a few others.⁷⁰

Among its visitors were politicians, businessmen and high-ranking officials. Roshanna Sylvester explained the reason for the Café *Robina*’s popularity within the middle-class by different purposes which this coffeehouse served: “Businessmen and politicians came there to work, negotiating deals or conducting meetings over coffee and sweets. Other came in search of work, hoping to strike up profitable acquaintanceships with successful entrepreneurs, merchants, or brokers...”⁷¹ At the same time, *Robina* attracted also journalists, who later created a certain image of this coffeehouse in the Odessa press.⁷² Thus, the press presented it as a place for heated political discussions: “in halls – politics, in kitchens – pastry [have been made].”⁷³

The day in *Robina* and *Fankoni* started from the early morning and lasted up to the late night: “There is a dawn in a cold haze, and there is a spring in the air. And here, hardly having risen after a dream, hungry Odessan rushes to the confectioner's shop *Robina*”.⁷⁴ There, in the coffeehouses the visitors could get access to the final newspapers and later to discuss the latest news. Thus, coffeehouses were one of the first places where the news reached the readers:

It is still dark. In stuffy cellars there is a crowd of obedient workers. There is a rumble in clouds of a lead dust, and the typesetters are standing stock-still at the cases. The only motion of nimble

⁶⁷ Grigorii Moskvich, *Putevoditel po Odesse* (A Guidebook on Odessa) (Odessa, 1915), 14.

⁶⁸ Faust, “Dni nashei zhizni” (“The Days of Our Life”), *Odesskaia pochta*, 6 August, 1912.

⁶⁹ Grigorii Moskvich, *Putevoditel po Odesse* (A Guidebook on Odessa) (Odessa, 1915), 14.

⁷⁰ Entuziast, “Monolog Robinista” (“Monolog of a Robinist”), *Odesskaia kopeika*, 1 (1913): 4.

⁷¹ Roshanna P. Sylvester, “Making an Appearance: Urban ‘Types’ and the Creation of Respectability in Odessa’s Popular Press, 1912-1914,” *Slavic Review* 4 (Winter, 2000): 817.

⁷² *Ibid.*: 816.

⁷³ Faust, “Dni nashei zhizni” (“The Days of Our Life”), *Odesskaia pochta*, 6 August, 1912.

⁷⁴ M. Iznmailov, “Den Odessita” (“A Day of an Odessan”), *Odesskaia pochta*, 4 March, 1912.

hands takes lead from typesetting cases. And in such a way this work flows, until the newspaper would not grow for those who had strongly slept at night and in the morning has got to *Robina*.⁷⁵

Actually, the coffeehouses were in some way rather similar to the clubs. They could be, probably, indicated as a certain type of clubs, even more open to the population than the previous clubs described. The fact that even journalists were looking for the news there made them important informational centers of the time. Thus, not drinking coffee, but talks, arguing, discussions, debates – these became the characteristic features of the coffeehouses in Odessa.

2.4. The Written Word Remains: the Press in Odessa

The press had always played an important role in Odessa since 1820 when the first newspaper was founded. Significantly, this earliest periodical in the city appeared in French. Its full name was *Messenger de la Russie méridionale, ou feuille commerciale, publiée avec l'autorisation du gouvernement*. Soon afterwards, on January 5, 1827, the famous bilingual (Russian and French) newspaper *Odesskii vestnik/Messenger d'Odessa* was established.⁷⁶ Later the number of newspapers increased. In the middle of the 1890s there were already nine popular periodicals and thirteen issues oriented towards a professional reading audience. There were *Vedomosti odesskogo gradonachalstva* (The Gazette of the Odessa City Government), *Vedomosti gorodskogo obshchestvennogo upravleniia* (The Gazette of the City Civil Administration), *Khersonskie eparkhialnye vedomosti* (Kherson Eparchial Gazette), *Novorossiiskii telegraf* (Telegraph of New Russia), *Odesskii listok* (Odessa Paper), *Odesskie novosti* (Odessa News), *Odessaia nemetskaia gazeta* (Odessa German Newspaper).⁷⁷

One of the oldest continuing periodicals of the time was *Odesskii listok* (Odessa Paper).⁷⁸ It traced its existence from the December 1873 when the editors V. Navrotskii and A.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ M.G. Popruhenko, *Odessaia gorodskaia publichnaia biblioteka, 1830-1910. Istoricheskii ocherk* (Odessa City Public Library, 1830-1910. An Historical Essay) (Odessa: Slavyanskaya Tipografiya, 1911),

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⁷⁷ Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 155.

⁷⁸ Roshanna P. Sylvester, *Tales of Old Odessa. Crime and Civility in a City of Thieves* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005), 6.

Serebrennikov started to publish a small newspaper *Odesskii listok objavlenii* (Odessa Paper of Advertisements). *Listok* in translation from Russian means “a paper”. At first it was literally a sheet of paper displayed on the corners of the streets. At first this newspaper was distributed for free. V. Navrotsky decided to concentrate on small advertisements and that was a successful choice: hundreds of people who were looking for a job or were going to sell goods arrived at the office every day. Over the course of time there appeared permanent subscribers, and in 1880 the circulation of this newspaper reached 3,000 copies. The same year *Odesskii listok objavlenij* was renamed *Odesskii listok*. For more than three decades V.V. Navrotsky remained the editor of the newspaper. He managed to find the means for its continued existence thanks to it being one of the cheapest newspapers in the city. In the 1890s he invited a lot of famous journalists to work in *Odesskii listok*. To attract readers V. Navrotskii opened a free reading hall for the subscribers and organized a society for journalists in retirement. The popularity of his newspaper grew every year. In the 1890s it was comparable to the papers in the capital and its circulation reached 10,000 copies. After V. Navrotskii’s death in 1911, his relatives S.M. and M.K. Navrotskii’s continued his business.⁷⁹

Odesskii listok informed its readers about the actions of local authorities. It also examined a variety of amusements and provincial events, worldwide news, local business and was full of rumors. The newspaper was also oriented around family readings – different feuilletons and other comments informed subscribers about the current events.⁸⁰

After the First Russian revolution the newspaper became close to the party of Constitutional Democrats (“Cadets”). One of Odessa humorist newspapers of the time published in such case a satirical poem:

The times has been changed nowadays,
There is nothing left from the previous epoch,
I do not know what had suddenly happened here,
But I suddenly found myself being a “cadet”.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Sasha Dmitrieva, “Letopis’ goroda” (“Chronicle of the City”), *Odesskii vestnik*, 24 December 2005.

⁸⁰ Roshanna P. Sylvester, *Tales of Old Odessa. Crime and Civility in a City of Thieves* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005), 6.

⁸¹ [A caricature], *Odessitka*, 18 June 1906.

These political orientations of the newspaper led to its closing. In the first issue of 1920 there was a caricature with a baby – an allegory to the New Year. Next to it the burial crosses were drawn with the notes: “1918”, “1919”. Underneath there was a subtitle “We wish that at least this would not be ill on rubella”.⁸² “Rubella” in Russian is *krasnuha* which sounds close to the Russian adjective *krasnyi* (red). In such a way the author of a caricature expected a hope that the new year would be free from the “red illness”, or simply Bolshevik attacks. But in February 1920 the Soviet power was established in the city. It is obvious that the newspaper was closed very soon afterwards.

During the First Russian Revolution there appeared a huge number of new periodicals. The year 1905 brought a possibility to say openly those things which were impossible to discuss before. Moreover, a lot of national organizations and political parties of various directions acquired a possibility to establish their own periodicals. This is why in 1905-1913 more than 40 periodicals were published in Odessa.⁸³ During the period of the revolution, there were almost no politically neutral periodical. Consciously and unconsciously, sometimes even officially declaring the independence of a newspaper, the sympathies of the editors were revealed through the articles. Thus, the newspapers in Odessa represented all the main directions of the social and political ideas of the Russian Empire.

The Odessa department of the Russian chauvinist organization *Soiuz Russkogo Naroda* (Union of the Russian Nation) issued a newspaper *Za Tsarya i Rodinu* (For the Tsar and Motherland). The editor was Count A. Konovnitsyn. The newspaper proclaimed Russian nationality as a ruling one and Russian as the only one possible state language. National question in this newspaper was called “tribal” and was supposed to be discussed according to the level of the readiness of a nation to help Russia and Russians.⁸⁴ At the same time, *Soiuz Russkogo Naroda* proclaimed that all non-Russian nations that live for a long time on the

⁸² *Odesskii listok*, 1 January 1920.

⁸³ Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 157.

⁸⁴ “Osnovopolozheniia Soiuz Russkogo Naroda” (“Main Points of the Union of the Russian Nation”), *Za Tsarya i Rodinu*, 23 April, 1906.

“Russian territory” would be recognized as equal (except those whom *Soiuz* regarded as hostile for it). An anti-Semite character of the articles was obvious: even trying to analyze Jewish pogroms and to find who was guilty, the newspaper accused Jews in organizing them: “all this was done by Jewish friends-comrades, companions and their supporters.”⁸⁵ Simultaneously, the newspaper suggested discussing the Jewish question in the State Duma, while the independence of Finland and a Polish national movement were treated in a rather negative way.⁸⁶

A newspaper *Russkii golos* (The Russian Voice) was edited by A.I. Muranevich. Its first issue appeared on December 25, 1905. This paper was daily and was financed by the public donations. The issue often published programs and appeals of different political parties which showed its attitudes to the social life. Thus, in the petition of a party *Soiuz 17 Oktyabrya* (Union of the 17th of October) the unity and indivisibleness of the Russian Empire was stated. But unlike *Soiuz Russkogo Naroda*, *oktyabristy* recognized an exclusive right for Finland for separation.⁸⁷ Another political program published in this newspaper was a program of *Partiia tsentra* (The Party of Center). Here the disagreement with any autonomy within Russia was repeated as well.⁸⁸ *Russkii golos* also published other agendas which carried similar ideas.

Political, social and literary newspaper *Narod* (The Nation), edited by G.N. Karant, declared independence from narrow party interests and proclaimed equality of sexes, nationalities and religions with recognition of autonomies of certain regions.⁸⁹ Even though the sympathies of the newspaper to the Cadets were obvious, at least in the other points it supported declared principles. Thus, the appeal of *Partiia narodnoi svobody* (A Party of Peoples Freedom - a new name of Constitutional Democrats) was published both in Russian and in Ukrainian.

⁸⁵ “Kto vinovat v oktyabr’skih sobytiiah i kto gromil evreev?” (“Who Is Guilty in the October Events and Who Smashed Jews?”), *Za Tsarya i Rodinu*, 30 April, 1906.

⁸⁶ “Polyaki buntuiut” (“Poles Rebel”), *Za Tsarya i Rodinu*, 17 September 1906.

⁸⁷ “Vozzvaniiie Soiuzia 17 oktyabrya” (“Appeal of the Union of the 17th of October”), *Russkii golos*, 25 December, 1905.

⁸⁸ “Programma Partii Tsentra” (“Program of the Party of Center”), *Russkii golos*, 29 December, 1905.

⁸⁹ [Editorial], *Narod*, 25 January, 1906.

There was also a request to the Poles to support the candidate from “Cadets” in case they wanted a depute to support the equality of the Poles and a free development of a nation.⁹⁰

The daily political, social, literature and financial newspaper *Mayak* (The Leading Light) was edited by P.I. Kompan. It contained government decrees, telegrams, feuilletons, local chronicles, literature and sport reviews, reference materials and so on. One can trace an attempt to inform about the demands and social life of various national groups inhabiting Odessa. Thus, the congratulations of the Odessa committee of Ukrainian democratic-radical party to the Prof. Shchepkin, after he was elected to the State Duma from Odessa, were published in Ukrainian.⁹¹ There were a lot of petitions of Jewish organizations available in this newspaper as well.

The Jewish question was also supported by the newspaper *Novoe obozrenie* (The New Review) edited by C.L. Isakovich. At the beginning of 1907 the newspaper printed an open letter of *Soiuz dlya dostigeniia evreiskogo polnopraviia* (Union for Achievement Equality for Jews). Besides the declaration of what is clear from the title of the Union, the second point of the letter seemed relevant: “To represent the interests of the Russian Jewry in reality, the Union for achievement equality of Jews has to have braveness to provide its own independent national policy as it was done by Poles and Ukrainians...”⁹² As one can see, the Ukrainian movement was openly mentioned there while in the majority of other publications it was hidden behind the wide-ranging phrase “struggling of nations for self-determination”. Newspaper also published the main point of the program *Partiia mirnogo obnovleniia* (The Party of Peaceful Renewal) which claimed “equality and equal rights of all the citizens (Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, Poles and so on)”.⁹³

During the First Russian Revolution there appeared a lot of satirical newspapers and magazines. There has to be mentioned a satirical illustrated newspaper *Odessitka* (Odessa

⁹⁰ “Vozzvaniiie k izbiratelyam-polyakam” (“Appeal to the Polish Voters”), *Narod*, 8 April, 1906.

⁹¹ [A telegram to Prof. Shchepkin from Odessa Committee UDRP], *Mayak*, 28 April 1906.

⁹² “Otkrytoe pismo Soiuz dlya dostigeniia evreiskogo polnopraviia” (“An Open Letter of the Union for Achievement Equality for Jews”), *Novoe obozreniie*, 20 January, 1907.

⁹³ “Partiia Mirnogo Obnovleniia” (“Party of a Peaceful Renewal”), *Novoe obozreniie*, 20 January, 1907.

Woman). Its first issue appeared on June, 18, 1906 and was edited by V.V. Dashkevich-Chaikovskii. The newspaper was distributed in Odessa and other cities as well as abroad according to subscription.⁹⁴ In general, more than fifteen satirical issues appeared in Odessa at that time.⁹⁵

After the decline of the revolution a splash of the appearance of the new issues stopped for a while. It was mainly connected with the closing of that newspapers which were officially supported by the political parties and organizations which did not exist any more. Nevertheless, in 1913-1914 there were still more 60 local newspapers in Odessa.⁹⁶ In the reference book *Vsia Odessa* (All Odessa) for the year 1913 there are 68 local periodicals indicated. Among them there were popular dailies *Vecherniaia pochta* (Evening Post), *Odesskaia pochta* (Odessa Post), *Odesskii kurier* (Odessa Courier), *Odesskii listok* (Odessa Paper). There were a number of Jewish papers in Yiddish as well as Jewish periodicals in Russian – *Evrei* (A Jew), *Evreiskii meditsinskii golos* (Jewish Medical Voice) and so on. A few newspapers appeared in German such as *Nemetskoe obozreniie* (German Review), *Odessaer Zeitung* and *Khristianskii narodnyi vestnik* (Christian National Herald).⁹⁷ But with the outbreak of the World War I both Jewish and German issues became illegal. Thus, since 1915 Jewish periodicals were prohibited by the military commandment. According to a decree of the Main administration of press “the Jewish press and correspondence on Jewish language in a significant way promotes espionage”.⁹⁸ Therefore, the publishing and distribution of Jewish newspapers was forbidden. One of a few exceptions was a newspaper *Unzer Leben*, an editor of which managed to get permission to

⁹⁴ *Odessitka*, 18 June, 1906.

⁹⁵ Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 157.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Vsia Odessa. Adressnaia i spravochnaia kniga vsei Odessy s otdelom Odesskii uezd na 1913 g.* (All Odessa: Address and Reference Book with the Section for Odessa Uezd for 1913) (Odessa, 1913), 232-234.

⁹⁸ S.L. Rubinstein, *Odes'ka periodychna presa rokiv revolutsii ta hromadyanskoji vijny* (Odessa Periodical Press during the Years of Revolution and Civil War) (Odessa, 1929), XLII.

distribute this issue. This periodical which appeared originally in 1907 in Warsaw was one of a few in the Russian Empire and the only in Odessa organ in Yiddish.⁹⁹

In such a way one can notice a certain pattern: the attempts to establish national issues were the most successful at the times of political (revolutionary) changes while during the periods of the constant development all-Odessa periodicals remained on the premier positions. Therefore, national elites, which involuntarily were aspiring to the formation of separate public spheres and were not able to realize it before 1905 and during the inter-revolutionary period, found the space of the self-expression in the cosmopolitan periodicals of Odessa. At the same time, democratic shifts and relative freedom of speech paradoxically caused a split of this common public sphere into various spaces. The example of the Odessa periodicals clearly shows this phenomenon. Simultaneously, this led to the second fact – the national issue became increasingly discussed in the newspapers of the various political orientations.

Therefore, a certain structure in Odessa's public sphere can be determined. This structure, obviously, has multiple levels. First of all, it is divided by the institutions of the public sphere presented by the above described libraries, clubs, coffeehouses and the press. Every institution had its own specifics and provided a special function toward the common construction. While libraries served as dealers of the new ideas and concepts, the press continued this function adding also an option of feedback, and, therefore, led to certain discussion. Clubs and coffeehouses, in their turn, provided a secondary level of these debates as public there was usually acknowledged with the information from the press. At the same time, topics discussed here were often reflected in the press later, these periodicals were subscribed to by the libraries and reading halls – accordingly, the process of interaction was continuous.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

The chronological dimension is the second level of the public sphere's structure. The open access to information and to the public debates is crucial for the public debates. Hence, the level of this access differed in the different historical stages. In the examined period one can notice at least four such phases: the pre-revolutionary period, then the First Russian revolution, the time prior to the World War I, and finally, the war period. The possibility to get access and to express opinions was different and this, consequently, formed a specific character of the public sphere in every indicated period. Clearly this can be seen on the example of the press as well as within national societies and clubs.

Simultaneously, national issue turned into being more significant. Nationalizing a society quickly became a tool to involve new participants into public debates. Therefore, the common sphere found itself in danger of a split: while national public spheres started to segregate, the cosmopolitan nature of Odessa's public sphere all-Odessa sphere was undermined the necessity of survival by finding the meeting points with these divided communities.

3. Attempts to Create a Ukrainian Public Space

In 2005 the Educational Society *Prosvita* in Odessa celebrated a hundred-year anniversary. Different activities devoted to this event took place in the city and, in particular, a scientific conference was held. “The history of the Odessa *Prosvita* is a unique phenomenon not just in the history of Odessa, but in the whole Ukrainian movement in the 2nd half of the 19th century - the beginning of the 20th century”¹⁰⁰ – concluded the Odessa historian Anatoliy Mysechko. These words can be also indicated as an essence of the majority of the reports declared during that meeting.

Nowadays the trend to stress the significance of the society in the life of Odessa at the beginning of the 20th century became rather popular in the historical writings, especially, in the works of the local authors. The topic suddenly appeared beneficial for defending dissertations, publishing books and articles.¹⁰¹ Again the emphasis has been made on the uniqueness and importance of that organization, its special role for the turn of the 20th century public sphere in Odessa. It is obvious that such unanimous high-colored conclusions need to be clarified. What was the real place of *Prosvita* and its followers, societies *Ukrajins'kyi Klub* (Ukrainian Club) and *Ukrajins'ka Hata* (Ukrainian House), in the public life of Odessa? And how much did the public sphere created by its founders coexist with the general space of city? The answers on these questions appear to be important.

¹⁰⁰ Anatoliy Mysechko “Odes'ka *Prosvita* yak proyav rozbudovy gromadyans'kogo suspilstva na pochatku XX st.” (“Odessa *Prosvita* as a Reflection of the Development of the Civil Society at the Beginning of the 20th Century”), in *Prosvita: mynule, suchasne i majbutne (do 100-richchya Odes'koji “Prosvity”)* (*Prosvita: Past, Present and Future. To the 100th Anniversary of Odessa Prosvita*), ed. Tetiana Ananchenko (Odessa: Druk 2006), 48.

¹⁰¹ Anatoliy, Mysechko “Mistse Odes'koji “Prosvity” v Ukrajins'komu rusi na pochatku XX st.” (“The Place of Odessa *Prosvita* in the Ukrainian Movement at the Beginning of the 20th Century”), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 44.

A few factors need to come together to allow that possibility of an emergence of a public sphere. First of all, according to its classical definition, there might be an open access for all the participants (real and hypothetical). Furthermore, it might consist of well-educated and well-informed public to create the milieu of the public debate. At the same time any national society is limited from the very beginning by the frames of national issue. Therefore, it is possible to speak not about pretending of any organization of that kind to substitute the common public sphere, but to find its own place within it, to create a substructure within a broader structure.

One can trace such attempts of Ukrainians in Odessa since the late 19th century, when a circle called *Hromada* (The Society) was established in the city. The mainstream of this organization was in spreading the popular socialist ideas of the time. From 1870s to 1890s the ideals shifted to the national-democratic priorities.¹⁰² That led to the closing of the society. It was rather obvious: at the times when the very notion of the word “Ukrainian” was illegal, such a circle was regarded as dangerous. It was the First Russian Revolution of 1905, which abolished such restrictions and made a procedure of the foundation of the national organizations simpler.

Soon afterwards Nickolas II published his famous Manifesto, on October 30, 1905, the circle of Ukrainian associates in Odessa gathered in the apartment of the doctor Ivan Lutsenko. The main outcome of that meeting was that the decision of activists to found an educational and cultural society based on the example of *Prosvitas* in Galicia. The same day they adopted the

¹⁰² Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareschenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 85.

Statute of their organization.¹⁰³ The city mayor Apollon Grigoriev legalized this Statute on November 25, 1905, after a month delay.¹⁰⁴ According to this document, the aim of the organization was to help the cultural and educational development of the Ukrainians in Odessa. To this effect, the society planned to publish books and periodicals, to open libraries and reading halls, to provide public lectures, literary and musical evenings and to found schools, kindergartens and other institutions of such a kind.¹⁰⁵

As one can conclude from the first program document of the circle, the demands of the narrow national group (“Ukrainians in Odessa”) was put on the priority. At the same time, the society could not exclude the possibility of broader cooperation with those who did not fit this definition. Actually, the idea of a Ukrainian organization at the beginning seemed to raise an interest among the Odessa society. This is how the governor reported about it to the Main Police Department about the first meetings organized by *Prosvita*:

Ukrainians that live in Odessa ... started to enlist collaborators to organize a Ukrainian party or a society, to unite the Ukrainians organized among themselves two meetings in the City auditorium – on November 23 and on December 4, 1905. These meetings were often political, and so popular at that time, that thousands of people gathered in the auditorium and around it, mostly the common people.¹⁰⁶

Nevertheless, the last point of this report appears controversial. “Thousands of people” – this amount of visitors can be interpreted as a huge success of the just created society. At the same time, the mention about the social group (“common people”) allows to suppose that they were mostly hawkers who came to see what was going on. This hypothesis can be supported by

¹⁰³ Anatoliy Mysechko, “Odes’ka Prosvita (1905-1909)” (“Odessa Prosvita, 1905-1909”), in *Ukrajins’kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 26.

¹⁰⁴ Taras Maksymiuk, “Pro Statut pershoi odes’koji “Prosvity” (“About the Statute of the First Odessa Prosvita”), in *Prosvita: mynule, suchasne i majbutne (do 100-richchya Odes’koji “Prosvity”)* (Prosvita: Past, Present and Future. To the 100th Anniversary of Odessa Prosvita), ed. Tetiana Ananchenko (Odessa: Druk 2006), 8.

¹⁰⁵ *Statut Ukrajins’kogo Tovarystva Prosvita v Odesi* (Statute of the Ukrainian Society Prosvita in Odessa) (Odessa, 1905), 2.

the other fact – the amount of people who afterwards decided to become the members of *Prosvita*. Thus, in the end of 1905 the society counted 150 members.¹⁰⁷ Perhaps, that was the actual amount of the associates which was obviously far from “thousands”.

It is essential to observe the biographic materials of the leaders of the organization to indicate to what extent *Prosvita* appeared as an inner phenomenon (whether the outlook of its founders was formed in Odessa) or its members tried to bring to life the ideas “imported” from outside. For this analysis the most influential people in *Prosvita* should be taken - such as its leaders Mykhailo Komarov, Ivan Lypa, Ivan Lutsenko, Serhiy Shelukhin and Andriy Nikovs'kyi. All five of them were the active members at first in *Hromada* and later in *Prosvita*, people who determined the image and the character of both organizations.

After the analysis of a few criteria of their biographies (the place of birth, the place of education and work and the date of arrival to Odessa), it becomes obvious that the outlook of the majority of them was not formed in that city. All of them were not born there and origins of the majority of activists can be traced far from Odessa. They came to the city in an adult age with the formed worldview and system of values. Thus, by the time they arrived to Odessa, Mykhailo Komarov was already 36 years old, Ivan Lypa – 37, Ivan Lutsenko was 30 and Serhiy Shelukhin – 35. Obviously, the influences of the years of the formation of their personality are of a special importance.

The place of education in this case means a lot as well. As one can see, both Ivan Lypa and Mykhailo Komarov graduated from Kharkiv University, Serhiy Shelukhin – from St.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted from: Anatolii Mysechko, “Odes'ka Prosvita (1905-1909)” (“Odessa Prosvita, 1905-1909”), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 26.

¹⁰⁷ Anatolii Mysechko, “Odes'ka Prosvita (1905-1909)” (“Odessa Prosvita, 1905-1909”), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 26.

Volodymyr's University in Kiev. Both universities in the late 19th century became the centers of Ukrainian national movement. Apparently, that influenced on the students who found themselves in the thick of things. It is well-known, for example, that Ivan Lypa, being a student in Kharkiv, became a founder in 1891 of a Ukrainian illegal patriotic union *Bratstvo Tarasivtsiv* (as well as another activist of *Prosvita* in Odessa Vitaliy Borovyk, who was a student in Kiev at that moment). Andriy Nikovs'kyi in this case can be presented as an exception: born in the village not far from Odessa, he studied there in the Novorossiyskiy University. At the same time, Nikovs'kyi was one of the youngest in the society, during its activity he was just a student and the raise of his career happened later, after the revolution 1917.

TABLE 3. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF THE *PROSVITA*'S ACTIVISTS

#	Name	Born	Education and career experience	In Odessa since	Position in Odessa
1	Mykhailo Komarov (1844-1913)	Dmytrivka, (near Pavlograd, Katerynoslavska guberniia)	Studied in Kharkiv University, then lived in Kiev, Uman'	1880	Public notary
2	Ivan Lypa (1865-1923)	Kerch, Crimea	Studied in Kharkiv University, (medical faculty), was one of the founders of <i>Bratstvo Tarasivtsiv</i> in 1891. Graduated "Medical studies" in Kazan University, was a member of Scientific Shevchenko Society in Lviv	1902	Doctor
3	Ivan Lutsenko (1863-1919)	Keybalovka (near Poltava)	Studied in St.-Petersburg military medical academy	1893	Private doctor, homeopath
4	Serhiy Shelukhin (1864-1938)	Denhy, (Zolotivs'ky povit, Poltavs'ka guberniia)	Studied in St. Volodymyr University in Kiev (Physical-mathematical faculty and Faculty of law); worked as a judge in Elisavetgrad and Kamyanets-Podil'sky.	1899	Member of Kishinev and Odessa district courts, private layer
5	Andriy Nikovs'kyi (1885-1930s)	Malyi Buyalyk (Odeskyi Khersonska guberniia)	Studied in Novorossiyskiy University in Odessa (historical-philological faculty)	1890s	Student

Sources:

On M. Komarov: “Komarov Mykhailo”, in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, V. II (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 593-594; On I. Lypa: Anatoliy Mysechko, “Ivan Lypa yak publitsyst i vydavets z Odesy” (“Ivan Lypa as a Publisher and Editor from Odessa”), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 84-85; On Ivan Lutsenko: G.D. Zlenko and O.P. Moshchek “Skromnyi geroi Ukrainy Ivan Lutsenko” (“A Modest Hero of Ukraine”) in http://www.polykhrest.od.ua/history_eng.php?p=2 (last visited 01.06.2007); On S. Shelukhyn: Anatoliy Mysechko, “Z istorii rodyny Shelukhynykh” (“From the History of The Shelukhyn Family”), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 116-117; On A. Nikovs'kyi: Anatoliy Mysechko, “Zhyttya viddane Ukrajini (A.V. Nikovs'kyi)” (“A Life Devoted to Ukraine. A.V. Nikovs'kyi”), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 94-95.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that there were common reasons for all these people to come to Odessa. Usually the motivation was connected with the professional career. After settling in Odessa they made attempts to create an atmosphere to which they accustomed before. Actually, these activists could be compared to the Ukrainian Diaspora operating in the non-Ukrainian public space. They tried to bring to Odessa the ideas that had not a background in the city and, therefore, were alien for average citizens. At the same time, the leaders of *Prosvita*, probably realized that in order not to find themselves in the “national reservation” in Odessa they needed to involve broader public in their activities. The ideas and activities of the society needed to be attractive and popular for the moment. Therefore, the combination of democratic rhetoric and educational-entertainment cultural events appeared a successful formula.

Prosvita usually organized its events twice a week: on Wednesdays the readings of reports were held and on Saturdays literature-vocal evenings were prepared.¹⁰⁸ The majority of the activities of the society were held in the own building of *Prosvita*.¹⁰⁹ The office of the society was situated on Sophiivskaya street – this is in the city center, five minutes walk to the very heart of Odessa, Deribasovskaya street. Sophievskaya street symbolically links the

¹⁰⁸ *Odchot ukrajins'kogo tovarystva Prosvita v Odesi za 1907 r.* (Report of the Ukrainian Society Prosvita for 1907) (Odessa, 1908), 6.

historical center with the industrial district Peresyp where workers lived (a lot of them were of a Ukrainian origin: “the Ukrainians who settled in Odessa were for the most part poor unmarried males seeking to escape lives of rural poverty.”¹¹⁰)

At the same time, from the documents of the society it is clear that *Prosvita* expected not just its members to join the society. Thus, according to the annual report of 1907, entrance for the Wednesday events was totally free while the fee for the Saturday evenings was 25 kopecks for the members of *Prosvita* and 50 kopecks for everyone.¹¹¹ Consequently, it was supposed that these events would include wider public than simply the members of the organization.

As libraries were usually centers of the education and culture as well as institutions of the public sphere, it was important for the society to establish an own, national, library as well as to found national periodicals. In such a way, the society could organize an own public space built on the same structure as the common, all-Odessa space: “society-library-the press”. There are estimations that the library of *Prosvita* consisted of 2,000 volumes¹¹² - rather significant number. There was also broad choice of periodicals. Actually, through the press, which was subscribed by the society, one can indicate the readers’ orientation. Thus, according to the annual report of *Prosvita*, there were presented different periodicals: All-Ukrainian such as *Literaturno-naukovyj visnyk* (Literature-Scientific Herald), *Rada* (The Council), *Ridnyi krai* (Native Land), *Slovo* (The Word), *Svitova zirnytsya* (The World Sheet Lightening), the press from Galicia – *Bukovyna* (Bukovyna), *Hromads’kyi golos* (The Voice of Society), *Dilo* (The

¹⁰⁹ Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit’ (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 94.

¹¹⁰ Robert Weinberg, *The Revolution of 1905 in Odessa. Blood on the Steps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 19.

¹¹¹ *Odchot ukrajins’kogo tovarystva Prosvita v Odesi za 1907 r.* (Report of the Ukrainian Society Prosvita for 1907) (Odessa, 1908), 6.

Business), *Zerkalo* (The Mirror), *Ruslan* (Ruslan), *Svit* (The World) as well as the American-Ukrainian paper *Svoboda* (Freedom) and a few Russian magazines.¹¹³ This clearly shows the point of reference of the reading public and the agenda put by the administration of the library. Approximately the same number of periodicals from Dnieper Ukraine and from Galicia presented in the library was evidence that the news from both regions presented the same importance for the readers. It also created picture of an imagined Ukraine: not in administrative borders, but by the national criterion. Therefore, one can conclude, that such a choice of periodicals could mean the acceptance of an idea that Galician Ruthenians and Malorussians (Ukrainians) in the Russian Empire constitute a single nation. Therefore, everything, which dealt with the life of this nation (including its emigrants to America), appeared relevant.

Simultaneously, *Prosvita* tried to spread its influence on the wider groups of the society in Odessa. Thus, it is known that in 1907 four performances of the *Prosvita* drama section were shown in the theater “Garmoniiia”.¹¹⁴ The same year, in summer, *Prosvita* organized an interesting event in the Odessa seaside, in a place called Arkadiia. In the numerous kiosks Ukrainian literature and periodicals were sold. There was also a special contest for the best Ukrainian national suite and a concert program. In such a way, during the eight month 1906-1907 more than 7,500 people visited the activities organized by *Prosvita*.¹¹⁵

How did this influence the growth of the membership in the society? Obviously, with the course of time, it increased and at the beginning of 1908 already constituted 532

¹¹² Fedir Samojlov, Mykola Skrypnyk and Oleksandr Yareshchenko, *Odesa na zlami stolit' (kinets XIX – pochatok XX st.)* (Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Mayak 1998), 94.

¹¹³ *Odchot ukrajins'kogo tovarystva Prosvita v Odesi za 1907 r.* (Report of the Ukrainian Society Prosvita for 1907) (Odessa, 1908), 7.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

members.¹¹⁶ Again the situation was similar with that happened at the beginning of the existence of a society. A much higher number of people preferred to participate in the entertainment events than to accept the ideology and world outlook of the organization. Even though, the figure of 532 associates seems to be impressive.

Moreover, the national composition of the society was not strictly limited by the Ukrainian population. More than 100 members there were not Ukrainians. There were Greeks, Poles, Jews, Russians and representatives of the other ethnic groups.¹¹⁷ Therefore, *Prosvita* was a national organization that included persons from various ethnic groups. At the same time, *Prosvita* cooperated with the other national and cultural societies in Odessa, in particular, with the Polish clubs. Thus, a famous Polish activist Jan Mioduszevski was a member of *Prosvita* as well.¹¹⁸ Jews were also welcomed to the organization. Thus, on August 27, 1907 one of the members of the Odessa *Prosvita* Andriy Nikovs'kyi wrote in the letter to Mykola Arkas, the leader of *Prosvita* in Mykolaiv:

Once you asked me about the acceptance of the Jews to the society, I spoke about that in the meeting of our department, and it was supported not to take into consideration the national origin. Around ten Jewish members were accepted – mostly, there were students.¹¹⁹

Therefore, one can argue that all these facts are the signs of the entrance of *Prosvita* into the all-Odessa public space. The main arguments in that case would be the fact that the activities involved huge amount of people and mixed ethnic composition of *Prosvita*. But if to look at the Statutes of the majority of other national clubs and societies in Odessa, it is rather easy to find out, that they also invited representatives of the other ethnic groups to join them.

¹¹⁶ Anatoliy Mysechko, "Odes'ka Prosvita (1905-1909)" ("Odessa Prosvita, 1905-1909"), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 31.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 32.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 35.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in: Anatoliy Mysechko, "Odes'ka Prosvita (1905-1909)" ("Odessa Prosvita, 1905-1909"), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 31.

And this fact did not push them to pretend on the All-Odessa space. They still remained and perceived themselves as *national* clubs which aim was to provide and defend national interests. The same aim *Prosvita* had towards the Ukrainian national demands.

Another disputable question the real educational influences of *Prosvita's* activities. Thus, one of the journalists wrote in the Odessa newspaper about the “handful amount of conscious Ukrainian intelligentsia that is called “Ukrainian society””.¹²⁰ This journalist did not criticize *Prosvita*, but pointed out that the character of these organizations everywhere in Ukraine, and in Odessa as well, was different from that was often stressed in the press:

According to the information, which penetrated in the Ukrainian press, the most of time *Prosvita* was occupying itself with everything else, but not with its direct duties: they organized musical performances, family, vocal-musical evenings with dances, there were read reports in the narrow circle of listeners. In other words, the majority of these institutions (in particular *Prosvitas* of Odessa and Mykolaiv), which were founded for the educational aims, were directed to something which was close to the simple clubs for self-amusement.¹²¹

It was claimed that the existence of *Prosvitas* could even cause a danger for the Ukrainian movement as these societies pretended to unite around themselves the conscious Ukrainians and, at the same time, they “turned their energy to the path of least effort and not there where they ought to”.¹²²

If to compare the activities of *Prosvita* with the activities of the other national clubs in Odessa, it becomes clear that the Ukrainian society was not doing something different or less effective than the other societies around. In such a way the suggestion of a mentioned above journalist to call this society simply “a club” could smooth this dissonance. Thus, it was written in a popular local newspaper *Odesskie novosti* (Odessa News) that the activity of *Prosvita* did

¹²⁰ Ukrainskii journalist, “Kulturno-natsional’noe dvigieniie sredi ukraintsev v 1908 g.” (“Cultural-National Movement of Ukrainians in 1908”), *Odesskie novosti*, 1 January 1909.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

not coincide with the “usurped by it a high title *Prosvita*”¹²³ (which is in translation from Ukrainian – “enlightenment, education”). The author of the article suggested entitling *Prosvita* a “Ukrainian club”, arguing that the activities of the society were the same kind as those that were organized by the other meetings (or clubs). The difference, on his point of view, was just in that in *Prosvita* all these activities carried out the national Ukrainian character.¹²⁴

The level of participation of *Prosvita* in the political life is also a question of a special interest. On the one hand, it was a political issue which caused the closing of the society in 1909. Thus, in the letter of the temporary General-governor and city mayor of Odessa Malyshev to the Main Police Department (April 19, 1908) it was mentioned that the members of *Prosvita*, “obviously tried to carry out the program of the Ukrainian party of social-democrats...”¹²⁵ At the same time, political activity of the activists of the society was their personal business. Indeed, a lot of members of *Prosvita* worked in the political parties, but they had become their members sometimes even before the foundation of the society. *Prosvita* united the members of various parties, but separated itself from the political activity. This was mainly caused by the cultural orientation of the leader – Mykhailo Komarov. He saw the aim of the society, first of all, in the cultural work.¹²⁶ Thus, on the one hand, the political debates and discussions, obviously, took place in the organization. On the other hand, they were mainly connected with the individual views of its members, but not with the collective orientation of the society. This

¹²³ Ukrainskii journalist, “*Prosvita* ili klub? (iz deyatelnosti Odesskoi “Prosvity” za 1908 g.)” (“*Prosvita* or a Club? From the Activity of Odessa *Prosvita* in 1908”), *Odesskie novosti*, 4 April, 1909.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ “A letter by General-governor Malyshev to the Main Police Department, April 19, 1908,” in Anatoliy Mysechko, *Ukrajins’kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 142.

¹²⁶ Maluta, Olha “Odes’ka *Prosvita* u formuvanni dergavnytskoho potentsialu ukrajins’koho narodu (persha chvert’ XX st.)” (“Odessa *Prosvita* on the Formation of Statehood Potential of Ukrainian Nation, First Half of the 20th Century”), in *Prosvita: mynule, suchasne i majbutne (do 100-richchya Odes’koi “Prosvity”)* (*Prosvita: Past, Present and Future. To the 100th anniversary of Odessa Prosvita*), ed. Tetiana Ananchenko (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 54.

also made the character of the organization closer to being a cultural club than a social organization.

The clarification of a name of the society happened in 1910. The authorities officially closed *Prosvita* in November 1909. After that its leaders started searching ways to legalize the Ukrainian society under a new name. They realized that a neutral title was needed, and on the first place an entertainment activity had to be put. Therefore, they decided to call it *Odes'kyi Ukrains'kyi Klub* (Odessa Ukrainian Club) – according to the analogy of a famous *English Club*.¹²⁷ The aim of this society was indicated as “providing a possibility for the members of the club and their families to spend their leisure time in Odessa with comfort and pleasure.”¹²⁸ Accordingly, even though, officially *Prosvita* and *Ukrainian Club* were different organizations, practically the second was just the continuation of the first. This can be also seen from the list of the founders of the *Ukrainian Club*. Thus, among them there were: I. Lutsenko, Ya. Ponomarenko, M. Komarov, L. Kovalchuk, A. Nikovs'kyi, I. Lypa, V. Chehivs'kyi, M. Slabchenko. All these people were active members of *Prosvita* as well. Therefore, it is possible to stress that *Prosvita* actually just changed the title and got the name, which was more suitable for its activities and purpose.

The same can be claimed about the third Ukrainian society of that time – *Ukrajins'ka Hata*. At first it acted simultaneously with the *Ukrainian Club* and was aimed to organize musical and dramatic events. After *Ukrainian Club* was closed in 1913, *Ukrajinska Hata* basically continued its mission. There is information that there were 209 members in the society in 1912 – half the number than in *Prosvita*. At the same time, this society managed to exist

¹²⁷ Mysechko, Anatolij “Odes'kyi Ukrains'kyi Klub” (“Odessa Ukrainian Club”), in *Ukrajins'kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 37.

longer than all the others. Thus, in 1916 the five-year anniversary was celebrated, and the magazine *Ukrainskaya gizn'* (St.-Petersburg) wrote that this society existed much longer than the famous *Prosvita*.¹²⁹ This society survived up to 1917.

Therefore, one can stress that the place of *Prosvita* in the public sphere of Odessa appears to be complicated. At the very beginning it had closer connections with the “Ukrainian movement” in general than with the public space in Odessa. The idea of a Ukrainian society did not originate in the circle of the local Ukrainians but among the people who brought national Ukrainian ideas from outside. But with the course of time *Prosvita* gradually gained support among the local population. The fact that one fifth of its members constituted non-Ukrainians showed that in the agenda of a *national* organization appeared attractive for the representatives of the other nations. At the same time, *Prosvita* was aimed to be an organization where Ukrainian national issues were at stake. Therefore, even though being one of the biggest of the various national clubs in Odessa, it still remained just a substructure within the common cultural space in Odessa.

¹²⁸ *Vsia Odessa. Adressnaia i spravochnaia kniga vsei Odessy s otelom Odesskii uezd na 1913 g.* (All Odessa: Address and Reference Book with the Section for Odessa Uezd for 1913) (Odessa, 1913), 273.

¹²⁹ Mysechko, Anatoliy “Tovarystvo “Ukrains’ka Hata” v Odesi” (“Society Ukrainian House in Odessa”), in *Ukrains’kyi rukh v Odesi naprykintsi XIX – pochatku XX st.* (Ukrainian Movement in Odessa at the Turn of the 20th Century) (Odessa: Druk, 2006), 43.

4. The Birth of the Ukrainian Press

The emergence of a national press is one of the important element for the creation of a national public sphere. The period of the First Russian revolution was connected to democratic shifts in the Russian Empire. It brought the abolition of the prohibitions on the Ukrainian language which had been banned to use, in particular, in the press. Therefore, this led to the emergence of a number of new periodicals all over Ukraine. Their founders were usually represented by the political parties as well as social and national-cultural organizations. Odessa press was not an exception. Ukrainian newspapers appeared in the chain of periodicals in that multicultural city as well. This chapter deals with the struggle of the intelligentsia for the legalization of the Ukrainian language at the beginning of the 20th century, the emergence of the Ukrainian press during 1905-1907 and its further development during the after-revolutionary period and the World War I.

4.1. *Intelligentsia in the Defense of the Ukrainian Language*

For a long period of time Ukrainian publications were prohibited by the imperial authorities. Therefore, Ukrainian press had no possibility to exist and develop. Thus, F.K. Pogrebennyk wrote in *Istoriya ukrajins'koji literatury* (A History of the Ukrainian Literature, in 8 volumes) that “In Eastern Ukraine, which belonged to tsarist Russia, there was no journalism at all prior to 1905.”¹³⁰ In reality, this statement is not accurate. There was a press, and, therefore, journalism existed in the territory of Ukraine. It is known that some local

¹³⁰ F.K.Pogrebennyk, “Krytyka i jurnalistyka” (“Critics and Journalism”), in *Istoriya ukrajins'koji literatury* (A History of Ukrainian Literature), V.5. *Literatura pochatku XX st.* (Literature at the Beginning of the 20th Century) (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1968), 46.

newspapers could even compete with the famous issues of the capital. At the same time, various governmental prohibitions created a situation where the press in the Ukrainian language, in particular, was absent. Therefore, at the time of its emergence in 1905 it indeed lacked its own traditions and experience.

The restriction of the Ukrainian printed language was guaranteed by a number of decrees. Thus, according to the circular from the Minister of Interior P.A. Valuev (July 18, 1863) to the Kiev, Moscow and Petersburg censor committees, which stressed that “there was not, is not, and cannot be any special Little Russian language, and that their dialect, as used by uneducated folk, is the same Russian language”.¹³¹ The main purpose was to stop the distribution of the literature among the common people and, therefore, to stop spreading of the language. As a result, according to “Secret memorandum of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Empire to the Minister of Public Education” it was ordered that just those works could be printed in Little Russian (Ukrainian), that “belong to the branch of a high literature”. At the same time, the books of the theological character as well as textbooks and other publications supposed for the top-priority reading were prohibited.¹³²

The next restriction occurred after Alexander II had signed a special edict in Ems on May 18, 1876. This edict was directed to the two Ministers – of Interior and of the Popular Education and intended “curbing the activities of Ukrainophiles, which present a danger to the

¹³¹ “The Circular of the Minister of the Interior P.A. Valuev to the Kiev, Moscow and Petersburg Censorship Committees, 18 July 1863,” in Alexei Miller, *The Ukrainian Question. The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2003), 263-264.

¹³² “Tajemne vidnoshennya Ministra vnutrishnih sprav Rosijs’koji imperiji do Ministra narodnoji osvity vid 8 lypnya 1863 r.” (“A Secret Memorandum of the Minister of Interior in the Russian Empire to the Minister of the Popular Education, 8 July, 1863”), in *Materialy z istorii natsional’noji jurnalistyky Shchidnoji Ukrajiny pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts’kyi Tsentr Ukrajin’s’koji Presy, 2001), 18.

state”.¹³³ This document included detailed instruction with the special attention to the language issue. The reaction was immediate. The letter of the Main Administration of the Printing Affairs (Glavnoe upravleniie po voprosam pechati) No. 3570 (June 23, 1876) prohibited bringing from abroad, publishing and distribution in the empire works in Ukrainian as well as theatre performances in this language.¹³⁴ These rules were later restricted in the circular No.4016 (October 16, 1881).¹³⁵

In such difficult circumstances the representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia repeatedly raised the issue on the mitigation or full abolition of these restrictions. At the beginning of the 20th century the appeals to defend Ukrainian language became more frequent. Thus, in December 1904 during the celebration of the anniversary of Ivan Nechui-Levytsky, the famous Ukrainian writer, a special resolution to the authorities was signed by the Ukrainian activists. This petition requested the elimination of the restrictions and was sent to the Committee of Ministers. Later, the special delegation was sent from Kiev to Sergey Witte, the Chair of the Committee. One of its members, Borys Hrinchenko, later recollected: “Count Witte was very polite and persuaded us, that, obviously, that the ban was unfair, that it was a kind of

¹³³ “The Conclusions of the Special Council regarding measures to curb Ukrainophile propaganda, after corrections in accordance with remarks made by Alexander II on 18 May in the town of Ems,” in Alexei Miller, *The Ukrainian Question. The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2003), 267.

¹³⁴ “Tsirkulyarnyi lyst No.3570 Golovnoho upravlinnya u spravah druku Ministerstvavnutrishnih sprav Rosijs’koi imperii do nachalnykiv gubernii pro zaboronu vvezennya z-za kordonu, drukuvannya i poshyrennya v imperii tvoriv ukrains’koju movu, atakog teatral’nyh vystav ukrains’koju movu” (“A Circular Letter No. 3570 by the Main Administration of the Printing Affairs in the Russian Empire to the Chiefs of Gubernias on the Prohibition of Bringing From Abroad, Printing and Distribution in the Empire Works in Ukrainian as well as Theatre Performances in Ukrainian”), in *Materialy z istorii natsional’noi jurnalistyky Skhidnoi Ukrainy pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts’kyi Tsentr Ukrainy’koi Presy, 2001), 18-19.

¹³⁵ “Tsirkulyarnyi lyst No. 4016 Golovnoho upravlinnya u spravah druku Ministerstvavnutrishnih sprav Rosijs’koi imperii do nachalnykiv gubernii pro dopovnennya do obmeгуval’nyh pravyl 1876 roku shchodo vykorystannyaukrains’koji movy” (“A Circular Letter No. 4016 by the Main Administration of the Printing Affairs in the Russian Empire to the Chiefs of Gubernias on the Addition of Restrictions of 1876 on the use of Ukrainian Language”), in *Materialy z istorii natsional’noi jurnalistyky Skhidnoi Ukrainy pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts’kyi Tsentr Ukrainy’koi Presy, 2001), 19-20.

misunderstanding, that inevitably it would be abolished and that it was needed just to wait for awhile”.¹³⁶ After that, in the end of 1904 the Committee of Ministers discussed this issue twice and even made a conclusion that the prohibition of the Ukrainian language was a drag on the increasing of the low educational level of the peasants in the guberniias of Little Russia. However, the prohibition was not abolished.

Nevertheless, Ukrainian activists persistently continued to struggle for their language. In 1903 Ivan Lypa tried to establish an ethnographical magazine in Odessa. He asked an advice of Borys Hrinchenko, and received a number of recommendations from him. Hrinchenko doubted that the censorship would allow a magazine in Ukrainian language. He wrote: “Possibly, it would be prohibited, but anyways – if you would not run, you would not be able to catch, so it is necessary at least to run.”¹³⁷ At the same time, B. Hrinchenko provided Lypa with the project of an application to the authorities.¹³⁸ That magazine did not appear. Thus, in 1904 Ivan Lypa made an attempt to open a monthly professional magazine *Likars’kyi poradnyk* (Doctor’s Advisor) in Ukrainian in Odessa. But not just the political periodicals were under restrictions but specialized issues as well. Therefore, Lypa received a refusal.¹³⁹ A similar disappointment awaited Ivan Lutsenko, who tried to found in Odessa a weekly *Novyny* (The News). In his application for the permission it was claimed that the editor was going to print a newspaper with larger font and with illustrations to make it available for poorly educated peasants. The contents of *Novyny* had to include press and political reviews, fiction (stories and poems), articles on agriculture, medicine, hygiene, history, law, bibliography of Ukrainian and Russian

¹³⁶ Borys Hrinchenko, *Tyagkym shlyakhom (pro ukrajins’ku presu)* (By the Hard Way. About the Ukrainian Press) (Kiev, 1912), 7.

¹³⁷ “Lyst B. Hrinchenka do I. Lypy 10.VII. 1903” (“A letter of B. Hrinchenko to I. Lypa 10. VII. 1903”), *Zapysky istoryko-filologichnoho viddilu VUAN* 21/22 (1928): 347.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*: 347-348.

books, replies on questions and other information. It was planned to establish an addition to the newspaper called *Misyachnyk Novyn* (A Monthly of The News).¹⁴⁰ At that time these plans seemed rather ambitious, and Ivan Lutsenko did not receive permission for their realization.

The protests against the restrictions continued. At the beginning of 1905 Ukrainian activists published a letter in the St.-Petersburg magazine *Syn Otechestva* (Son of the Fatherland). It was argued:

The full abolition of any limitations specially created for our native word, the equalization of the Ukrainian literature with the literatures of other nations in a legal way, the possibility to use native language in all branches of literature and science, in books and in the press – these are the demands which are strongly waiting for their realization.¹⁴¹

Those, who signed the letter, expressed their conviction that “just the free press can carry out successfully a difficult and responsible affair of serving the native country” and joined the aspirations of the “public opinion within the whole thinking Russia” about “the liberation of the printed word from the pressure of the preliminary censorship and any other incompetent intervening into the sphere of cultural life”.¹⁴² Soon the same petitions, protests and appeals were sent from Kharkiv, Poltava, Chernigiv, Odessa and other cities.¹⁴³ Thus, for example, at the meeting of the Odessa City Council on January 26, 1905 it was claimed the necessity of the abolition of the circulars which banned the explanatory materials in schools in the “Little Russian” language. It was also stressed a need to include the articles on this language in the textbooks together with articles in Russian and Church-Slavonic in case that the possibility of

¹³⁹ Ivan Krups'kyi, “Stanovlennya i rozvytok ukrajins'koji gurnalistyky Naddnipyrians'koji Ukrajiny (2 pol. XIX-poch. XX. st.)” (“Emergence and Development of Ukrainian Journalism in Dnieper Ukraine at the Turn of the 20th Century”), *Zbirnyk prats Naukovo-doslidnoho tsentru periodyky* 1 (1994): 33.

¹⁴⁰ O.I. Sydorenko, ed., *Nezdijsneni vydannya: anotovanyi pokazhchyk nerealizovanyh proektiv ukrajinomovnyh periodychnykh vydan kin. XIX-poch. XX st.* (Unrealized Papers: Annotated Index of the Ukrainian-language Periodicals of the Turn of the 20th Century) (Kiev, 1989), 19-20.

¹⁴¹ “O nuzhdah ukrainskoi pechati” (“On the Needs of Ukrainian Press”), in *Materialy z istorii natsional'noji jurnalistyky Skhidnoji Ukrajiny pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts'kyi Tsentr Ukrajins'koji Presy, 2001), 22.

¹⁴² Ibid.

the total teaching in Ukrainian would be prevented and Russian would remain a special subject in the territories with the “Little Russian” population. At the same time, it was pointed out that Ukrainian books had to be allowed in the popular and school libraries on the same rights as the Russian books.¹⁴⁴

The numerous petitions led to the situation that at the beginning of 1905, according to the instruction of the Ministry of Education a number of institutions (Academy of Sciences, Universities in Kiev and Kharkiv) received an order to examine the issue concerning the necessity and possibility of taking down the limitations on the usage of Ukrainian language and to provide the arguments for this.¹⁴⁵ All institutions mentioned immediately replied to the minister that the ban had to be abolished, and the Academy of Sciences even published a brochure in defense of Ukrainian literature.¹⁴⁶ In preparation of a conclusion of the commission of the Academy of Sciences under the leadership of academic F. Korsh, took place academics V. Zalenskii, A. Lappo-Danilevskii, S. Oldenberg, A. Famitsyn, F. Fortunatov and A. Shahmatov. In their summary remarks, in particular, it was concluded:

The commission has reasons to consider that the abolition of the Ukrainian printed word will influence not just the increasing of knowledge among the masses with the help of distribution of the scientific-popular publications among the Ukrainians, but on the general raise of the cultural image of the nation.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Borys Hrinchenko, *Tyagkym shlyakhom (pro ukrajins'ku presu)* (By the Hard Way. About the Ukrainian Press) (Kiev, 1912), 7.

¹⁴⁴ Yu. A. Levenets, ed., *Politychna istoriia Ukraïny XX st. Na zlami stolit' (kin. XIXst.- 1917 r.)*. (A Political History of the 20th Century Ukraine. At the Turn of the Century: End of 19th century - 1917) (Kiev: Geneza, 2002), 199-200.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 200.

¹⁴⁶ Borys Hrinchenko, *Tyagkym shlyakhom (pro ukrajins'ku presu)* (By the Hard Way. About the Ukrainian Press) (Kiev, 1912), 7.

¹⁴⁷ “Referat komisii u spravi znesennyazaboron ukrajins'koho drukovanoho slova” (“A Summary of the Commission for the Case of Abolition of Restrictions for the Ukrainian Printed Word”), in *Materialy z istorii natsional'noji jurnalistyky Shkhidnoji Ukraïny pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts'kyi Tsentr Ukraïns'koho Presy, 2001), 57.

However, these recommendations lacked a practical significance; therefore, the representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia had ambiguous towards to them. Thus, the famous Ukrainian scholar and political activist Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi wrote:

It is possible to regret that such situation, such views on our national case have not been indicated by the Petersburg Academy earlier, when our voices in defense of national rights and national development, within the endless quarrels, humiliations and insinuations, met so zealous silence of the authorities of the Russian science, with a few exceptions. At that time such a voice could acquire a great significance; nowadays, when national relations are determined not by the scientific debates, but by the other factors, it would not have such an effect, but will not be left without implication.¹⁴⁸

Indeed, it is questionable whether these petitions simply rent the air or they indeed prepared grounds for the further realization of these demands, informing both wide public and authorities about the unsolved problems. At the same time, not the personal decisions to abolish the restriction was needed, but the complex changes of the imperial political system.

The situation with the Ukrainian language in the turn-of-the-century is rather crucial for understanding the problems with what the Ukrainian activists would face later while creation a national public space. Printing production and the press is a necessary precondition for the formation of a certain imagined public or community, it is an important element for the possibility of any nation-building process. At the same time, neither petitions nor appeals brought freedom to the Ukrainian language but the revolutionary changes of the autumn 1905. It was the Revolution which opened the opportunity for using one of the most important tools in construction of a national space – the press.

4.2. The Ephemeral First Papers (1905-1907)

¹⁴⁸ Hrushevs'kyi, Mykhailo “Memorial Peterburz'koji Akademii uspravisvobody ukrajins'koji movy v Rosii” (“Memorial of the Petersburg Academy in the Case of the Freedom of Ukrainian Language in Russia”), in *Materialy z istorii natsional'noji jurnalistyky Skhidnoji Ukrajiny pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts'kyi Tsentr Ukrajins'koji Presy, 2001), 25.

In the Manifesto of October 17, 1905 the “unbreakable origins of the civil freedom on the basis of the real personal inviolability, freedom of consciousness, speech, meetings and unions”¹⁴⁹ were proclaimed. Immediately after the declaration of this Manifesto the Editorial Board of the Kiev newspaper *Hromads'ke Slovo* (The Word of Society) started to prepare the first issue, assuming that together with the democratic freedoms the censorship restrictions would be reduced. At the same time, a special decree had not been published yet. Until there was no such circular, the editors all over Ukraine did not risk publishing the first issues of their periodicals. The newspaper *Khliborob* (The Grain-grower) which appeared in Lubny on November 12, 1905 was the only exception.

“The Temporary Rules about the Periodical Issues” (as an addition to the article 114 of the “Statute about censorship and printing in the Russian Empire”) were adopted on November 24, 1905. They proclaimed the abolition of the preliminary censorship for the newspapers and for the Ukrainian press.¹⁵⁰ According to this document, anyone who wanted to publish a new periodical had to submit a special application to the local governor or city mayor indicating the data on the future issue and information about its employees. If there were no difficulties, governor or city mayor, after examining the application, could issue a certificate of registration within two weeks.¹⁵¹ Later it was confirmed in the decree in April 26, 1906.¹⁵² The editors made use of this right without delay. In this case Borys Hrinchenko wrote:

¹⁴⁹ “Manifest 17 zhovtnya 1905 r.” (“Manifesto of the 17th of October”), in *Materialy z istorii natsional'noji jurnalistyky Skhidnoji Ukrainy pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts'kyi Tsentr Ukrainy'koi Presy, 2001), 63.

¹⁵⁰ Borys Hrinchenko, *Tyagkym shlyakhom (pro ukrajins'ku presu)* (By the Hard Way. About the Ukrainian Press) (Kiev, 1912), 9.

¹⁵¹ “Vremennye pravila o povremennykh izdaniyakh, utverzhdennye 24 noyabrya 1905 g. (prilozheniye k statie 114 Ustava o tsenzure i pechati Rossijskoj imperii)” (“Temporary Rules on Periodical Issues, Adopted on November 24, 1905. Appendix to Article 114 of the Statute on Censorship and Printing in the Russian Empire”), in *Materialy z istorii natsional'noji jurnalistyky Skhidnoji Ukrainy pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts'kyi Tsentr Ukrainy'koi Presy, 2001), 66-67.

The news about intentions to publish Ukrainian newspapers were coming from everywhere, and it seemed, that any more or less noticeable Ukrainian center wanted to have an own Ukrainian organ. Not in all places these plans turned into action, but still something was realized.¹⁵³

While the turning point for the national press in Eastern Ukraine began in autumn 1905, in Odessa this period started at the beginning of 1906.¹⁵⁴ The first newspapers in Ukrainian in Odessa are connected with the cultural-educational society *Prosvita*. Thus, soon after the declaration of the Manifesto, the Ukrainian activists of Odessa decided to establish a weekly newspaper in Ukrainian *Narodna sprava* (People's Business). At the same time, the hopes that it would be an easy procedure were in vain. Neither the Manifesto, nor "Temporary Rules" abolished the Edict of 1876. Therefore, governors, to whom the right to issue certificates was given, reluctantly supported news periodicals.¹⁵⁵ In such a way, for example, the Odessa city mayor acted towards *Narodna sprava*: he did not sign the permission for the issue, arguing that the registration without prior arrangement "was just promised but not permitted".¹⁵⁶ Even after the registration of the Statute of *Prosvita* the censorship still did not allow the Ukrainian newspaper considering even the word "Ukrainian" unprintable. Then the activists decided to appeal to the Main Administration of the Printing Affairs in St.-Petersburg with the request to publish newspapers in Ukrainian in Odessa. They sent a detailed telegram along with return postage. However, the answer came later than was planned. In response St.-Petersburg directed

¹⁵² Yu. A. Levenets, ed., *Politychna istoriia Ukraïny XX st. Na zlami stolit' (kin. XIXst.- 1917 r.)*. (A Political History of the 20th Century Ukraine. At the Turn of the Century: End of 19th century - 1917) (Kiev: Geneza, 2002), 201.

¹⁵³ Borys Hrinchenko, *Tyagkym shlyakhom (pro ukrajins'ku presu)* (By the Hard Way. About the Ukrainian Press) (Kiev, 1912), 10.

¹⁵⁴ N.M.,Sydorenko, "Stolitnij jivilei natsional'noji presy u Skhidnij Ukraïni jak pryvid dlya rozdumiv" ("A Hundred-Year Anniversary of the National Press in Eastern Ukraine as an Occasion to Think"), in *Ukrajins'ka periodyka: istoriia i suchasnis't: Dopovidi ta povidomlennya Devyatoji Vseukrajins'koji naukovy-teoretychnoji konferentsii* (Ukrainian Periodicals: History and Present: Reports of the Ninth All-Ukrainian Conference), ed. Myroslav Romanuk (Lviv: LNB im. V. Stefanyka, 2005), 28.

¹⁵⁵ Sydorenko, O.I., Shudrya N.M. "Nezdijsneni proekty ukrajinomovnyh periodychnyj vydan' dr. pol. XIX-poch. XX st." ("Unrealized Projects of Ukrainian-language Periodicals at the Turn of the 20th Century"), *Jurnalistyka, presa, telebachennya, radio* 23 (1991): 9.

the activists back to the local authorities. They were caught in a vicious circle. Not waiting for the end of this story, the activists instead decided to open a newspaper in Russian.¹⁵⁷

In that way the newspaper *Narodnoe delo* (Peoples Business, in Russian) appeared on January 1, 1906. Although officially it was a Russian-language newspaper, a significant part of the materials were printed in Ukrainian. Ivan Lutsenko was indicated as an editor and the issue was designated as an organ of the local group of Ukrainians. The Editorial Board aimed “to awake the self-consciousness of the Ukrainian nation, to explain its needs and rights, to serve these needs and to defend these rights.”¹⁵⁸ There were plans to publish articles, government instructions, reviews of foreign affairs, especially in Galicia and Bukovyna where Ukrainians lived, reviews of life in the Russian Empire, Ukraine and the South, chronicles of local events. Materials on the activities of the Ukrainian were proclaimed of a special importance.¹⁵⁹ Thus, in the first issue there were published articles about Ukrainian meetings in Odessa, a material with the review of the Ukrainian history up to the joining the Russian Empire, information on the Odessa *Prosvita* and various news from all over Ukraine.¹⁶⁰

Simultaneously, on January 3, 1906 permission for the Ukrainian-language periodical was received. Therefore, on January 8 the first issue of the newspaper *Narodna sprava* came out which appeared as the continuation of *Narodnoe delo*.¹⁶¹

Reflecting upon the image of the new Ukrainian press, the well-known politician and literary critic Serhiy Yefremov wrote in 1906 that the main task was “to determine rather

¹⁵⁶ Ivan Krups'kyi, “Stanovlennya i rozvytok ukrajins'koji gurnalistyky Naddnipryans'koji Ukrajiny (2 pol. XIX-poch. XX. st.)” (“Emergence and Development of Ukrainian Journalism in Dnieper Ukraine at the Turn of the 20th Century”), *Zbirnyk prats Naukovo-doslidnoho tsentru periodyky* 1 (1994): 38.

¹⁵⁷ “Ot redaktsii” (“From the Editorial Board”) *Narodnoe delo*, 1 January, 1906.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ “Nasha programma” (“Our Programme”), *Narodnoe delo*, 1 January, 1906.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ “Vid redaktsii” (“From the Editorial Board”), *Narodna sprava*, 8 January, 1906.

confidently and distinctly our own position and to stand on it firmly not to go down from it”.¹⁶² What was this position to be? On the opinion of S. Yefremov, “at the first time it all [i.e., the press] has to be more or less democratic”.¹⁶³

Narodna sprava generally met these requirements. Information about its foundation appeared even in Kiev. Thus, the magazine *Nova Hromada* (The New Society) put a note about *Narodna sprava* as the continuation of *Narodnoe delo*, pointing out that it was “political, economical and literary newspaper”.¹⁶⁴ Its aim was to provide weekly reviews of the life in Ukraine and beyond, to preserve the interests of peasantry and workers, to defend the equal rights of all oppressed nations in Russia for their national-cultural and political life, especially the rights of the Ukrainians.¹⁶⁵ In the editorial it was stressed that *Narodna sprava* “will appeal to the russified and polonized parts of the intelligent Ukrainian society for unanimity and national life”.¹⁶⁶

In the article “Choho nam treba?” (“What Do We Need?”) an attempt to politicize Ukrainians was made. It was explained what they had to do and how to behave at the time of the elections to the State Duma. Thus, the author of the material suggested: “It is necessary to unite. Knowledge and unity – this is the main thing, that is essential for all of us to establish better order in our country.”¹⁶⁷ There was also a reprint of an article from the newspaper *Odesskie novosti*. There, in particular, the historical right of Ukrainians to be called “Great Russians” was stressed. Russians, therefore, according to this logic, had to be called “Little Russians” (“Malorossy”) – instead of Ukrainians. Next to this material there was included the

¹⁶² Serhiy [Serhiy Yefremov], “Vidhuky z gyttya ta pys'menstva” (“Reflections on Life and Literature”), *Nova Hromada* 3 (1906): 101.

¹⁶³ Ibid.:102.

¹⁶⁴ “Shcho je v periodychnij ukrajins'kij presi” (“What Is There in Ukrainian Periodicals?”) *Nova Hromada* 1 (1906): 159.

¹⁶⁵ [Program of the newspaper], *Narodna sprava*, 8 January, 1906

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

demand of students who appealed to use terms “Ukraine”, “Ukrainian” instead of “Little Russia” (“Malorossiya”), “Little Russian” (“malorossiys’kyi”).¹⁶⁸

However, after the appearance of the first issue the local authorities prohibited the further publishing of a newspaper defending this decision by the “deleterious character towards the public order”.¹⁶⁹ But the actual reason was different. In fact, there was not a censor in Odessa who knew the Ukrainian language fluently. There was only one person who could “catch the separate fragments with the general vagueness of the whole article”.¹⁷⁰ Being afraid to miss something, he asked to close the newspaper.

Nevertheless, with the closing of *Narodna sprava* the struggle for Ukrainian-language newspapers did not stop. It was on January 27, 1906 when permission to publish a weekly literary, political and scientific newspaper *Nova Ukrajina* (New Ukraine) was received. I.M. Ivashchenko was indicated as its editor. The program of the newspaper included editorials, orders of the government, reprints from other periodicals, reviews of the foreign events, local chronicles, correspondence and advertisements.¹⁷¹ However, this newspaper was not published.

At the same time, on February 5, 1906 the first issue of the newspaper *Visty* (The News) appeared. Editorials on the topical issues, official announcements and documents, news from Russia, including Ukrainian lands as well as from Galicia and Bukovyna, foreign news, local chronicles, sketches on the life of peasants and city citizens, press reviews – all these topics

¹⁶⁷ “Choho nam treba?” (“What Do We Need?”), *Narodna sprava*, 8 January, 1906.

¹⁶⁸ O.V. Slobozhan “Ukrajins’ke natsional’ne pytannya na storinkah odes’kyh “prosvityans’kykh gazet (1905-1907)” (“Ukrainian National Question on the Pages of Odessa Prosvita Newspapers”), *Istorychni i politologichni doslidzhennya* 3/4 (2005): 64.

¹⁶⁹ *Materialy z istorii natsional’noji jurnalistyky Skhidnoji Ukrajiny pochatku XX st.* (Materials on the History of National Journalism in Eastern Ukraine at the Beginning of the 20th Century), ed. N.M. Sydorenko and O.I. Sydorenko (Kiev: Doslidnyts’kyi Tsentr Ukrajins’koji Presy, 2001), 437.

¹⁷⁰ O.I. Sydorenko, ed. *Ukrajinomovna presa Rosiji: anotovanyi pokazhchyk periodychnykh vydan’* (The Press in Ukrainian in Russia: Annotated Index of the Periodicals) (Kiev, 1987), 20.

¹⁷¹ O.I. Sydorenko, ed., *Nezdijnseni vydannya: anotovanyi pokazhchyk nerealizovanyh proektiv ukrajinomovnyh periodychnykh vydan kin. XIX-poch. XX st.* (Unrealized Papers: Annotated Index of the Ukrainian-language Periodicals of the Turn of the 20th Century) (Kiev, 1989), 32.

were planned to be discussed on the pages of this periodical. Thus, in the editorial of the first issue it was stressed:

We in our Ukrainian newspaper, avoiding any chauvinism, will put on the first place the interests of the native Ukrainian nation in its unity. We will stand for the same and equal rights of all the nations of Russia and their national-cultural and political life as well as for the broadest and greatest education of any person in his national ground, for decentralization and a right in the regional and local life for the wide self-government.¹⁷²

It was stressed that more and more peoples at that time proclaimed the necessity of solving their national question. At the same time, it was rejected the belief that the emergence of nationalism within one nation would lead to its struggle with the other. From this point of view, nationalism meant, first of all, the right for the free development of a nation on its historical and ethnographical territory.¹⁷³

This newspaper had a permanent column “About the State Duma”, where political topics were observed. Thus, in the first issue it was discussed what advantages the Duma could bring for the common people. The author of this article wrote that the elections were not equal for everyone, because Odessa, for example, having a half-million population had a right to send just one depute to the Duma, while Moscow with its population of a million could elect four representatives.¹⁷⁴ In the second issue the column “About the State Duma” the necessity to join the efforts before the elections to the State Duma were proclaimed.¹⁷⁵ In the same column but in the third issue of *Visty* an overview of the main political parties of the time was made. The author divided them into three groups: 1) Right (on the author’s opinion, these are the parties of aristocracy which would try to preserve its leading positions); 2) Left (or socialists – those who argued that people should live and work in societies, which later would be able to form a

¹⁷² “Vid redaktsii” (“From the Editorial Board”), *Visty*, 5 February, 1906.

¹⁷³ O.G. Shishko, “Ideya dergavnosti Ukrainy na storinkah ukrajins’koju presy v Odesi v 1906 g.” (“Idea of a Statehood in the Pages of the Ukrainian Press in Odessa in 1906”), in *Odesi-200: Materialy mignarodnoji naukovo-teoretychnoji konferentsii, prysvyachenoji 200-richchu mista* (Odessa-200. Materials of the International Conference Devoted to the 200th Anniversary of Odessa), Part 2. (Odessa, 1994), 41-42.

¹⁷⁴ “Pro Dergavnu Dumu” (“About the State Duma”), *Visty*, 5 February, 1906.

common society of people, and all the means of production would be in the state's possession); 3). Moderate (parties, who wish for reforms. The author calls them also democratic or peoples parties).¹⁷⁶ In the next issue the Editorial Board promised to recommend for whom the Ukrainians in Odessa should vote, but the next doubled issue (No. 4-5) was all devoted to the outstanding Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko. Therefore, the column "About the State Duma" was absent there. Simultaneously, this issue of *Visty* became the last one.

The reasons for the closing of the newspaper are not clearly determined. The researcher of the Ukrainian press O.I. Sydorenko made a conclusion that "possibly, it was forbidden for the same reasons as *Narodna sprava*".¹⁷⁷ At the same time, Borys Hrinchenko presented a different explanation. He wrote: "Some time passed and it was revealed that in that blossoming [of the press] there a lot of barren flowers: half of them wilted by themselves, the others were shaken down by unfriendly cold winds."¹⁷⁸ Under the epithet "cold winds" censor restrictions and administrative bans should be understood. Later B. Hrinchenko wrote:

Why were there so many barren flowers? The biggest significance is usually put for the hostile cold winds ... But there were a lot of that [periodicals], which were not closed by the administration, but who stopped by themselves such as: *Vilna Ukrajina*, *Zaporizhzhie*, *Slobozhanshchyna*, *Shershen'*, *Visty*, *Ukrajins'ke bdzhilnytstvo* ... Of course a few of them were confiscated ... But, for instance, to *Visty* or *Ukrajins'ke bdzhilnytstvo* it was impossible to find fault with confiscates, and they could safely drag out their existence up to nowadays.¹⁷⁹

From these lines it becomes obvious that *Visty* was closed not as much because of the outside factors as because of inner problems. This trend within the Ukrainian press was described also by the politician and journalist of that time Dmytro Doroshenko. He remarked:

The majority of the Ukrainian issues, which started to be published since the beginning of 1906, had to disappear soon because of the unhappy circumstances: as exterior in the forms of

¹⁷⁵ "Pro Dergavnu Dumu" ("About the State Duma"), *Visty*, 15 February, 1906.

¹⁷⁶ "Pro Dergavnu Dumu" ("About the State Duma"), *Visty*, 22, 1906.

¹⁷⁷ O.I. Sydorenko, ed. *Ukrajinomovna presa Rosiji: anotovanyi pokazhchyk periodychnykh vydan'* (The Press in Ukrainian in Russia: Annotated Index of the Periodicals) (Kiev, 1987), 13.

¹⁷⁸ Borys Hrinchenko, *Tyagkym shlyakhom (pro ukrajins'ku presu)* (By the Hard Way. About the Ukrainian Press) (Kiev, 1912), 11.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

confiscations and bans as internal: lack of financial and literary forces, unwillingness and so on. And there appeared in fact that Ukrainians intelligentsia did not manage to obtain any major organ and masses did not manage to get popular newspapers so important for them in our crucial moment.¹⁸⁰

What did lead to the fact that not just in Odessa, but in the majority of cities the first Ukrainian newspapers did not become influential or popular eventually leading to their demise? Borys Hrinchenko, trying to find an answer to this question, pointed out the lack of qualified employees, the lack of subscribers who could support these issues financially.¹⁸¹

Moreover, not everywhere were the attitudes of the local authorities favorable to the emergence and accordingly existence of the Ukrainian press. Thus, since October 1905 till June 1907 there were declared about the appearance of 64 Ukrainian-language newspapers. Simultaneously, its existence at least by the single issue was proved just by 24 periodicals.¹⁸²

At the same time, for Ukraine which had not any issue of such a kind before even this amount was significant. A variety of the local newspapers caused a situation when during the short period of time Ukrainian periodicals suddenly required a lot of employees. Instead of concentrating on the publishing of a few serious newspapers in Kiev and their distribution among the other cities, vice versa there appeared a lot of small papers. Obviously, they did not withstand competition with the other issues, mostly in Russian. In this case B. Hrinchenko pointed out:

Moreover if to remember that we had to write for a reader who was used to the tone of the free capital press of the end of 1905, that it was necessary even now to compete with that capital press which was not simply rich on financial and literary forces, but always more free than our “provincial” one.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Dmytro Doroshenko, “Ukraina v 1906 rotsi” (“Ukraine in 1907”), *Ukraina* I Part II (January, 1907): 7-8.

¹⁸¹ Borys Hrinchenko, *Tyagkym shlyakhom (pro ukrains'ku presu)* (By the Hard Way. About the Ukrainian Press) (Kiev, 1912), 13.

¹⁸² Fedir Samojlov, “Shlyakhom natsionalnoho vidrodzhennya: ukrains'ka presa u 1905-1907 rr.” (“By the Way of National Awakening: Ukrainian Press in 1905-1907”), in *Ukrains'ka periodyka: istoriia i suchasnist'* (Ukrainian Periodicals: Past and Present), ed. Myroslav Romanuk (Lviv, 1993), 124.

¹⁸³ Borys Hrinchenko, *Tyagkym shlyakhom (pro ukrains'ku presu)* (By the Hard Way. About the Ukrainian Press) (Kiev, 1912), 15.

Therefore, encumbered by unavoidable mistakes, one of the biggest achievements of the First Russian revolution was the possibility to use printed Ukrainian language and accordingly the emergence of the Ukrainian press. Odessa appeared as one of the first cities where these newspapers were founded. At the same time, they did not manage to become a long-lasting papers and did not gain popularity and influence among the population. At the same time, it was in 1906 when the traditions of the Ukrainian press were founded in the city.

4.3. Struggle for the Existence: the Press in 1907-1916

Soon after the defeat of the revolution there started a period of turning back of the democratic achievements. The systematic ban of the Ukrainian press caused its almost total destruction. From the few dozens of Ukrainian periodicals there remained just five.¹⁸⁴ At the same time, there were no locally owned Ukrainian papers in Odessa at all. Nevertheless, Ukrainian activists were able to subscribe to newspapers from Kiev and from abroad. Thus, it is known that all possible issues were present in the reading hall of the society *Prosvita*.¹⁸⁵ But later this society was also repressed and was closed in 1909.

During 1908-1914 at different periods there were published 24 newspapers and magazines in Ukrainian.¹⁸⁶ In 1908 there were 9 issues, in the end of the year there remained 8. In 1910 the amount of the periodicals increased to 10, in 1911-1912 it constituted 11 issues and

¹⁸⁴ P.I. Vorobey, "Z istoriji Ukrajins'koji presy v Rosiji (1905-1914)" ("From the History of the Ukrainian Press in Russia, 1905-1914"), *Ukrajins'kyi istorychnyi jurnal* 10 (1971): 52.

¹⁸⁵ *Odchot Ukrajins'koho tovarystva "Prosvita" v Odesi za 1907 rik* (Report of the Ukrainian Society Prosvita in Odessa for 1907) (Odessa, 1908), 7.

¹⁸⁶ P.I. Vorobey, "Z istoriji Ukrajins'koji presy v Rosiji (1905-1914)" ("From the History of the Ukrainian Press in Russia, 1905-1914"), *Ukrajins'kyi istorychnyi jurnal* 10 (1971): 53.

in 1913 – 16.¹⁸⁷ Odessa was responsible for none. In fact, in 1912 there was an attempt to found a magazine *Hromadyanyn* (The Citizen) here. Thus, O.I. Sydorenko, referring to the information published in the magazines *Snip* (1912, No. 14) and *Zasiv* (1912, No. 12) points out that there should be a literary-social magazine, and P. Borovykov was mentioned as its publisher and A. Bovkun as an editor. But the idea of this paper, probably, was not realized.¹⁸⁸

The situation with the Ukrainian press became even more complicated with the beginning of the World War I. Thus, on August 2, 1914 the authorities in Kiev prohibited publishing of a newspaper *Rada* (The Council), and soon afterwards – the magazine *Ukrajins'ka Hata* (The Ukrainian House). At the beginning of 1915 by a special order of the Kiev governor the activities of all Editorial Boards of the newspapers that were published in “Little Russian tongue” were stopped. Among them there were popular monthlies *Literaturno-naukovyj visnyk* (Literature-Scientific Herald), *Ukrajina* (Ukraine), *Dzvin* (The Ring), *Svitlo* (The Light), *Moloda Ukrajina* (Young Ukraine).¹⁸⁹

The issue was that during 1905-1915 the Ukrainian newspapers in the Russian Empire were published according to Ukrainian (phonetic) orthography. But with the start of the war the using of this orthography became dangerous for the unity of the Russian Empire. Thus, Professor Florinskii wrote to the Main Administration of the Printing Affairs that “The Ukrainian literature as a provincial sub-literature of the Russian language for its existence and

¹⁸⁷ F.K. Pogrebennyk, “Krytyka i jurnalistyka” (“Critics and Journalism”), in *Istoriya ukrajins'koji literatury* (A History of Ukrainian Literature), V.5. *Literatura pochatku XX st.* (Literature at the Beginning of the 20th Century) (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1968), 67-68.

¹⁸⁸ O.I. Sydorenko, ed., *Nezdijsneni vydannya: anotovanyi pokazhchyk nerealizovanyh proektiv ukrajinomovnyh periodychnykh vydan kin. XIX-poch. XX st.* (Unrealized Papers: Annotated Index of the Ukrainian-language Periodicals of the Turn of the 20th Century) (Kiev, 1989), 49-50.

¹⁸⁹ Mykola Tymoshyk, “Vydavnycha sprava periodu Ukrajins'koji Narodnoji Respubliky (1917-1920)” (“Publishing Affairs during the Period of the Ukrainian Peoples Republic, 1917-1920”), *Visnyk Knygkovojo palaty* 4 (2003): 30.

development does not need any new artificially created orthography”.¹⁹⁰ A.S. Shchogolev in his letter also insisted to “allow access to the printing-presses just for those activists of the Ukrainian press, who would reject Austrian [phonetic] as narrowly a political tool, dangerous for the interests of Russia.”¹⁹¹

The authorities supported these ideas as well. In the secret letter of the Head of the headquarter of the Kiev military district to the governor of Kiev (January 31, 1915) it was pointed out:

During the giving out the permissions for the periodicals in the Malorussian tongue to oblige the editors according to the receipt that the issues published by them should be printed according to the not abolished Great Will of May 18/30, 1876, according to which all the writings with any deviation from the accepted Russian orthography were forbidden.¹⁹²

Therefore, the periodicals appeared out of possibility to be published in Ukrainian.

“What for?” – asked Symon Petluyra, the famous Ukrainian politician and journalist, in his article “A Year of Silence”:

We do not know and we hardly can get an acceptable answer to this question. At the same time this issue remains unsolved, during a year it penetrates and concentrates attention of the whole Ukrainian society. Lacking a native word and common organs for the expression of our thoughts and views, our aspirations and hopes, it appeared in a condition of a certain hibernation, like some loaf that has been cut off, being put away from the participation in fulfilling rather important tasks which were put forward by the war, the tasks that could be overcome just with the participation of the whole multinational population of Russia.¹⁹³

Petluyra stressed that the Ukrainian nation had a right to demand that none would “encroach on its soul” and insisted: “return to us our newspapers, our magazines, our native word”.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ F.K.Pogrebennyk, “Krytyka i jurnalistyka” (“Critics and Journalism”), in *Istoriya ukrajins’koji literatury* (A History of Ukrainian Literature), V.5. *Literatura pochatku XX st.* (Literature at the Beginning of the 20th Century) (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1968), 58.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 68.

¹⁹² “Lyst nachal’nyka shtabu kyivs’koho vijs’kovoho okruhu kyivs’komu gubernatoru vid 31 sichnya 1915 r.” (“A Letter of the Chief of the Headquarter of Kiev Military District to the Governor of Kiev, January 31, 1915”), *Bibliologichni visti* 4 (1929): 55.

¹⁹³ Petluyra, Symon “Rik movchannya” (“A Year of Silence”), in *Statti* (Articles) (Kiev: Dnipro, 1993), 168.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 171

Finally a few concessions were reached. Revival of the revolutionary movement in the spring of 1915 activated the struggle for the renewal of the closed newspapers and magazines.¹⁹⁵ This led to the fact that according to the special permission of the military censorship there was allowed publishing of a few magazines. At the same time, these periodicals could not deal with the topical questions of the political life, were mostly far from politics and concentrated mostly of the chronicles and of the publications of the literary works.¹⁹⁶ In such circumstances a Ukrainian-language magazine *Osnova* (The Basis) appeared in Odessa in 1915.

Andriy Nikovs'kyi was a person who did a lot for the realization of this project. During the First Russian revolution he was a student of the historical-philological faculty of Novorossijs'kyi University in Odessa. He was also an active member of *Prosvita* at that time. Since the autumn 1906 he was adopted as secretary and was responsible for the library. Having a certain literary talent, Nikovs'kyi started to publish notes on the activity of the society as well as literature reviews in various magazines in Ukraine. Moreover, he occupied himself with the publishing business. Soon after *Prosvita* was closed, Nikovs'kyi decided to move to Kiev where he was suggested to take a high position of an editor of the newspaper *Rada* (The Council). That was the only daily political issue in Ukrainian in Russian Empire at that moment. The publishing of this newspaper was financially supported by the famous Ukrainian activist Yevhen Chykalkenko. At the beginning of the war *Rada* was closed by the authorities. Then Nikovs'kyi started to cooperate with the magazine *Literaturno-naukovyj visnyk*. When this periodical was closed as well, he decided to found his own magazine. To realize this plan

¹⁹⁵ P.I. Vorobey, "Z istoriji Ukrajins'koji presy v Rosiji (1905-1914)" ("From the History of the Ukrainian Press in Russia, 1905-1914"), *Ukrajins'kyi istorychnyj jurnal* 10 (1971): 55.

he applied a lot of efforts. Finally, the permission was received and with the help of the writer Volodymyr Buryachenko and the teacher Il'ko Havryluyk there appeared *Osnova*. It emerged in 1915 in Odessa, in the Motherland of Nikovs'kyi.¹⁹⁷

The magazine became a follower of the closed *Literaturno-naukovyi visnyk*. In his letter Andriy Nikovs'kyi even asked to send the first issue of *Osnova* to all the subscribers of *LNV*. Moreover, the magazine was sent for free for the deported Ukrainian activists.¹⁹⁸ It was possible to subscribe for *Osnova* in the Ukrainians bookshops in Kiev, Kharkiv, Poltava, Katerynoslav, Odessa, Kremenchuk, Katerynodar, Petrograd and Moscow.¹⁹⁹

Following the traditions of *Literaturno-naukovyi visnyk*, *Osnova* published works of the most famous writers and scholars. Among the authors of the first issue there were Volodymyr Vynnychenko ("A Tramp"), Grygorii Chuprynka (poems), O'Konnor-Vilins'ka ("Three Letters"), Oleksandr Hryshevs'kyi ("From the life of the Kiev circle in 1870-1874"), Sofiya Rusova ("National issue in Belgium"), S. Yefremov ("About what had happened and what had not") and others.²⁰⁰ In the second issue of *Osnova* there appeared one of the first publications of the famous poets Hrustyna Alchevs'ka and Pavlo Tychyna, the memoirs of the Ukrainian activist Dmytro Doroshenko "From the Near Past" and other articles.²⁰¹

On the third issue *Osnova* was closed by the censorship. Therefore, the materials prepared for the forth issue A. Nikovs'kyi published in 1916 in the almanac *Step*. Since that

¹⁹⁶ F.K.Pogrebennyk, "Krytyka i jurnalistyka" ("Critics and Journalism"), in *Istoriya ukrajins'koji literatury* (A History of Ukrainian Literature), V.5. *Literatura pochatku XX st.* (Literature at the Beginning of the 20th Century) (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1968), 68.

¹⁹⁷ Grigoriy Zlenko, *Lytsari dosvitnikh vogniv: trydtsyat' try portrety diyachiv odes'koji Prosvity 1905-1909* (Knights Before Dawn: Thirty Three Portraits of the Activists of Odessa Prosvita, 1905-1909) (Odessa, Astroprint, 2005), 83-87.

¹⁹⁸ Anatoliy Mysechko, "Tovarystvo "Ukrajins'ka Hata" v Odesi" ("Society *Ukrajins'ka Hata* in Odessa"), *Zapuskyy istorichnoho fakultetu* 7 (1998): 93-97.

¹⁹⁹ [Announcement], *Osnova* III (October, 1915): flyleaf.

²⁰⁰ "Zmist" ("Table of Contents"), *Osnova* I (August, 1915): 2.

²⁰¹ "Zmist" ("Table of Contents"), *Osnova* II (September, 1915): 2.

period up to the February revolution of 1917 there was a break in the existence of the Ukrainian press in Odessa. However, Professor Mykola Tymoshyk pointed out that “in 1916 at first in Moscow and then in Odessa there was published and spread all over Ukraine a literary-scientific magazine *Slovo* [The Word], which appeared once in two weeks.”²⁰² At the same time, there are no references to it in any bibliographic indexes.

Therefore, at the time when everywhere in Ukraine publishing of the most popular and serious newspapers was stopped, activists in Odessa together with A. Nikovs'kyi managed to publish three issues of the Ukrainian magazine. Among its authors there were a lot of famous people and the geography of its distribution was wider than the local limits. Obviously, it was not the local periodical. Being published in Odessa, it pretended for the All-Ukrainian space. At the same time, it followed the fate of the previous papers in Ukrainian in Odessa being closed after a few issues appeared.

In sum, it is possible to conclude that the opportunity to use the national press as an institution of a Ukrainian public sphere was not used completely. The ephemeral papers that appeared in 1906-1915 can be studied rather as a presentation of the projects and setting up the agenda of the Ukrainian community than as real national organs. They did not perform the main function of the periodicals which assume influence on the mass audience, accumulating the information, transforming the ideas and reflecting them on the broader public. It is impossible to stress the influence or the place in the system of the local press of the papers which were presented just by a few papers. Nevertheless, in indicating of the role of these periodicals in the public life in Odessa it is possible to place them as attempts of the Ukrainian associations to create a complete structure of the national public sphere. Although, these attempts were not

²⁰² Mykola Tymoshyk, “Vydavnycha sprava periodu Ukrajins'koji Narodnoji Respubliky (1917-1920)” (“Publishing Affairs during the Period of the Ukrainian Peoples Republic, 1917-1920”), *Visnyk Knygkovoji palaty*

successful, they shed the light on the wider processes, for instance, on the place of Ukrainian societies in Odessa and beyond through the eyes of their leaders.

Conclusions

The public sphere in Odessa presented a specific kind of public sphere, which was characterized by its multiculturalism and multilevel structure. Therefore, one can divide two major levels within its structure: super-level, or common space and various national spheres as sub-levels within the broader scheme. Such an organization posed a number of problems which it was possible to reveal taking as a case study the Ukrainian public sphere in the city.

The discussion on the multicultural origin of the public sphere in Odessa needs to be clarified by separation of it into two forms: one that could be described loosely as “cultural” and other as “political”. It is possible to indicate the existence of so-called cosmopolitan public sphere in Odessa in its literary stage. This public sphere originally emerged in libraries, coffeehouses and clubs that were open and available for educated people of various ethnic origins. At the same time, the political stage of the public sphere in Odessa, which was raised after the revolution of 1905, unavoidably led to disintegration of a common urban public sphere into national sub-spheres. Since then it is more relevant to speak not about the cosmopolitan literary sphere, but the multicultural political one. Multiculturalism therefore, is understood as a coexistence and interaction of a number of cultural/national identities. At the same time, multiculturalism in Odessa was based on the two largest ethnic groups, Russians and Jews, while all the other including Ukrainians, were less represented on this under-level. This influenced on the specificity of their separate, national public sphere.

The question about the role of such national spheres and their emergence is of a special importance. On the one hand, their appearance can be interpreted as a sign of the high-development of the “cosmopolitan” sphere, which with over the course of time obtained a more institutionalized and structured character. Cultural and national differences appeared simply as

signifiers of this development. On the other hand, this transition in Odessa happened not in a natural evolutionary manner, but with the revolutionary changes in the country in general.

The Ukrainian public sphere is a good example of these processes. It was attempted to build on the structure of the pre-revolutionary scheme taking into account political demands of the time. At the same time, it was influenced on a high level by the Ukrainian national movement of the turn of the 20th century. In fact, Ukrainian society *Prosvita* was founded not by the native Odessans but by the participants who were initially active in the Ukrainian movement elsewhere. Therefore, Ukrainian public sphere in Odessa united features of both Ukrainian public spheres of the largest centers of national movements and tried place itself within the multicultural structure of Odessa.

The appearance of national public spheres is traditionally presented in the close connection to the spread of the periodical press. In this case one can determine two main interactions. First of all, it is how national public spheres determined the emergence of their own papers, and secondly, in which extent non-national newspapers and magazines could shape the national identities in the region. The case of Odessa allows one to conclude that the degree of the influence of the cosmopolitan press on the national life was rather low. National relations before the age of revolution could be presented in two contexts: in the chronicles of the local events (if such activities were organized by the national associations, for example), or when stressing the multicultural spirit of the city. Ukrainians in this sense presented a special case as the very word “Ukrainian” was considered as illegal and the most common connotation of the references to them in the Odessa press were advertisements of the performances of “Malorussian theatre troops”. The Revolution of 1905 changed the representation of the national question in the Odessa press. Since then this topic became one of the most relevant. On the one hand, the splash of national activity found its reflection in the periodicals, on the other,

regular information of such kind published in daily newspapers made the process of national differentiation more public. Therefore, at the time of the emergence of various national public spheres in the city, their participants became aware of the existence of each other to a large extent because of the publications in all-Odessa press.

Simultaneously with the institutionalization and structuralization of these public spheres, the national press arose. It was aimed at providing an important function of publicizing the activities and, therefore, the existence of such national units within the society of Odessa. The case of the Ukrainian press was special as the possibility of its legal operation appeared just at the end of 1905. Therefore, it is relevant to emphasize that its founders were faced with dealing with a few tasks simultaneously: with the introduction of the new periodicals into the existing structure of the local press, shaping its own image and specificity of the newspapers and, accordingly, founding their reading audience. The first Ukrainian newspapers in Odessa failed almost in all of these projects. One can indicate complex reasons for that: both external (barriers put by authorities, lack of Ukrainian censors) as well as internal (financial problems, lack of experienced authors). At the same time, the fate of these papers was also similar to the situation with the Ukrainian press outside Odessa.

In fact, the interaction between the Ukrainian national movement in general and its regional manifestations plays a significant role in analyzing the Ukrainian public sphere of Odessa. As it was mentioned above, it was the 19th Ukrainian romanticism that inspired the founders of these first national associations in the city. At the same time, excitement of the freedoms brought by the Revolution led to unjustified ambitions. Thus, the lack of coordination among the editors of the various national papers led to their weakness. This shows that Ukrainian national groups in different cities tried to build their own public sphere limited

according to both national and territorial criteria. Existence of its own periodical was, therefore, a necessary element of such a public sphere. Hence, diversity was reflected even here: instead of building a common cultural space, there appeared a number of separate Ukrainian “spaces”. Examination of the agendas of the Ukrainian periodicals in Odessa distinctly displays this process. These papers pretended to cover not only the local activities, but everything concerning Ukrainian national life in general. At the same time, their real reading audience could hardly go beyond the boundaries of the Kherson guberniia.

In such a way it is possible to conclude that the Revolution of 1905 revealed the national composition and the character of Odessa. The idea of the cosmopolitan megapolis was no longer relevant. The construction of this project, a metaphorical “Babylon tower” was stopped by the Russian Revolution. Since then it became obvious that the people in Odessa speak in different languages (both in literal and figurative senses). Thus, the multicultural sphere was formed which included multiple publics and, in particular, the Ukrainian one.

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