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Professor Leonid Ushkalov's Skovorodiana

Сковородинознавство професора Леоніда Ушкалова

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Abstract

The article analyzes the contribution of Professor Leonid Ushkalov's scientific works to the intellectual matrix of Kharkiv Philological School and Skovoroda studies. He outlined in his researches such complex problems of literary and philosophical reasonings by H. Skovoroda as the source of his works; genre-artistic features of his poetry versification; a fable definition by Skovoroda as an independent literary genre of philosophical style, and a parable as a model of a fable and philosophical dialogue peculiar fusion; vivid mythological and biblical imagery and the original structure of treatises; deployment in magnificent Baroque forms and in biblical, mythological, emblematic images in the plane of Christian Neoplatonism of philosophical and theological thoughts in the theologian's «Socratic» dialogues; Skovoroda's Biblical noematics and heuristics as a text comprehensive allegory of the Holy Bible; the influence of works by Skovoroda on the new, modern and contemporary Ukrainian literature and a great number of other issues, each of which has the prospect of deploying into a separate Skovoroda

Анотація

У статті проаналізовано внесок наукових праць професора Леоніда Ушкалова в інтелектуальну матрицю Харківської філологічної школи та студії Сковороди. У своїх дослідженнях він окреслив такі складні проблеми літературно-філософських міркувань Г. Сковороди як джерело його творів; жанрово-художні особливості його поетичної версифікації; визначення байки Сковородою як самостійного літературного жанру філософського стилю та притчі як моделі байки та своєрідного злиття філософського діалогу; яскраві міфологічні та біблійні образи та оригінальна структура трактатів; розгортання у чудових формах бароко та в біблійних, міфологічних, емблематичних образах у площині християнського неоплатонізму філософських та богословських думок «сократичних» діалогівбогослова; Біблійна ноematика та евристика Сковороди як текстова всебічна алегорія СвятоїБіблії; впливтворівСковородинанову, сучасну та сучасну українську літературу та велику

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studies discourse. In particular, it is stated that L. Ushkalov offered more than three hundred themes for further works about H. Skovoroda's creative activity.

Keywords: fable, parable, treatise, dialogue, Biblical noematics, heuristics.

Introduction

Leonid Ushkalov became the founder of the Skovoroda issue in the modern Kharkiv scientific centre, he was an active participant of the society, Doctor of Philology, Professor of the Ukrainian Literature Department at H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University.

He began to study Skovoroda's works being a postgraduate student at Taras Shevchenko Literature Institute of National Academy of Sciences in Ukraine and doing a doctorate degree at the Department of Ukrainian Literature at Kharkiv National Pedagogical University.

In 1989 at Taras Shevchenko Literature Institute of National Academy of Sciences in Ukraine L. Ushkalov defended his thesis for obtaining the degree of the candidate of philology on Skovoroda studies theme: *Tvorchist Hryhoriia Skovorody i antychna kultura (Hryhoriia Skovoroda's creative activity and ancient culture)*. At the same Institute in 1996, he defended a dissertation for the degree of the doctor of philology on the theme closely related to the work by H. Skovoroda: *Literatura ukrainskoho baroko v yii zviazkakhi z filosofiiu (Literature of the Ukrainian Baroque in its Relations with Philosophy)*.

The article aims to analyze the contribution of Professor Leonid Ushkalov's scientific works to the intellectual matrix of Kharkiv Philological School and Skovoroda studies. The results of Professor Leonid Ushkalov's intellectual activity need to be comprehended and included in the scientific system of Ukrainian literary studies coordinates. The novelty and originality of his scientific achievements have good reasons to encourage the younger generation of scientists to study not only his researches about H. Skovoroda, but also other literary works by the professor.

Theoretical Framework or Literature Review

D. Chyzhevskiy once wrote: "Now there are no fewer than 250 big and small works dedicated to

кількість інших питань, кожна з яких має перспективу розгорнутись в окремому дискурсі Сковороди. Зокрема, зазначено, що Л. Ушкалов запропонував понад триста тем для подальших робіт про творчу діяльність Г. Сковороди.

Ключові слова: байка, притча, трактат, діалог, біблійна ноematика, евристика.

Skovoroda, who, as it is generally acknowledged, is the most interesting figure in the history of the Ukrainian spirit. In these works – we can say without exaggeration – probably, no fewer than 250 different views on Skovoroda are expressed, on what he was, what he is and can be for Ukrainian culture" (Chyzhevskiy, 2004, p. 25).

Taking into consideration Skovoroda's world view, on the one hand, entrenched in the ancient Ukrainian spiritual culture, and on the other hand in ancient philosophy, Alexandrian patristics, German mysticism, his creative activity attracted the attention of hundreds of domestic and foreign scholars in philosophy, history, theology, linguistics, pedagogy and literary criticism. He was called the Ukrainian Socrates, Ukrainian Jean-Jacques Rousseau, then Ukrainian Francis of Assisi, and as a carrier of cosmic consciousness, as an apostle of rationalism and as the brightest representative of the emblematic style in the mystical literature of modern times, as the greatest Christian philosopher in the world after the first Fathers of the Church, and as a man who embodied all the features of Ukrainian people and beat the own East Slavic path to comprehension of reality. These comparisons turn our philosopher into a kind of symbol in Ukrainian culture from antiquity to the present day.

Today, there are thousands of scientific studies that analyze various aspects of Hryhoriia Skovoroda's works, he was the last intellectual gem of the Ukrainian Baroque. The Kharkiv Philological School, which was formed over two centuries and continues its fruitful work today, has made a significant contribution to promoting a deeper understanding of the original portrait of the Ukrainian philosopher and writer as an iconic figure of the Ukrainian nation.

However, the most important scientific word in the systematization of the Baroque artist's views, interpretation of ideas, images, plots of his works was said by Leonid Ushkalov, who was the founder of the Kharkiv Scientific School within

the Kharkiv School of Philology, Doctor of Philology, Professor of Ukrainian and World Literature in H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University. The particularity of Ukrainian literature scientific analysis by Professor Leonid Ushkalov was the study of Ukrainian literature as a whole living organism and a variegated intertextual phenomenon, within which the artistic codes of some eras, Mr. Professor, carefully reading the text, deciphered knowledge of aesthetics and poetics of others.

The lasting factual basis of L. Ushkalov's scientific investigations, based on a high-quality philological school, encourages dialogue, discussion and endless literary discourse.

Methodology

The authors of the article used the chronological method to investigate the researches by Professor Leonid Ushkalov, devoted to the study of the creative activity of the Ukrainian Baroque writer and philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda. The use of the historical method provided a deep understanding of the problem essence and more substantiated conclusions regarding each new research object. The descriptive method allowed us to analyze extensively each scientist's research, as well as to achieve a broader generalization in the issue of Professor Leonid Ushkalov's approaches and general concepts of scientific interests.

Results and Discussion

Leonid Ushkalov is the author of numerous historical and literary, historical and philosophical works devoted to Skovoroda's life and his creative activity, which were published in the Ukrainian, English, German, Polish and Russian languages.

An important contribution to the Ukrainian Skovoroda studies is eleven books by the author, namely: *Narysy z filosofii Hryhoriia Skovorody (Sketches of the Philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda)*, (Ushkalov, 1993, *Ukrains'ke barokove bohomyslennia: Sim etiudiv pro Hryhoriia Skovorodu (Ukrainian Baroque Concepts of God: Seven Studies on Hryhorii Skovoroda)*, (Ushkalov, 2001), *Dva stolittia skovorodiiany: bibliohrafichnyi dovidnyk (Two centuries of Skovorodiana: A Bibliographical Guide)* (Ushkalov, 2002), *Hryhorii Skovoroda: seminarii (Hryhorii Skovoroda: Seminars)* (Ushkalov, 2004), *Skovoroda ta inshi: Prychynky do istorii ukrainskoi literatury (Skovoroda and Others: Contributions to the History of*

Ukrainian Literature) (Ushkalov, 2007b), *Hryhorii Skovoroda (Hryhorii Skovoroda)* (Ushkalov, 2009), *Skovoroda, Shevchenko, feminizm...: statti 2010–2013 rokiv (Skovoroda, Shevchenko, Feminism ...): articles 2010–2013)* (Ushkalov, 2014), *Lovytyva nevlavnoho ptakha: zhyttia Hryhoriia Skovorody (Chasing an Uncapturable Bird: The Life of Hryhorii Skovoroda)* (Ushkalov, 2017), *Skovoroda vid A do YA (Skovoroda from A to Z)* (Ushkalov, 2019).

The first monograph by the post-graduate student L. Ushkalov *Sketches of the Philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda* written in co-authorship with the former fifth-year student and now well-known Moscow professor O. Marchenko revealed to the scientific world the serious researcher capable of putting forward profound reasonable conclusions. The work was devoted to the fundamental issues of Hryhorii Skovoroda's ideology, whose various models absorbed the European philosophical traditions from antiquity to baroque.

In the monograph *Hryhorii Skovoroda and the Culture of Antiquity* the author carried out an extrapolation of imaginary comprehensiveness of H. Skovoroda's "To Every City Its Customs and Laws" to the entire cultural sphere. The writer's literary work is regarded by the scientist as a kind of infinity «image» of the spiritual mankind culture. The deployment of this work in the chronotope of the European spiritual tradition made the author carry out his analysis beyond the strictly literary series and prove that being on the other side of the poetic sphere, philosophical universals are components of certain ideological construction.

In the work *Ukrainian Baroque Concepts of God: Seven Studies on Hryhorii Skovoroda* L. Ushkalov considers Hryhorii Skovoroda's method of ascension to God as a "ladder" in the context of the Ukrainian thinking of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as the highest outbreak of the Ukrainian spiritual tradition in the late Baroque era. Steps to this "ladder" had to be sought in the Bible, which had in the Ukrainian Baroque literature peculiarities of interpretation. "The interpretation of fiction texts was free, while the interpretation of the texts of the Holy Scriptures required a comparison of the consequences of interpretation, which theoretically had to satisfy the needs of religious cults, though in practice it was not always possible" (Levchenko, 2020b, p. 63), and also "The literal interpretation of the Bible does not reveal the whole essence of the sacred truth" (Levchenko, 2020a, p. 181).

The researcher emphasizes that Hryhorii Skovoroda's God thinking synthesis of philosophy, theology and mysticism is a work hallmark in the Ukrainian Baroque era.

According to the scholar, Skovoroda's "God thinking" is structured by the archetypal dream images typical of Baroque as one of the mysterious life forms, the Lord's fear "trichotomy", the general "figurative" noematic instruction in the field of biblical hermeneutics, the idea of self-knowledge in the direction of Divine Providence, the world images and ideas, rhetorical "matte" based on the expressive means of the Ukrainian literary baroque.

The unique construction of the scientific monograph indicates the presence of the author's imagery poems before each chapter of the book.

Both the structure of the monograph, its lofty scientific language and the broad terminology base used by the researcher, the conclusions, which the author appeals to, prove the fact that L. Ushkalov was involved in the creation of a deeply intellectual elitist science in Ukraine.

In 2007 in the series "High Shelf" published in Kyiv house "Fakt" the book *Skovoroda and Others: Contributions to the History of Ukrainian Literature* by L. Ushkalov. It has twenty articles, essays and reviews devoted to the Ukrainian literary tradition from ancient times to the present day. The book indicates the expansion of L. Ushkalov's literary horizons because the author touches on the problem of creative activity not only of Ukrainian ancient literature representatives, in the forefront of which is Hryhorii Skovoroda, but also raises issues related to the works by Dmytro Chyzhevskiy and others.

A very important work for the further development of the world's Skovoroda studies was performed by L. Ushkalov, having compiled a bibliographic guide for bicentennial Skovoroda studies *Two Centuries of Skovorodiana* (Ushkalov, Vakulenko, & Ievtushenko, 2002), in which scientists from Ukraine, Austria, Italy, Canada, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Romania and the USA participated. The scientist also wrote the seminars *Hryhorii Skovoroda: Seminars* (Ushkalov, 2004), on more than three hundred topics, on each one can write a wide range of scientific researches about Skovoroda from the abstract to the dissertation.

The bibliographic guide *Two Centuries of Skovorodiana* (Ushkalov, Vakulenko, &

Ievtushenko, 2002) recorded the most trusted publications of Skovoroda's works and numerous works about the Ukrainian philosopher in the world literary studies during the 19-20th centuries. The book is structured by the authors' and subject indexes, which greatly simplifies the search for the desired source. The compiler used the "chronicle" manner of making a bibliographic guide, which resulted in its composition transparency and ease of use. The chronological principle of work arrangement best illustrates the amplitude of the fluctuations in the development of Ukrainian Skovoroda studies. There was an evident "Skovoroda boom" at the beginning of the 20th century, during the "Ukrainian Renaissance" and at the end of the 20th, at the beginning of the 21st centuries, during the years of Ukraine independence. There was also a decline in the development of Ukrainian Skovoroda studies in the 1930s-1950s, when the Ukrainian intellectual elite was subjected to brutal extermination by Bolshevik terror.

In general, the publication of the bibliographic guide promotes the revival and deepening of Skovoroda studies.

L. Ushkalov described the prospects for the development of the Ukrainian Skovoroda studies in his textbook *Hryhorii Skovoroda: Seminars* (Ushkalov, 2004). The author presented bibliographic information on a variety of issues related to Hryhorii Skovoroda's life and work.

The scholar thinks that one of the main directions in academic Skovoroda studies is to find out the specific sources of Skovoroda's poetry, philosophy and theology.

As reported by L. Ushkalov, it is important to take into consideration the point of Skovoroda's influence on the further Ukrainian culture and philosophy, as well as the problem of his connection with the central and Western European literary and philosophical traditions of the XVII – XVIII centuries.

The thorough research of Skovoroda's universals, such as nature, affinity, type, archetype, antitype and others are to be studied in the future.

The bibliographic and methodological support of perspective academic themes is intended to be implemented in the analyzed manual.

The monograph *Sketches of the Philosophy of Hryhorii Skovoroda* (Ushkalov, 1993) which is a

popular essay about the Ukrainian philosopher's life and work was written both in Ukrainian and Russian not only for a professionally prepared audience, but for a wide range of recipients.

In addition, many issues related to the works by Skovoroda professor Ushkalov considered in his other books: *Svit ukrainsko hobaroko: filolohichni etyudy (The World of the Ukrainian Baroque: Philological Essays)* (Ushkalov, 1994), *Z istorii ukrainskoi literatury XVII–XVIII stolit (From the History of Ukrainian Literature of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)* (Ushkalov, 1999), *Esei pro ukrainske baroko (Essays on the Ukrainian Baroque)* (Ushkalov, 2006), “*Na ryshovanniakh istorii ukrainskoi literatury*”: *deshcho pro retseptsiu nashoi klasyky (On the Basis of Ukrainian Literature History: Some Points of Understanding Classical Literature)* (Ushkalov, 2007a).

The World of the Ukrainian Baroque: Philological Essays (Ushkalov, 1994) is devoted to the ideology and rhetoric of the Ukrainian Baroque literature, in particular its foundational universals, such as “imitation of nature”, “image”, “text”, “concept”, “golden mean”, “understanding sciences” etc. Among the names associated with the phenomenon of the Ukrainian literary baroque the author also mentions Hryhorii Skovoroda.

Ukrainian intellectualists' reflections of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, among which Hryhorii Skovoroda takes a respectable place, about life sense and the destiny of the Motherland, spirit motions and aesthetic preferences represented the “cogitative” plot of L. Ushkalov's book *From the History of Ukrainian Literature of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Ushkalov, 1999).

A certain generalization of previously published works by L. Ushkalov is his book *Essays on the Ukrainian Baroque* (Ushkalov, 2006). Reflecting on the Ukrainian Baroque, its sense, place and role in the history of our literature from ancient times to today, the author also relies on Hryhorii Skovoroda's doctrine.

For the book *Ukrainian Baroque Concepts of God: Seven Studies on Hryhorii Skovoroda* (Ushkalov, 2001) Professor Ushkalov got the first H. Skovoroda Kharkiv municipal prize (2002), the bibliographical guide *Two Centuries of Skovorodiana* (Ushkalov, Vakulenko, & Ievtushenko, 2002) won the first prize at Lviv International Publishers Forum in 2002 in the category «Dictionaries and Reference Books»

and received a special prize from the Ukrainian Library Association, in 2007 L. Ushkalov became the winner of Hryhorii Skovoroda International Literary and Art Prize.

Professor Leonid Ushkalov did a lot for promoting the works by Skovoroda. In particular, he was the compiler, the editor, the author of the foreword and notes to the anthology *Barokova poeziia Slobozhanshchyny (Baroque Poetry of Slobozhanshchyna)* (Ushkalov, 2002a), in which the entire collection of Skovoroda's poetry was published. He was the author of the book projects *Skovoroda Hryhorii. Sad bozhestvennykh pisen (Skovoroda Hryhorii. The Garden of Divine Songs)* (text finalization, introduction and comments by Leonid Ushkalov) (Ushkalov, 2002b), *Skovoroda H. Vybrani tvory v ukrainskykh perekladakh (Hryhorii Skovoroda. Selected Works in Ukrainian Translations)* (text finalization, a foreword and notes by L. Ushkalov) (Skovoroda, 2003), *Chyzhevskiy D. Filosofiia H.S. Skovorody (Dmytro Chyzhevskiy. H.S. Skovoroda's Philosophy)* (text finalization and foreword by Prof. Leonid Ushkalov) (Ushkalov, 2004), *Hryhorii Skovoroda* (Ushkalov, 2009) and others. Professor Ushkalov was also a scientific consultant at the Skovoroda National Literary and Memorial Museum in Skovorodynivka, made reports on Skovoroda's works at many prestigious scientific presentations (for example, at the Third Congress of the International Association of Ukrainianists in 1996 he was the head of Skovoroda workshop, and at the international congresses of the American Council Scientific Societies, in 2005 and 2007 he presented the report “*About the state and the prospects of Skovoroda's works*” and “*Textual issues related to the preparation of a new academic edition of works by Skovoroda*”).

The pinnacle of Kharkiv Skovoroda studies was the work by the professor Leonid Ushkalov in a full academic edition of Skovoroda's works, in which several institutions, in particular, Taras Shevchenko Literature Institute of National Academy of Sciences in Ukraine, H.S. Skovoroda Philosophy Institute of National Academy of Sciences in Ukraine, H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, H. Skovoroda National Literary and The Memorial Museum in Skovorodynivka and the University of Alberta (Canada) got involved. The professors from the University of Alberta Nataliia Pylypiuk and Oleg Ilnytskyi prepared the fundamental electronic concordance for this publication.

In 2010, a complete academic collection of works by Hryhorii Skovoroda was published in the Kharkiv publishing house "Maidan". It immediately became the winner in the XVI Forum of Publishers in Lviv, and in the All-Ukrainian Rating "Book of the Year" it won the first prize and the Grand Prix in the "Reader" nomination. In 2011, the second edition was published and its author was given I. Franko prize by the National Academy of Sciences Presidium of Ukraine.

Leonid Ushkalov's book "*Skovoroda, Shevchenko, Feminism ...*": *Articles 2010–2013* (2014) contained fifteen articles written during 2010–2013 which cover several historical, literary, philosophical, theological and cultural issues related to the works by Hryhorii Skovoroda (1722–1794) and Taras Shevchenko (1814–1861). Moreover, the author analyzes the problems of Ukrainian feminism in the nineteenth century, examines certain phenomena of Ukrainian literature during the reform and Baroque times, the 1920s.

Leonid Ushkalov presented the biography of the Ukrainian writer, philosopher, theologian Hryhorii Skovoroda in the book *Chasing an Uncapturable Bird: The Life of Hryhorii Skovoroda* (2017). So, this work was not only a biography of the prominent person based on rich source material but also a depiction of the vivid image of Ukraine in the XVIII century. Skovoroda's life is described in eleven chapters of the book and is framed by two separate plots – Prelude and Finale, which are intended to deepen Skovoroda's biography and show the pivotal role in the Ukrainian spiritual tradition.

Skovoroda from A to Z (2019) completes Leonid Ushkalov's Skovoroda studies. Unfortunately, it was not issued when the outstanding literary critic L. Ushkalov was alive and was published in 2019 by "Staryi Lev Publishing House". Due to the authors' efforts, this book made it possible not only for adults but also for children to understand the complex allegorical and symbolic integrals of the Ukrainian Baroque artist's work. The illustrative slogans of H. Skovoroda's creative activity, interpreted by L. Ushkalov, were intended to create in the children's and adults' imagination the integral picture of life filled with light, joy, love, faith and hope, and openness to the world.

Conclusions

The authors have analyzed the contribution of Professor Leonid Ushkalov's scientific works to

the intellectual matrix of Kharkiv Philological School and Skovoroda studies. The observational perspective of our study shows the presence and worthy contribution of Leonid Ushkalov to the study of Hryhorii Skovoroda's life and work.

Consequently, L. Ushkalov outlined the themes of the studies and made a significant contribution to the research of such complex problems about H. Skovoroda's creative activity as the source of his writings; genre variety and features of his poetry versification; fable genre as "an independent literary genre of philosophical style"; parable as "a peculiar combination of fable and philosophical dialogue"; bright mythological and biblical imagery and the original structure of treatises; deployment in magnificent baroque forms, images "from the Bible, Greek mythology, etc." (Ushkalov, 2010) and in the stream of Christian Neoplatonism philosophical and theological views in the "Socratic" dialogues of the theologian; anthropological paradigm of ontology, aesthetics, epistemology within the idea of «two natures»; deploying the idea of "knowing thyself" in the perspective of "affinity" in the reconciliation plane of human will with God's Providence; Skovoroda's philosophy of the heart; radicalism of the Origen apokatastasis in the eudemonism of the philosopher's worldview; Skovoroda's "paradox of inequality"; the idea of "deification" of a person; Skovoroda's "metaphysical Eros (Amor divinus)" in the form of "love for the Bible", Skovoroda's biblical noematics and heuristics as a comprehensive allegory of the Holy Scripture; the structure of Skovoroda's symbolic world; Skovoroda's creative activity in the context of the Ukrainian Baroque tradition; the influence of Skovoroda's works on the new, modern and contemporary Ukrainian literature and a great number of other issues, each of which has the prospect of deploying into a separate and detailed Skovoroda studies discourse.

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