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## **FOUNDATION OF THEATRE IN BERDYCHIV: ANTON ZHMIYOVSKI'S LIFESTORY**

This article attempts to analyze Anton Zhmiovski's life and his achievements in the foundation and development of theatrical traditions in Berdychiv. Anton Zhmiovski is considered to be the founder of Berdychiv theatre.

Traditions of performing arts in Berdychiv are firmly intertwined with the life of well-known entrepreneur Anton Zhmiovski. Anton P. Zhmiovski (Zmievskyy, pol.Zmijowski, 1769-1834). is one of the most prominent figures of professional theatre art in Volyn. A. Zhmiovski was not only an entrepreneur but also an actor, director and playwright [8, p. 86].

The main centres of Volyn region, where the formation of a professional theatre took place, were the towns of Zhytomyr and Berdychiv. These are the places where public theatres were opened. Thus, a permanent building of theatre was built in Berdychiv around 1802, and in Zhytomyr in 1803. It is also important to emphasize that the first private theatrical enterprise in Berdychiv was founded in 1793, [1] and in Zhytomyr - in 1797 [2]. This can be considered the beginning of the history of theatre in Volyn region [8, p. 42].

It is important to note that the development of these theatres was associated with an active creative work of the famous entrepreneur A.Zhmiovski. He is considered to be a pioneer of professional theatre art in Volyn. We know that Zhmiovski was a cashier at the theatre of V. Boguslavski. There he tried his acting capabilities by playing menial roles [9, p. 202]. Later, A. Zhmiovski continued his activities in Tulchin as a director of the court theatre of Count Shchensnyi Pototski, Russian and Podolski governor at the end of the XVIII century [8, p. 86]. The entrepreneur had to give performances for Pototski in Tulchin (governor's residence) and Uman.

Due to the fact that in 1793 Count Pototski left Tulchin (probably because of the division of Poland), A.Zhmiovski moved to Berdychiv, where he founded the Polish troupe [1]. First, he gave performances at the inn, and then he built the theatre building near the stables, next to the trade rows. A few years later (1797) A.Zhmiovski moved to Zhytomyr, but the theatrical company stayed in Berdychiv, where they acted until 1800.

Later, the theatrical life in Berdychiv was somewhat sluggish. A permanent theatre company did not exist. But at the time of the governor of Zhytomyr, M. Komburleya semi-amateur theatre company went on tour. To honor the distinguished service of A.Zhmiovski, Pototski left a legacy of a great theatrical wardrobe (about 700 different kinds of costumes, masks and props), a theatrical library (70 items, including 50 comedies, 9 dramas, 7 tragedies, 4 operas) [9, p. 218]. All donated by Count Pototski A.Zhmiovski took to Zhytomyr, [9, p. 204], where he occupied a permanent theatre building that was previously owned by Pototski [3]. With his own company A.

Zhmiyovski performed in many cities of Ukraine, including in Zhytomyr (1797), Tulchin (1799), Dubna, Kyiv (1800, 1804-1805, 1816, 1819).

Moreover it is also important to mention that at this period, namely in 1816 an actor, director, entrepreneur of Russian Empire - Ludwig Y. Mlotkovski (Mlatkovski, Molotkovski; born ca. 1795 - died March 27, 1855) acted in A.Zhmiyovski's company [7]. The best known period of Anton Zhmiyovski's activity is the time when he managed the theatre in Zhytomyr. Here he presented works by V. Boguslavski, F. Zablotski and scenes from the plays of Shakespeare. Under his leadership *Barbara Radzyvylivna* by K. Zelinski was staged in Zhytomyr theatre. It was the evidence of Anton Zhmiyovski's ambitions.

In performances of Zhytomyr theatre, A.Zhmiyovski played on the stage at his own dramas that sometimes were very unusual. He is the author of the stage plays

*Catching ghoul, Enchantress of the Visla, Chumak-magician* and others. It should be noted that the last piece had considerable success, and it was staged for the first time in 1834 at Zhytomyr theatre. It was in the repertory theatrical companies of V. Petrovski, K. Zelinsky, I. Dreysih, P. Medvedev. Different interpretations of this play were successfully performed at the theatres in Western Ukrainian, Russian, Georgian and Tatar stages [5, p. 273]. A. Zhmiyovski was notable for the extraordinary gift of clear pronunciation and memory, and was a skilful organizer of the theatrical business. In 1829, he even organized a small opera house. However, because of various external circumstances there was a decline of his activity, and in 1834 left by his most dedicated actors, he died in poverty. [6]

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