

Source of Life (Dzherelo Zhyttia) Publishing House (Ukraine)

NIKOLAY A. ZHUKALYUK

Nikolay A. Zhukalyuk, pastor, writer, historian, and professional journalist. After his service in the Soviet Army, he devoted himself to church ministry. Over a period of thirty-five years in the Soviet period, Zhukalyuk carried out pastoral ministry and was one of the unofficial leaders of the SDA Church in the USSR. Zhukalyuk was the first president of the Ukrainian Union Conference. He established and served as a general manager and editor-in-chief of the *Dzherelo Zhyttia* Publishing House. He is author of 15 books, including books on the history of SDA Church such as *Afflicted*, *Tossed With Tempest*. At present, Zhukalyuk is serving as chief editor for the translation of the Bible into contemporary Ukrainian language.

Source of Life (*Dzherelo Zhyttia*) is Ukraine's Seventh-day Adventist publishing house. Located in Kiev, it was established in 1993.

Silent Missionaries

Distribution of the printed word has been essential to the outreach of the Seventh-day Adventist Church from its inception. Long before the General Conference decided to send missionaries to foreign countries, tracts, brochures, and books about “present-day truth” published in the United States by Adventist pioneers reached Europe and other continents. As far back as 1873, German emigrants from the Russian Empire, in particular the Mennonites who adopted the Adventist doctrines, sent to their homeland “silent missionaries” in the form of Adventist tracts and brochures. Those materials had a great spiritual influence because their message was confirmed by the quotations from the Bible.¹ At this time, Ukraine was part of the Russian Empire.

Having neither fair opportunities nor financial means, Heinrich Johann Loeb sack and his relative Heinrich Konrad Loeb sack, who were among the first Adventists in the Russian Empire, organized a colporteur society. The colporteurs delivered Adventist literature, mostly illegally, from Switzerland and Germany, often at the jeopardy of not only their freedom but also their lives. According to archival sources, it was in the territory of Western Russia alone that the literature for a quite large amount was sold in the year 1913.²

Adventist Publishing Activities in the Russian Empire and the USSR

Pastors I. Lvov and H. K. Loeb sack, the future leaders of the Adventist Church in Russia and Ukraine, started publishing activities in St. Petersburg in 1913. They printed the magazine *Maslina* (Olive Tree), which was later renamed *Blagaya Vest'* (The Good News).³ Under the Communist regime, the printed word was considered an “ideological weapon.” The Soviet Union prohibited all religious publishing houses, although the publication of

some magazines and books was allowed from time to time after being carefully censored.⁴

Religious persecution in the Soviet Union grew more severe, and by the mid-1950s the Adventist Church began to suffer from lack of spiritual support. Surviving copies of old magazines and books were worn thin by much reading; Sabbath School quarterlies and devotional books disappeared altogether.⁵ To fill the need, illegal publishers, called *samizdats*, were secretly organized in Adventist communities throughout the country. Their workers, devoted and faithful to God, reprinted books and brochures by using typewriters. Church members purchased hundreds of kilograms of thin tissue paper and carbon paper on which typists reproduced Adventist literature, sometimes inserting up to fifteen sheets of thin paper interleaved with carbon paper. Young church members studied English in order to translate the literature written by English-speaking Adventist authors abroad (first of all, E. G. White books) and smuggled into the Soviet Union. The translated literature was then illegally brought to the local samizdats for further reproduction and distribution among Adventist communities and groups in regions.

Samizdat in Lvov

In the mid-twentieth century, one of the largest publishing centers of the Adventist Church in the Soviet Union was a local church in the city of Lvov. The secret printing press was organized by pastor Nikolay Zhukalyuk in 1967. In order to keep everything in secret, the Lvov samizdat was organized as three separate independent groups that did not know of each other. The leaders of each group, mostly young people, were accountable exclusively to Nikolay Zhukalyuk.

It all started when Ludwig Lemeshko, a church member and a top-quality locksmith, designed a primitive printing press. This device was located in the basement of the house of a retired pastor, S. Smyk. The font type was illegally purchased discarded equipment from the government publishing houses in Lvov. The page was setup manually. The first book produced with this equipment was Ellen G. White's *Steps to Christ*, of which thousands of copies were printed. The group of printers was headed by S. Smyk's son, Andrei Smyk.

Another printing press with manual page setup was designed and operated by brothers Bogdan and Oleg Kachmar. This device turned out to be much more productive because it was powered by an automobile starter and required much less human power.

The third group was the largest. It consisted of approximately thirty-five or forty typists, who were the wives and daughters of ministers, including those of Pastors Nikolay Zhukalyuk and A. Kolodiy. In order to maintain secrecy and minimize the sound of typewriters, which was easily heard through the thin walls of Soviet-era apartments, the women had to perform this unusually heavy work sometimes in wardrobes or bathrooms. The communication with the typists was maintained by typist Liya Polishchuk, who was also a pianist. She married a dentist who, after their marriage, was also involved in the printing work and became a bookbinder. But the main bookbinding operations were carried out by two members of the Lvov church, Bogdan Stasyuk and Emil

Kapitan. In addition, Roman Vovk was responsible for purchasing, maintaining, and repairing typewriters across much of the country. He also purchased thin tissue paper and carbon paper. The literature produced in this way was transported to local churches throughout the country by church members, often inconspicuously by women carrying shopping bags or old suitcases. As a result, church members regularly received Sabbath school quarterlies, devotionals books, and other materials translated by Alevtina Shtabinskaya, Nadezhda Parasey, Nadezhda Matsanova, Olga Pervanchuk, and others.⁶

These efforts rejuvenated the Church but did not escape the KGB's attention. In November 1973 Zhukalyuk and Liya Polishchuk, coordinator of the largest third group, were arrested. The police organized searches of the homes of many Adventist leaders throughout the country and confiscated a lot of Christian literature. Zhukalyuk's and Polishchuk's trial lasted seven months. During this time, they were kept in stinking cells at the Lvov detention center and interrogated almost every day. Finally, in May 1974 they were sentenced to two years of imprisonment and service in a labor camp.⁷ In spite of arrests, court trials, and imprisonment for printing religious literature and participation in the samizdat, many church members across the nation continued the illegal production of Adventist books and periodicals until 1992 when the "Law on Publishing Activity," removed the prohibition on the printing of religious literature.

In September 1989, the leaders of the Ukrainian Union Conference (UUC) petitioned the Council for Religious Affairs in Ukraine for permission to publish a monthly church newspaper, *Visnyk myru* (The Herald of Peace), edited by Bogdan Kachmar. In early 1990 preliminary oral permission was received, and the editorial board, consisting of seven people, was formed. In February 1991 the first comprehensive layout was approved by the UUC administrative committee, and in April of the same year, for the first time in the history of the Church in Ukraine, the newspaper *Visnyk myru* was published in an edition of 10,000 copies. The newspaper printed articles in two languages—Russian and Ukrainian.

Ukrainian Union Conference Publishing Activities

Following Ukraine's independence, when Ukrainian became the state's official language, it became necessary to organize an official Ukrainian publishing department. In late 1990 the publishing department was headed by Zhukalyuk, while the editor-in-chief of the *Visnyk Miru*, Bogdan Kachmar, served as executive secretary of the department. This department was responsible for the translation and editing of periodicals and the preparation of Ellen G. White's books for publication in the Ukrainian language.

It was the beginning of an era of large evangelistic campaigns, requiring the preparation of massive quantities of literature in both Ukrainian and Russian. The UUC sought professional editors who were fluent in both languages to meet the demand. Two highly skilled specialists, Vilina Merkulova and Alla Kapitonenko, who had previously worked in secular publishing houses, were hired. Merkulova started work in the UUC publishing house in August 1990 and two years later, in August 1992, she was appointed the editor-in-chief of the

newspaper *Visnyk myru*. She recommended Alla Kapitonenko, who later joined the editorial staff. Another remarkable woman and organizer, Tamara Grytsyuk, negotiated agreements with secular publishers for printing material. Since the Adventist Church in Ukraine did not yet have its own printing equipment, the importance of this committed woman's work cannot be overstated.

In January 1993, the UUC executive committee made the decision to start publishing a Russian and Ukrainian edition of the *Signs of the Time* magazine (under the title *Oznaky chasu*). It was evident that the production of such a magazine was impossible without a professional editor to manage its production. Church leaders found their editor in Yuri Tokarev, a recent convert from the mass evangelistic programs in Kiev who had formerly worked for the Soviet newspaper *Culture and Life*. In May 1993, Yuri Tokarev became the editor-in-chief of the *Oznaky chasu* magazine. The first issue of this magazine, published in September 1993 with a print run of 25,000 copies, was timed to coincide with the 5th Congress of the Adventist Church in Ukraine. Beginning in 1994 this quarterly periodical was published in two languages, Ukrainian and Russian.

Acquiring a Printing Press

The Adventist publishing house in Ukraine was developing quite well, but its production remained very expensive because eighty percent of the budget was absorbed by the cost outsourcing printing to state publishing houses. In 1991, UUC leaders began to seek a way to reduce publishing costs. They prayerfully looked for sponsors who could help purchase printing equipment that would be, even if old, in working condition. At the beginning of 1993, their prayers were answered. The leaders of the Adventist Church in Germany offered UUC a printing press. Its purchase was also partially funded by sponsors. Thus, by the middle of 1994 the equipment was delivered to Ukraine, and by the end of the year an experienced German specialist, A.E. Gramkov, had installed the printing press. The first brochure printed on it was *The Week of Prayer Readings 1994*. This small book was greeted with fervor and joy by all Adventist churches and companies in Ukraine.

In 1994 the Ukrainian Union Conference led by Mikhail Murga, invited Nikolay Zhukalyuk, former UUC president, to direct the publishing ministry. Zhukalyuk was a professional journalist with a love of spiritual literature and experience in the underground samizdat in Lvov. He served as the first director of the *Dzherelo Zhyttia* (Source of Life) Publishing House, combining this ministry with the office of the editor-in-chief.

Fulfilling Its Mission

In its first nine years of its existence, the *Dzherelo Zhyttia* Publishing House earned a reputation for excellence among other publishers of its type in Ukraine. Many of Ellen G. White's books, as well as books by other Christian authors, were translated and published in Ukrainian. Denominational periodical literature was also regularly printed. In addition to the Ukrainian publishing pioneers previously mentioned, other notable employees at the outset of the publishing business included Mikhail Lutsio, Vera Kuzmenko, Pavel Zhukalyuk

and his wifeChernevich, Valeryi Shilyago, Vladimir Chipchar, Tanya Romanko, Irina Sirota, Stefan Karichenskiy, Olga Pervanchuk, Nadezhda Kachmar, sisters Natalya and Tanya Kushch, Olga Bokova, and Larisa Kachmar.

After celebrating his seventieth anniversary of employment in the publishing ministry, Zhukalyuk passed the baton of leadership to younger and stronger administrators. In 2002 he was succeeded as a publishing house director by Vasiliy Dzhulay, a person highly committed to the literary work. Larisa Kachmar, who had prepared for several years for this position of responsibility, became the new editor-in-chief.

In spite of the change in management, Ukrainian Publishing House *Dzherelo Zhyttia* continues to serve. A relatively small team of slightly over fifty people—of which only twenty-three people are full time—is working under the direction of Dzhulay and Kachma. They print church periodicals (Sabbath School quarterlies, morning devotionals, and the Week of Prayer readings) in Ukrainian and Russian. In addition, youth and children's newspapers and magazines, a total of nineteen titles, are produced for different age categories. A monthly missionary newspaper, *Vechnoye sokrovishche* (The Eternal Treasure), in a run of 250,000 copies, is most popular in all regions of Ukraine.

The *Dzherelo Zhyttia* Publishing House is currently producing many books and brochures, including missionary outreach resources. Within the 2012-2013 period alone, the circulation of the missionary books, *The Great Controversy* and *Steps to Christ* by Ellen G. White, reached over half a million copies, and the total circulation of all missionary books reached 1,048,000 copies. Many other books and brochures, including those written by native authors, continue to be regularly published. The number of books written by local authors continues to increase.

Distribution of the printed missionary literature among readers requires a significant number of volunteer literature evangelists. To facilitate the trips these workers make into hard-to-reach regions of the country, the UUC purchased more than 150 bicycles and more than thirty kayaks and catamarans. In 2014 alone, the literature evangelists distributed 115,000 books.

SOURCES

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NOTES

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6. N.A. Zhukalyuk, *Kriz' buri, shtormy, lykholittya* (Kiev: Dzherelo Zhyttia, 2009), 364-370.
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