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Artistic Versions of World War II in Ukrainian Socialist Realist Literature (1941–1943)

У статті досліджено український соцреалістичний канон 1941–1943 рр. У ній стверджується, що канон цього періоду відзначався відносною лібералізацією, яка виявилася в трьох тенденціях: модифікації функцій літератури, розширенні списку канонічних тем та образів, ревізії радянського життя та політики Комуністичної партії. Для періоду лібералізації канону характерні три наративи про війну. Офіційна версія війни продукована в драматичних творах Олександра Корнійчука, реабілітаційна версія створена Павлом Тичиною в поемі "Похорон друга", ревізійна версія – Олександром Довженком у кіноповісті "Україна в огні". Стаття націлена на дослідження подібностей, відмінностей та протиріч у мистецькій інтерпретації воєнного досвіду. Такий підхід спрямований на аналіз літератури 1941–1943 рр. як зразок радянської пропаганди та водночас "справжнього" мистецтва, що відображає реальну трагедію війни.
Ключові слова: український соцреалістичний канон, офіційна, реабілітаційна та ревізійна версії війни, радянська пропаганда.

В статье исследуется украинский соцреалистический канон 1941–1943 гг. В ней утверждается, что относительная либерализация – отличительная черта канона, которая характеризуется тремя тенденциями: модификацией функций литературы, расширением набора канонических тем и образов, а также ревизией советской жизни и политики партии. Три военные нарративы показательны для периода либерализации канона. Официальная версия войны создана в пьесах Александра Корнейчука, реабилитационная версия – в поэме Павла Тычины "Похорон друга", ревизионистская – в киноповести Александра Довженко "Украина в огне". Статья нацелена на исследование сходства, различия и противоречия в художественных интерпретациях военного опыта. Этот подход направлен на анализ украинской литературы 1941–1943 гг. как образца советской пропаганды и в то же время "истинных" художественных текстов, описывающих реальную трагедию военного периода.
Ключевые слова: украинский соцреалистический канон, официальная, реабилитационная, ревизионистская версии войны, советская пропаганда.

The paper deals with Ukrainian socialist realist canon of 1941–1943. It states that relative liberalization was the main feature of the canon of that period which is revealed in three tendencies: modification of literature functions, extension of canonical themes and images as well as revision of Soviet life

and Communist party's policy. The three narratives of the war are indicative for the period of canon liberalization. The official version of the war was offered in Oleksandr Korniychuk's plays, the rehabilitation version was created in Pavlo Tychyna's Funeral of a Friend poem, and the revisionist version is found in Oleksandr Dovzhenko's Ukraine in Flames cinematic novel. The article is aimed at the exploration of similarities, differences and contradictions in artistic interpretations of the war experience. This approach directed toward the analyses of 1941-1943 Ukrainian literature which can be codified as Soviet propaganda and at the same time as a "true" artistic works depicting the real tragedy of war period.

Key words: Ukrainian socialist realist canon, official, rehabilitation and revisionist versions of the war, Soviet propaganda.

The Second World War¹ forced substantial changes in the Stalinist culture which was developing in a "threatened" situation. In the context of literature, the war stimulated literary concepts modifications which revealed themselves in three tendencies.

The first was an ideological change in the role of literature and its aesthetic categories. New ways of developing literature in wartime were based on ideological and aesthetic principles established in the 1930s, a period of totalitarian culture formation. The concept of militarization was the main to be addressed in the context of totalitarian culture, particularly in literature. It was manifested in the creation of semantics of threat, aggressiveness, and harassment, embodied in the image of an enemy and focused on the theme of Soviet separateness and uniqueness. In the 1930s the ideology of militarization was created in the form of imaginary and fabricated threats. The beginning of the war gave this ideology a real meaning, activating the ideological arsenal of motivations for struggle with the enemy represented by Nazi Germany.

The real threat intensified the military strategies of Soviet power which considered literature as a tool for the militarization of Soviet consciousness and as a weapon against the enemies. Literature had to anticipate victory which was regarded as its sacred duty. According to this thesis the main ideological and aesthetic concepts were changed. Instead

¹There are at least two ways of codifications of the main phenomena I'm going to talk about. The first, which is accepted in world historiography, is WWII. The second, is the Great Patriotic War, elaborated by Soviet historiography and which reveals the specificity of the Soviet vision of the 20th century history. The first codification attests to the research approach interpreting the historical past. The second one demonstrates the priority of an ideological approach, for the Soviet writers who were Soviet patriots it was the Great Patriotic War. To avoid the contradiction between the terms I would like to stick to the word "war".

of the crucial futuristic idea directed toward communism, implemented in the socialist realist literature of 1930s, the hope of future victory predominated in literature of the war period. The same change happened to archetypical protagonist of socialist realist literature: he is depicted not as a builder of communism but rather as a victory winner.

The mobilized status of literature determined gradations of aesthetic dominants. Poetry occupied the prominent place in war literature because of the specificity of the genre: it could provide a quick response to events and create their image in suggestive and metaphorical forms, provoking readers' immediate and powerful response. Among the modes of artistic expression, journalistic works, aimed at the formation of social consciousness, predominated. They stimulated the appearance of chronicles, the dominance of the factual data and the use of poster imagery as the main tools to enhance a persuasive impact on the reader.

The circumstances of "threatened" culture stimulated the second process which was expanding the canon revealed in two ways. On the one hand, it was associated with the lifting of restrictions on previously taboo themes and images, for instance the glorious historical past of Ukraine, Ukraine as the spiritual homeland, life of immortal soul etc. On the other hand, it was related to the rehabilitation of the "imprisoned" word, its aesthetic and ontological potential. The credibility of wartime literature was determined not only by ideology but also by the power of "fiery" words and the sincerity of a writer's humanist feelings toward the fate of their Motherland.

The third tendency of the Stalinist war period culture was associated with the process of revision. The circumstances of real threat caused a significant blow at the stability of Soviet cultural myths, such as the invincibility of the Soviet army. As a result, doubts appeared in the thinking of Soviet people, which prevented cultural homogeneity and control of mental practices. The "naked" truth busted into literature, causing revisionist narratives which resulted in the modification of the socialist realist canon.

The three tendencies – modification, extension and revision – clearly show the specific period of socialist realist canon that was developing in the context of a relative liberalization during the war period. Its specificity can be found in multiple interpretations of military experience, mostly during the beginning of the war. The tendencies are reflected in the three war narratives, created in 1941–43 which was a defensive time for the Soviet army. The official version of the war was offered in Oleksandr Korniychuk's plays, the rehabilitation version was created in Pavlo Tychyna's *Funeral of a Friend* poem, and the revisionist version is found in Oleksandr Dovzhenko's *Ukraine in Flames* cinematic novel.

The official version of war in Korniychuk's plays

Oleksandr Korniychuk occupies a special place in the Ukrainian socialist realist canon being the most representative "product" of Soviet culture. The writer served it selflessly and represented it successfully. In a most effective way, the playwright showed his totalitarian essence during the war period, when he was involved in the creation of totalitarian myths, proving the priorities of Soviet ideology. His journalistic style of writing, ideological world view and dogmatic thinking contributed to the postulation of these myths and modified the status of his works of art: they are much more a social than artistic phenomenon [1, c. 95]. The annihilation of artistic truth showed that the language of power appears there in its "pure" form, disclosing the technology of totalitarian communication: when works of art are used for conveying ideology to mass consciousness.

As a war-time writer, Oleksandr Korniychuk made his debut very quickly: less than three months into the war (autumn of 1941) he wrote a comedy *Partisans in Ukrainian Steppes*. It was a time of tragic news from the front: the blockade of Kyiv, heavy battles, the absence of a strategy of waging the war. This historical context clarifies the ideological significance of Korniychuk's comedy: it fulfills the functions of ideologically "appropriate" information and rehabilitation.

The function of ideologically "appropriate" information foresees the predominance of didactic semantics. In the play anybody can find answers to the main questions raised under wartime circumstances: who is who (Korniychuk creates the images of a hero and an enemy), what to do (Korniychuk formulates a recommendation for the organization of partisan movement) and the situation is not that bad (the tragedy of the war is "muted" by humorous scenes).

The function of rehabilitation is motivated by the necessity to rescue Soviet consciousness from the inflicted injury: debunking the myth of invincibility of the Soviet army. The therapeutic semantics in the play is created in several ways. Firstly, Oleksandr Korniychuk uses the party's explanation of the army's defeat: "Вона [армія] відходить тому, що німецькі фашисти несподівано вдарили, як головорізи, на неї". (*It [the army] retreats because German fascists hit it unexpectedly like thugs* [3, c. 236]).

Secondly, the playwright creates an image of partisans who did not exist at that time, because a decree about the organization of partisan movement was about to be published. This situation attests to the fact that Korniychuk is "ahead" of reality or, in other words, anticipates the forthcoming events. Instead of chaos, the Soviet army's defeat, which

characterized the real circumstances of the beginning of the war, Korniychuk creates an image of an organized partisan community, winning significant victories far away from the front line.

Thirdly, the playwright depicts the tragedy of the situation (loss of harvest, death of people) in comic terms: opposing the tragedy of civilization with people's "faked" optimism. It should be also noted that Korniychuk employs a therapeutic technique of recognition: he uses the plot and imaginative "framework" of his very popular pre-war comedy, *In Ukrainian Steppes*. According to the plot of the play two farm leaders, who were antagonists in the past, became partners in the fight against the enemy, leading a partisan detachment.

The core of Korniychuk's vision of the war is represented by the codification of the hero and the enemy. The image of the hero is defined by the author's statement: "Ніколи радянські люди не будуть рабами німецьких фашистів" (*Soviet people will never become the slaves of German fascists* [3, с. 236]). The threat of occupation pushes the village people to retreat to a swamp where they organized a partisan detachment. Korniychuk describes the war as nation-wide: old men, women and children became partisans. This depiction of the war helps the playwright to create a generalized image of the people who defend their Motherland. Portraying them, the author employs exaggerated glorification. Partisans are depicted as brilliant strategists, who skillfully conduct several military operations: save people from the death, destroy enemy ammunitions, capture a German colonel and all fascists in the village.

Generalization is the main way of the depiction the hero, the principle of individualization can be regarded just as an additional way in the creation of this image. Conversely, the image of the enemy is particularized according to the principle of deheroization (debunking of heroic). Oleksandr Korniychuk focuses on the "internal" enemies of Soviet people: they are nationalist and Petlura followers who help German fascists in exchange for promises of private ownership of land as well as opponents of Soviet regime, who dream about the economic changes of Ukraine. The second type of enemies is German fascists. Portraying them, Korniychuk uses people's expressive codifications: *horde, infidels, fascist pigs, beats, damned souls, murderers and cannibals*. Germans are greedy, undisciplined and cowardly; they want to grab Ukrainian rich land. The culmination of negative depictions of enemies is their ignominious death: they died not in an equal battle but as captives who are not capable to fight with partisans.

Thus, the official version of the war in Korniychuk's play is based on the principle of heroism and deheroization. The writer portrays the

partisan detachment, capable of winning far away from the front line, and a helpless enemy, incapable of fighting, who can only accomplish an inglorious death. This version of the war was quickly spread because Ukrainian theatres played the comedy on the front line and elsewhere. Thanks to the comedy *Partisans in Ukrainian Steppes*, an ideologically correct vision of war was put into the Soviet mass consciousness.

Oleksandr Korniychuk creates another modification of the war myth in the play *The Front*, written a year after the comedy *Partisans in Ukrainian Steppes*. The appearance of this play was influenced by ideological necessity: the playwright is once again trying to explain the reasons for the Soviet army's defeat. The army's retreat continued, raising the question of erroneous actions of the party leadership. The Soviet authorities needed to be protected. As a result, propaganda focused on finding a fake culprit, who was supposed to embody all failures of the Soviet leadership. The play *The Front* implements this project and is aimed at an ideological search for a culprit.

The publication of this play is associated with a direct order from Stalin. Korniychuk took a vacation and finished the play in a month. But the author himself commented on the role of Stalin in a different way [1, c. 94]. When the play was finished Korniychuk asked the Central Committee of the Communist Party for the permission to have the play published, but unexpectedly received it from Stalin himself. Both versions of the circumstances which stimulated the appearance *The Front* prove that the Soviet authorities were interested to have this play. It is very illuminating that the play *The Front* was published in *Pravda*, the central newspaper of the Communist Party with the highest circulation in the Soviet Union. The timing of the play's publication is also telling: it appeared on August 24, 1942 which was the most tragic moment in the Stalingrad battle when the Soviet army was retreating. Both the place and the time of publishing demonstrate that the play was considered as a very important tool in political propaganda during the war period.

The strategic task of the play *The Front* foresees predominance of accusation. The author does not use the official version of the war created in his previous play which was based on the contrasting of hero and enemy images. The play *The Front* focuses on the highest military command on the battlefields whom playwright links to the Soviet army's defeat. The main conflict of the play took place between two military leaders who advocate different approaches to war tactics. The panoramic war plan is narrowed down to two heroes: they are both "the Soviet", but the first one is recognized as "correct" and "positive", the second one is

termed as "incorrect" and "negative". Thereby, this version of the war constructed in the play *The Front* is "internally" ideological.

The play had a huge resonance. Soviet officers wrote a letter to the Central Committee, requesting suspension of its publication, deeming it harmful to military discipline. The Soviet authorities reacted immediately: the article *About Oleksandr Korniychuk's Play "The Front"* was published in *Pravda* on August 29, 1942. It supported sharp criticism of the "backwardness of military leaders", calling for an eradication of obsolete military strategies. Thus, the creation of the image of "inner" enemy was aimed at the mobilization of Soviet consciousness in the struggle with "external" enemies.

The comedy *Mister Perkins's Mission in the Country of the Bolsheviks* published in 1943 is ideologically and artistically the weakest of Korniychuk's war period plays. The comedy is written as a response to the turning point in the war when the Soviet army stopped the Nazi offensive and the second front opened. These conditions are the stimulus for the pathos of victory in the comedy. It is aimed at instilling confidence in the inevitable victory over the enemy and a belief in the ally's support. It also plays a significant role in rehabilitating allegiance in the mass consciousness to its Soviet leaders. The years of defensive war (1941–1943) damaged the credibility of the Soviet authorities. Korniychuk constructs a vision of the Soviet regime's uniqueness. To implement this task, he uses the principle of indirect characterizing. Mr. Perkins, an American businessman, visits the Soviet Union to understand its political and cultural peculiarities. The conclusion of his investigation is directed to the postulation of the idea of the greatness of the Soviet country: "Слабке місце радянського народу полягає в тому, що він сам ще не осяг того, що він зробив і що може зробити" (*The weakness of the Soviet people lies in the fact that they have not comprehended what they have done and what they can still do* [1, c. 105]).

Thus, the core of Korniychuk's official version of the war is the glorification of the Soviet authorities and the invincibility of the Soviet people led by the Communist party. This version made a great contribution to the propaganda of the Soviet policy.

Rehabilitation version of war: Pavlo Tychyna's *Funeral of a Friend*

The image of a human soul, which had been under taboo during 1930s in socialist realist literature, was rehabilitated during the war period as an image of suffering and struggling for victory. The return of the human soul to the ontological values of totalitarianism can be considered

as the most important feature of war literature. In this context the status of Tychna's *Funeral of a Friend* is most significant.

The particularity of Tychna's poem is determined by the focus on the spiritual experience of a lyric protagonist. The image of the protagonist's soul is created as coexistence of the tragic with the optimistic. The tragic is depicted in images of the war, an unknown soldier's funeral and an approaching storm. The optimistic is created by the type of the protagonist (the concept of the heroic), the narration consisting of declarative and propagandistic discourse and the plot's elements of a dream about the future.

Three ways of the protagonist's perception of the world are depicted in the poem. The first one is determined by the senses: sight, hearing, taste etc. The world experienced as a tragedy is depicted by acoustic and visual images. The semantics of anxiety, tragedy and mourning predominates in the first stage of perception devoted to the creation of images of landscapes with an emphasis on natural world awaiting a storm. The image of a weeping orchestra plays a central role at this level of the protagonist's perception of the world.

Requiem sounds create an appropriate emotional context at the second stage of perception associated with the process of narrative formation. The lyrical protagonist clearing snow sees the funeral of an unknown soldier, remembers his dead friend and this prompts him to join the funeral procession. Returning home, he dreams of a victorious future.

The depiction of the funeral scene is the main contribution to the formation of tragic pathos of the poem. The protagonist's consciousness is focused on optimistic motives. This contradiction should be regarded, on the one hand, as a vitalism, appropriate in the situation of the war, and on the other, as an ideological stimulus. That is why ideological motives are used to create the pathos of optimism.

The first motive associated with exaggerated glorification of friend's history is shown in mythical categories. The second motive focuses on the funeral speaker, who symbolizes the voice of Soviet authorities, and likens the poem to examples of journalistic writing and Soviet propaganda. The main idea of the speech, a call to struggle, is embodied in the image of the "red sword". The speaker depicts a Europe, which rises up against fascism, thereby stressing the decisive role of the Soviet Motherland in the war. The third motive connected with the dream of a communist future, uses famous socialist realist clichés, such as the image of the land as a natural paradise, the industrial greatness of the country, the hero as a warrior and the Soviet authorities leading it forward.

The traces of ideological thinking at the second stage of perception turn into the main principle of the third stage in formatting the coexistence of the tragic and the optimistic. As a result, a philosophical conclusion was drawn: the tragedy of the situation (funeral of an unknown soldier) transforms into the tragedy of life, which is depicted in terms of eschatology.

The poet creates his own eschatological myth aimed at not at the state of death but rather at constituting political strategies of the Soviet Union. The main point of the myth is overcoming the chaos and renewing the order embodied in a poetic image of history. The myth is also reinforced by the idea of immortality, which sounds as the main motive in the spiritual enlightenment of the hero. This idea emerges as a result of sincere human empathy caused by the funeral and the desire to overcome death. At the same time, it is connected with totalitarian ideology directed at improving the "spiritual" story.

To conclude, we should say that two artistic practices have merged in the poetic world of Tychyna's poem. High artistic values, firstly revealed in Tychyna's poetry collection *Solar Clarinets*, in the poem manifested themselves in a multi-level construction of the protagonist's world, in which visual and acoustic images and semantics of the tragic prevail. The "totalitarian" dominance is traced to the formation of Soviet eschatological myth, the glorification of the heroic and optimistic. The connection of two artistic practices forms the rehabilitative vision of the war, as declared in the artistic expression of the poet and the creation of an image of human soul. This version of the war is close to the official Soviet view with its predominance of ideology and propagandistic type of poetic thinking.

The revisionist version of war:

Oleksandr Dovzhenko's *Ukraine in Flames*

The war time became a special period in Oleksandr Dovzhenko's literary activities. From the very beginning of the war the writer actively published his artistic and journalistic works in central and military newspapers. His stories *The Renegade* and *The Night before the Fight* were published as separate books in millions of copies. Stalin approved *The Night before the Fight* because Dovzhenko "surpassed" his order of "not retreating" and embodied it in the tale. Stalin's reaction shows that the relationship between the artist and the authorities functioned effectively. However, the traumatic experience of the war changed the priorities in writer's thinking, programming revisionism as the dominance of his works of art in the war period. The cinematic novel *Ukraine in Flames* can be recognized as the most striking example of Dovzhenko's war vision in which official and revisionist tendencies coexist.

Author's journalistic style of writing provides his clear position with expressive accents and predetermined the literary specificity of the novel. Creating the vision of the war in Ukraine, whose population was in different military camps and under occupation, Dovzhenko regards the war as "fair", "sacred" and a "liberating", in other words, he reproduces the official Soviet codes. They can be found in socialist realist scheme, based on polarization of hero and enemy.

The domination of heroism idea in Dovzhenko's vision of the war is associated with its chronology from the time of the Soviet army's retreat to the victorious liberation of the Ukrainian lands. The idea of heroism embodied in the generalized images of the Soviet army and a partisan detachment is unfolded in individualized protagonists. One of the most important images is that of the Soviet soldier Vasyl Kravchyna. The protagonist's first appearance is accompanied by his negative self-evaluation expressed by double repetition of the statement: "Я не герой" (*I am not a hero* [2, с. 155]). This introduction results from the tragic time: the soldier retreated with his army leaving his Fatherland to the desecration of the enemy. The main point, which changed the hero's negative self-evaluation, was a night of love with the Ukrainian girl Olesya.

The image of Olesya foresees broader possibilities of interpretation. Olesya embodies the idea of Motherland which is to be liberated. Thanks to personal intimate experience Kravchyna gains an experience of a nation-wide scale: he formulates the basic motivation of why and how he must fight. As a result, Kravchyna created a new self-identification code and he is symbolically reborn as a hero and warrior: "Я зрозумів, Олесю, – стежка назад до тебе є одна, один є шлях. Шлях геройства. Треба бути героєм і ненавидіти ворога" (*I understand Olesya – there is only one path leading back to you. The hero's path. I must be a hero and hate the enemy* [2, с. 159]).

In another scene Vasyl Kravchyna, now a military commander, a brave warrior and a wise mentor enriched by war experience, goes on the offensive. Another dominant clue in the heroic code is established: victory and magnificence. Kravchyna's ability to formulate "the truth", to produce an appropriate vision of the war is considered by Dovzhenko as "perfect" heroism. The hero is portrayed among liberated peasants and soldiers during a confidential conversation and is deemed to be a spiritual authority. This evaluation is codified as superiority and extraordinary.

The poetics of heroism created in the image of Vasyl Kravchyna unfolds in a broader plane as a history of the formation of an invincible Soviet army. At the beginning of the novel Dovzhenko concentrates on

the depiction of retreating soldiers in a situation of disorientation, lack of directions and confusion. The main type of soldier in this time is the heroic martyr who gives his life trying to stop the enemy. The writer concentrates on searching for the factor which turns soldiers from war sufferers into the winners. The author believes that this clear motivation and valuable orientations serve as the basic military principles of mass consciousness formation signaling the birth of a holistic, combat-ready and perfect military team who can win the war.

The generalized image of Soviet defenders is completed by the description of a partisan detachment in the style of Ukrainian folk songs. The fighters are described as tireless folk heroes, liberating their native land from enemies. The Cossack semantics is crucial for the depiction of the partisans which gives the family name *Zaporozhtsi* (Ukr. Запорожці) to the protagonists.

The image of Lavrin Zaporozhets is central for the representation of partisans. He is portrayed as the "father" in direct sense (as head of a large family, chairman of a collective farm in the past) and metaphorically, personifying the wisdom and spiritual grandeur of the invincible Ukrainian people. Lavrin Zaporozhets is a skilful tactician and strategist in fight with the enemies. Forced to accept the post of village mayor under German occupation, he conducts a dual policy: demonstrates loyalty to the German authorities and at the same time undermines their regime. After joining the partisan detachment, Lavrin becomes its successful leader.

The analysis of Dovzhenko's vision of the heroic in depicting the Soviet army and the partisan detachment leads to the conclusion that the success of this vision can be explained by the combination of Soviet ideological text with folklore. This synthesis turns into an attempt to link the official version of the war to Ukrainian historiosophic ideas which is seen in the end of Dovzhenko's novel when the partisan detachment meets with Soviet soldiers.

Besides the hero image, Dovzhenko's bipolar vision of the war is based on the depiction of the enemy. The main function of the latter is to underscore and highlight "sanctity" and "righteousness" of the hero. The enemy image is represented by Germans, their Italian allies, kurkuls and nationalists. This "traitors of the people" are mentioned only once when a judge pronounces a sentence on them. This differentiation demonstrates a clear gap between "patriotic" and "alien" Ukrainians, revealing Soviet codes in Dovzhenko's text. Soviet ideology also influenced Dovzhenko's vision of Europe as an enemy: "Європа на наших грудях! Вся. Два роки! Весь метал, вся хімія" (*Europe has been on our chests. All of Europe! For*

two years! All metal, all the chemicals [2, с. 230]). The "shameful history of Europe" is codified as a synonym of the war, reinforcing the importance of confrontations between Soviet Union and European countries.

The main thrust of the enemy depiction concerns on the Germans whose representation is quite broad: *occupier, invader, Nazi, Hitler's soldier, fascist, SS man*. The specificity of enemy image construction is subject to a definitive assessment by the author. Despising and denouncing the enemy, Dovzhenko rhetorically and with intransigent pathos, debunks and "annihilates" him. It is illuminative that Dovzhenko does not differentiate between the German army and German people, generalizing his depiction of the enemy, bestowing negative characteristics on it and imposing a accusation on all German people.

Dovzhenko's position convincingly demonstrates that his artistic thinking is infected by Soviet ideology. It is well-known that during the 1920s Dovzhenko lived in Germany, served as consular secretary for the trade mission of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic and attended lectures at the Berlin Higher Academic School of Fine Arts. The writer's biography shows that he knew German culture and everyday life of German people quit well. But his depiction of Germans was subordinated to ideological expediency, sacrificing artistic truth while creating a myth of a "worthless" enemy based on distortion of reality, grotesque imagery and exaggeration. Dovzhenko reveals his knowledge of the German culture in the novel only at the linguistics level allowing Germans to express themselves in their native language.

Constructing a generalized image of Germans as occupiers, Dovzhenko humiliates them, showing that they care only about their own stomach, demonstrating an elementary, alimentary vitality. The writer depicts drinking and wondering Germans, who, filling their needs, kill, destroy and rape. Germans are portrayed as uneducated; the logic of their behavior is explained by the mechanical execution of orders. The main motive for their participation in the war is economic benefits: Nazi authorities promised them hectares of Ukrainian rich land. Hence the corresponding codification is directed at debunking the heroic image of German soldiers: Dovzhenko calls them "docile German philistines".

The apogee in the scornful depiction of the enemy is his inglorious death: the foe is annihilated not as a courageous warrior but as a criminal. Dovzhenko draw the reader's attention to the following scenes: bees stinging German soldiers to death; cowardly behavior of soldiers captured by partisans; a dead German soldier whose mouth is stuffed with Ukrainian earth.

The tendency of Dovzhenko's official version of the war is, therefore, intensified by creating a cheering pathos for heroes and pejorative pathos for the enemy. The bipolar pathos is motivated by ideological expediency as well as by Dovzhenko's sincere human empathy. Being a Soviet patriot, he activated the entire arsenal of romantic poetry for the creation of the official vision of the war.

This vision does not cover the whole potential of the author's perception of the war. The catastrophe of civilisation predetermines the necessity of an opposing view: tragic reality forces the perception of war as suffering, "undermining" the official version of the war. Using expressionist aesthetics, Dovzhenko depicts the terrifying reality of war: devastated land, human sacrifices, and broken people's lives. The threat of society disintegration becomes the biggest shock for the writer. Instead of depicting a monolithic Soviet people, united by the idea to overcome a hated enemy, Dovzhenko portrays the fragmentation of society into wartime categories: refugees, the occupied, deserters, Nazi policemen and prisoners. This dissolution destroys the uniqueness in images of hero and enemy. The writer depicts the dysfunction in communication between members of the Soviet community when refugees hate those who are willing to remain in the occupation zone, while the occupied people condemn refugees, fleeing their land. Dovzhenko tries to understand the cause of this social catastrophe, closely related to the Soviet defeat in the first years of the war.

The analysis of the realities of the war led Dovzhenko to a dramatic conclusion: the cause of the catastrophe is in the strain of the Soviet consciousness, which was formed as a result of ill-conceived policies of the Soviet state. At first this analysis is expressed through the voice of the German Colonel von Krause, who knows the history and psychology of the Ukrainian people quit well and skillfully uses this knowledge in developing military strategies. This approach to the creation of an enemy image conflicts with Dovzhenko's personally created myth of enemies as "thick-headed geeks". Krause admires the vitality of Ukrainians and their ability to die, but at the same time draws attention to their shortcomings: "Ці люди абсолютно позбавлені вміння прощати один одному незгоди навіть в ім'я інтересів загальних, високих. У них немає державного інстинкту ..., вони не вивчають історії. Дивовижно. Вони вже двадцять п'ять літ живуть негативними лозунгами одкидання бога, власності, сім'ї, дружби. У них від слова нація остався тільки прикметник. У них немає великих істин. Тому серед них так багато зрадників..." (*These people have absolutely no ability to forgive each other even for the sake of common, high interests. They do not have an instinct for statehood [...], they do not study*

history. It's unbelievable. They have already lived twenty five years among negative slogans condemning God, property, family and friendship. From the word "nation" only an adjective remains for them. They do not embrace high truths. That is why they have so many traitors... [2, с. 164]).

It is evident that the "Soviet enemy" formulated the social diagnosis of Soviet society: ignorance of history, loss of ideological orientation, the corrosion of moral values. The same diagnosis is repeated in the author's commentaries and his protagonist's speeches, turning into the key motivation for his creative thinking: the vision of the war unfolds in a criticism of the entire Soviet society.

Taking into account the closed nature of Soviet cultural myths, the degree of revision is very impressive: Dovzhenko criticizes the party's dogmas and their implementation. He points out the difference between the supreme ideas of the party's program and the spiritual impoverishment of the people, postulating the party's line and the apathy to the fate of a particular individual.

The logic of Dovzhenko's revision foresees not only a critical reflection but also the construction of a program of rehabilitation for society: using metaphorical language, the writer takes the position of a social physician. He believes that the war stimulates mobilization of society's internal potential, contributing to catharsis, release of spiritual waste and cynicism. Hence, a strategy is announced by the principal, positive hero: "Кожен із нас мусить одержати дві перемоги. Перемогу над загарбником-фашистом, вітчизняну спільну велику перемогу. І другу перемогу свою малу, – над безліччю своїх недостатків, над грубістю, дурістю"

(Each of us has to have two victories. Victory over the fascist-occupier, a national, common, great victory. And the second, small victory over numerous personal shortcomings, rudeness and stupidity [2, с. 231]).

Dovzhenko bases his rehabilitation program on both approaches. The first one is situational and associated with stabilization of social consciousness and consolidation of society. The writer offers emotional impulses that stimulate spiritual purification: the enemy can have only hatred and revenge, countrymen possess compassion, understanding and forgiveness.

The second approach concerns the perspective. It focuses on the intensification of the archetypal categories of Ukrainian mentality: family, nation and homeland. Dovzhenko speaks of their priority numerous times, practically trying to "treat" Ukrainian consciousness.

Dovzhenko depicts members of the Zaporozhets family, bravely fighting with the enemy on different fronts, making significant contributions

to the victory. Portraying the Zaporozhets family, the writer points to the family idea of invincibility. It is reinforced by another idea of generations personified in the image of Olesya Zaporozhets. Mutilated physically and spiritually, she remains clear and conscious of her mission as family continuer. Family is a part of a larger community of people, whose life is based on the unity of generations. One of the last scenes in the novel is very symbolic: Soviet soldiers rest in the cemetery where they feel deep connection with their own past. Dovzhenko insists that the immortality of a nation is in this connection. That is why the writer often refers to the archetypal vision of the war as a confrontation of immortal people and deadly enemies. Dovzhenko believes that success in this confrontation is stimulated by the idea of the Motherland. At the same time, he argues that Soviet Ukrainians lost the idea of Motherland which caused their defeat in the beginning of the war. To make up for this loss, the writer reconstructs the image of Ukraine as a spiritual Motherland which can be regarded as the core of Dovzhenko's worldview.

Therefore, Dovzhenko's vision of the war is based on two levels. The first one is official which postulates the "probable", "desired" and ideologically motivated perception. The second one is revisionist, appearing as a result of Dovzhenko's deep analyses of the war circumstances. The predictability of critical reflections, their depth and emotional conviction predetermined the prioritization in his revisionist view of the war and the corresponding reading of the novel.

Ukraine in Flames was sharply condemned by the Soviet authorities, Stalin in particular. This reaction can be explained by its attack on the socialist realist canon: the writer uses the text of his novel not just to reproduce an ideological scheme but to criticise the social strain and promote his own view of how to overcome social disharmony. Dovzhenko's cinematic novel was banned, and the film was not created. However, the novel was published in the mid-1960-s and played a significant role in the deconstruction of the socialist realist canon, replacing the dominant romantic and celebratory view of the war with its critical and tragic vision.

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