

СЕКЦІЯ 2. ЛОКАЛЬНА ІСТОРІЯ ЯК ФОРМА ЗБЕРЕЖЕННЯ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ САМОІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ

DOI <https://doi.org/10.36059/978-966-397-618-1-12>

ETHNOGRAPHIC ACTIVITY OF TEACHER AND EDUCATOR IVANNA BLAZHKEVYCH (1886–1977)

Drohobytka O. Y.

*Ph.D. in History, Associate Professor,
Department of Ethnology and Archaeology
Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University,
Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine*

The history of Ukraine is rich in multifaceted figures whose intellectual and civic contributions remain largely overlooked by the general public. Ivanna Blazhkevych (1886–1977) belongs to this group of passionate individuals. She serves as a role model for the patriotic education of youth, as she combined the talents of a children's writer, poet, educator, and active social activist. Blazhkevych's creative legacy encompasses not only memoirs, poetry, and pedagogical manuals, but also essays on ethnography.

The future writer and educator was born on October 9, 1886, in the village of Denysiv (now in the Ternopil District of Ternopil Oblast), where her father, Omelian Borodievych, taught from 1867 to 1898 [1, p. 1]. After her mother's untimely death, four-year-old Ivanna was cared for by her grandfather, Silvestr Shchepanovsky, who worked as a forester for Count Nimentovsky. He instilled in her a lifelong love of folk tales, songs, and nature [9, p. 101].

The girl attended elementary school in the village of Denysiv (1893–1896) and completed three grades at the Ternopil Special School (1896–1900). Her family's modest means prevented her from continuing her education, so she devoted herself to self-study [1, p. 2]. In this way, she quickly became familiar with Polish translations of French and English authors, as well as the works of I. Nechui-Levytskyi, A. Tchaikovsky, V. Stefanyk, M. Cheremshyna, L. Martovych, and I. Franko. The girl had personally met I. Franko during her childhood, when he spoke at a public gathering in 1894 in the neighboring village of Kupchynci [8, p. 120].

From a young age, Ivanna Blazhkevych was actively involved in community work, organizing a women's section at the local sports

and gymnastics club, literacy classes, a branch of the «Vidrodzhennia» anti-alcohol society, and more [6, pp. 77–78]. Ethnography undoubtedly occupied an important place among her interests.

As early as 1909, I. Blazhkevych participated in an ethnographic exhibition in Stryi, organized on the initiative of attorney E. Olesnytskyi. There she exhibited a collection of folk clothing and embroidered shirts from her native Ternopil region – men’s and women’s clothing, wedding attire for brides and grooms, children’s clothing for boys and girls, embroidered towels, tablecloths, and shirts. For its diversity and artistic and ethnographic value, the collection was awarded a silver medal [10, p. 328].

The writer’s life was marked by many trials, including the hardships of World War I and her husband’s captivity. For her active civic work aimed at saving the population during World War I, in July 1918 I. Blazhkevych received the «Silver Cross of Merit» from the Ministry of Social Welfare [3, p. 194]. A distinct chapter in her biography was her participation in the state-building processes of the West Ukrainian People’s Republic. Due to her active civic work during the interwar period, she was repeatedly persecuted by the Polish authorities, and in 1928 she suffered the tragic loss of her two young daughters. She did not abandon her civic activities even during the years of Soviet rule [6, p. 83].

The teacher left behind several dozen notebooks containing ethnographic records about her native village of Denysiv in the Ternopil region. She described the natural and geographical location of the village, local trades and crafts, clothing, housing, peasant households, and the specific customs surrounding weddings, christenings, and calendar holidays (Christmas, Easter, harvest festivals). Some of the notebooks are titled «The Status of People in the Village Who Had the Opportunity to Gain Experience Through Travel and War», «The Attitude of Natives Toward Emigrants. Peasants’ attitudes toward industrialists, teachers, priests, village heads, and students», «The impact of emigration from the New World on the economic and cultural state of the village», «Attitudes toward the state and the authorities», which demonstrates the author’s desire to comprehensively document the daily lives of local residents. Interestingly, I. Blazhkevych also raised the issue of urbanization’s impact on the village and the moral state of its inhabitants [2].

In describing the culture of the inhabitants of the village of Denysiv in Ternopil district, the writer highlighted the role of the intelligentsia in diversifying the peasantry’s diet, introducing new crops, eradicating superstitions and fortune-telling, improving hygiene, and so on [7, p. 42]. As she wrote about her native village of Denysiv, World War I dealt a devastating blow to products made from homespun fabrics. Linen trousers were replaced by European suits, and raincoats and jackets began to be used as outerwear. The new fashion also affected headwear: while women still

preferred scarves, men began to wear caps, Cossack hats, and gray «kubankas». Only embroidery remained traditional, used to decorate women's and men's shirts made from factory-produced materials [2, pp. 177–178].

Given these urban influences, in her book «The Cultured Person», I. Blazhkevych called for the preservation of traditional folk clothing [4, p. 6]. She advised housewives to keep a clear record of expenses and income, which would teach thrift and prevent the purchase of impractical items, especially expensive clothing, which accelerates the economic ruin of the village [5, p. 3].

Thus, Ivanna Blazhkevych stands as a unique example of a Ukrainian intellectual who succeeded in combining her pedagogical talent with in-depth ethnographic research into the daily life of a Galician village. Her scholarly legacy, particularly her detailed records of the transformation of folk culture under the influence of urbanization and war, is a valuable source for contemporary ethnography.

References:

1. Державний архів Тернопільської області (ДАТО). Ф. Р–3205. Оп. 1. Спр. 2. 23 арк.
2. ДАТО. Ф. Р–3205. Оп. 1. Спр. 8. 678 арк.
3. Блажкевич І. Жінка на бойовій лінії: спогади, щоденник. Тернопіль : Навчальна книга – Богдан, 2017. 336 с.
4. Блажкевич І. Культурна людина. Яворів : Накладом української видавничої спілки «Громада» у Львові, 1932. 32 с.
5. Блажкевич І. «Не руки роблять – лише спосіб». *Жіноча доля*. 1930. Ч. 25. С. 3.
6. Дрогобицька О. Громадська діяльність Івanni Блажкевич (1886–1977). *Вісник Прикарпатського університету. Історія*. 2016. Вип. 28. С. 77–85.
7. Дрогобицька О. Традиція і модерн: Побут української сільської інтелігенції Галичини (кінець ХІХ – 30-ті рр. ХХ ст.). Івано-Франківськ : Симфонія форте, 2014. 540 с.
8. Рутило І. Іванна Блажкевич і дошкільництво. *Наукові записки Тернопільського державного педагогічного університету імені Володимира Гнатюка. Серія : Педагогіка*. 2002. № 11. С. 119–123.
9. Савак Б. Слово про нескореність: до 100-річчя від дня народження Івanni Блажкевич. *Жовтень*. 1986. № 10. С. 101–103.
10. Українські кооператори. Історичні нариси. Книга І. Львів : Видвництво Львівської комерційної академії, 1999. 456 с.