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Taras Shevchenko and Contemporaneity. To the 200th Anniversary of the Birth

The actuality of the article lies in the fact that just in the jubilee year Shevchenko's prophetic word finds its response in people's hearts and is perceived as a particularly modern one in Ukraine as well as abroad.

The aim of the research is to illustrate the present-day perception of T. Shevchenko's creative work in Ukrainian realities; to briefly analyze the linguistic and stylistic peculiarities of the translations of his poetry as well as the possibility to bring the philosophical views and power of Shevchenko's word in foreign interpretations.

The talented translations by E. L. Voynich, John Weir, V. Rich render the wealth of T. Shevchenko's poetic language, its emotionality, melodiousness, rhythmical structure as well as linguistic peculiarities of the poet's individual style. These interpretations make it possible to comprehend the spirit and the inner power of Shevchenko's verses, to bring the national colouring, freedom-loving ideas into English-language embodiment. The creative work of T. Shevchenko in these translations gets a new actual sounding and delivers the poetic beauty of the Ukrainian word to world literature.

Keywords: *contemporaneity of T. Shevchenko poetry, translations, individual style.*

Formulation of the research problem. This year, in March, all the Ukrainian-language and world community celebrated the bicentenary birth of Taras Shevchenko, the most outstanding Ukrainian poet. It is just nowadays as never before the prophetic word of Taras finds its response in the hearts of people because we understand Shevchenko's creative work as much as we understand ourselves and our present time. The poet's national and political lyrics which was so afraid of in tsarist and Soviet time has sounded by a voice of truth, goodness and justice with a new power.

An analysis of the recent researches and publications. Beginning from the latest of the 19th century and up to nowadays a many-sided creative work of the Ukrainian genius has been considered in numerous explorations of the authorized scientists, publicists, translators: K. Andrusyshen, M. Vozniak, E. L. Voynich, I. Dziuba, S. Yefremov, M. Zhulynskiy, P. Zaitsev, R. Zorivchak, A. Yensen, V. Kushnir, N. Koroliuk, O. Novytskiy, O. Ogonovskiy, Y. Pogrebennyk, V. Rich, I. Franko and others.

The aim of the research is to illustrate the present-day perception of T. Shevchenko's creative work in Ukrainian realities; to briefly analyze the linguistic and stylistic peculiarities of the translations of his poetry as well as the possibility to bring the philosophical views and power of Shevchenko's word in foreign interpretations.

Exposition of the main material. The German theorist of Art I.-R. Bekher compared the author to "the determinant point" [1, p. 97], due to which we can see all the picture of the world as a whole, to look ahead as well as back. This point opens the contemporary, the past and the future, reveals our eyes and gives us the opportunity to get at the matters' root. In fact, Shevchenko's creative work surely turns us back into the famous and tragic past of the Ukrainian people or it deeply penetrates into the inner world of a man, or reflects regularity of events:

Борітеся – поборете,
Вам Бог помагає!

Battle on – and win your battle!
God Himself will aid you;

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За вас правда, за вас слава
І воля святая! [2, р. 242].

At your side fight truth and glory,
Right and holy
freedom [3, р. 289-290].

Встане правда!
встане воля! [2, р. 241].

Liberty and right
shall triumph [3, р. 289].

As far as daring is concerned it should be noted that Shevchenko was the first to dare to create a lyrical pamphlet, political satire in the new Ukrainian literature that is his poem "The Dream". Ivan Dziuba, the Ukrainian specialist in literature and distinguished public figure, stated that Shevchenko had risked to criticize Power of that time what nobody had dared to do before, except perhaps Petefi and Hugo. "They scoffed at monarchs at that period when their peoples were rising in rebellion against them, but Shevchenko did it at those times when the majority of the public, even being liberal, could speak of their earthly sovereigns in no other way as with loyal trembling. Shevchenko's poetry is a constant judgment of any despotism in general" [4, p. 10-11].

The works by the Great poet differ not only in their original satirical and sarcastic direction but in a peculiar inside connection with song folklore and national coloring. It should be mentioned that a Ukrainian people's song had been of particular significance in formation of Shevchenko since his childhood. The Ukrainian nation being enslaved kept all the wealth of the eternal culture in its songs. Ukrainian people were singing of their far and nearer past, of their hard and unendurable epoch [5, p. 7]. The people were keeping their political and esthetical ideals in those songs. Not perceiving this essence one cannot penetrate into the verses of the prominent genius and comprehend Shevchenko's intonations with light melodic and nature of song. Taras who was a sensitive child observed interesting rites and the peculiarities of the people's mode of life. He knew plenty of people's songs, absorbed the history and folklore so that later on to represent selfhood of his nation in highly gifted works.

Taras' destiny filled with pain of life "in lackeys" and joyless orphanhood, yet opened some light-colored sides before him. When a youth of seventeen he found himself in Petersburg, in the city where Shevchenko was living for many years and where a number of important events in his life happened. Here he studied drawing in a professional way, wrote his first verses and a romantic ballad "Bewitched" ('Prychynna'). The talents of a young Ukrainian were remarked and highly estimated by his contemporaries that allowed the famous artists with world names to make the happiest day of Taras Shevchenko's life nearer – to become a free man. Since then he had an opportunity to gain high academic education and develop his talents in painting and poetry. It should be mentioned that Shevchenko made engraving with great inspiration and improved his mastering by working at etchings. A distinct depicting in deep shades as well as high technique of his works caused admiration and respect of the artists of those times. Still at his life he was the most appreciated just as a master of engraving for the development of which he got the title of academician in 1860.

On the historical and cultural background of the 19-th century Shevchenko stood out as the man of all-round culture and broad knowledge who always thought independently and originally. Shevchenko was well acquainted with world literature and arts beginning from ancient times up till his days. Nevertheless, he had his own thinking and his own world-viewed system and he was going towards truth by his own way. Shevchenko's genius lay just in the fact that he accumulated in himself all creative potential of many-millions Slavonic people, the spirit result of many generations. He arose before that people with a great mission of further improvement of karma of the Ukrainian people and approach of the latter to truth [6, p. 185-186].

As it is known, at the beginning of the 19-th century the problem of establishing the Ukrainian language, namely the Ukrainian new literary language was becoming more pointed. It was not acknowledged, it was forbidden, restricted. It was given a secondary role and it was called as 'peasant', 'domestic'. With the appearance of the 'Kobzar' in 1840 Taras Shevchenko put Ukrainian literature in the range of European literature and initiated indisputable right of Ukrainian to independent development. The poems

included in the collection impressed with its perfection, song-like beauty of an artistic word, exactness as well as its simplicity of the poet's deep thoughts:

Думи мої, думи мої,
Лихо мені з вами! [2, p. 41].

O my thoughts, my heartfelt thoughts
I am troubled for you [3, p. 141].

Серце мліло, не хотіло
Співать на чужині... [2, p. 41].

Heart was reeling, was unwilling
To sing among strangers... [3, p. 143].

Shevchenko holding forth timeless ideals of goodness and light became that very poet who belongs not to Ukraine only. He led the Ukrainian people's pain and its national problems through his poetic soul. But those were the problems of common to mankind in terms of significance. They became integral part of many national cultures. Shevchenko as a genius 'smelted' the ideas and feelings of the Ukrainian people into spiritual gaining of all the mankind. Taras Shevchenko's grandeur was relevantly spoken of by C. H. Andrusyshen, the Canadian translator: "Shevchenko's a volcanic spirit, towering titan-like above his own people, and high to be seen and heard by other nations of the world as he proclaims to all mankind the universally applicable virtues by which the moral fibres of humanity thrive and are strengthened. In the history of Eastern Europe he was one of the leading formative democratic forces, contributing, as a champion of Liberty, to the social betterment of men and to peaceful coexistence among them. The world has need of him, and of men like him, at this dire and perilous hour" [7, p. XI].

The prominent Ukrainian connoisseur in translation R. P. Zorivchak marked fairly well that the 'Kobzar' would be quite enough to make Shevchenko's poetry become that 'burning bush' which passed us through a vast desert of decay, slavery and discouragement toward a free, independent Ukraine' [8, p. 154]. No wonder that Shevchenko's flaming and patriotic poetry caused a reaction of representatives of world literature. The first poet's works were translated in the days of his life as early as in the year of 1856 when Herbel' performed their translations into Russian; in 1857 the poem 'The Haidamaky' was translated into Polish.

This poem was the first work by Shevchenko that became known in the German-language surrounding already in the year of 1843. Attention was paid to it by Jan Peter Jordan, the eminent specialist of Slavic languages and editor of the journal 'The Annual of Slav Literature, Art and Science.' But the first translations into German were carried out later on. In 1870 a Tirol poet Y. H. Obrist published his book titled as 'Taras Gryhorovych Shevchenko, the Ukrainian poet. The Outline of Life', the supplement to which became the translations of 16 works by Shevchenko'. The collection comprised 3 parts from the poem 'The Haidamaky', 'Hamaliya', 'The Night of Taras', 'The Rusalka', 'When I die, then make my grave' and others. Those translations were criticized in many ways fore they were done with the aid of contractors and could not render songlike nature, poetic intonations as well as rhythmic melody of the original. However, H. Obrist was the first to pay attention of German-language readers and critics to Shevchenko's creative work and gave a well-grounded description of his literary heritage.

The first really poetical translations of Shevchenko's works into German are considered to be the studies by I. Franko to whom belong translations of 22 verses from the 'Kobzar'. In addition, two translations of 'Testament' were performed by Franko: the first version was done in 1888 and the second one was carried out in 1903. It's his second variant which was regarded by experts as 'the achievement of translating art' [9, p. 86]. Franko's explorations such as 'The Ukrainian-Russ Literature' (1899), 'Taras Shevchenko and His Testament' (1903), 'Taras Shevchenko' (1914), 'The Dedication' (1914) published in periodicals of German and Austria-Hungary helped German-language public be acquainted with philosophical and ideological fundamentals of life and creativity of the great poet, his ideal of man.

The next step and the most active attempt to approach Shevchenko's poetry to German-language readers relates to the end of the 30-th and the beginning of the 50-th years of the XIX century. A group of German poets having left views namely A. Kurelly,

E. Vainert, G. Gupert and others took part in translating the 'Kobzar'. They did not know the Ukrainian language therefore they used the Russian translations, that is the versions were actually made by the contractors. In the year of 1951 in the Moscow Publishing House of foreign literature a two volume German-language collection of the 'Kobzar' was at last issued though with a rather infelicitous ideological foreword. No doubt, in order to see a genius creation in Shevchenko's works not only quality and perfection of artistic translations were necessary, but also the possibility, as the poet himself deemed, 'with not lying lips to say the truth' [2, p. 439].

In world literature the English-language Shevchenkiana is the most popular one. In 1868 Agapy Honcharenko, a Ukrainian immigrant and well-known figure of liberation democratic movement of the XIX-th century, published a free translation of excerpts from the poem 'The Caucasus' in San Francisco. However, that first attempt cannot be qualified as translation in modern terms of the word, but it just conveyed for the first time Shevchenko's word to the former compatriots on the American continent.

The famous fiction writers (E. L. Voynich, V. Reach), translators (O. Ivah, John Veer, Jack Lyndsay, P. P. Selvor), Professors of Slavonic (K. O. Mennig, V. Kirkconnel, K. T. Andrusyshyn) tried to represent the talent of T. Shevchenko to a wide circle of English-language readers. A number of English-Language publications were issued mainly in Canada and the USA as well as in Great Britain, Germany, Moscow, Kyiv. Some of Shevchenko's verses ('The Night of Taras', 'Days are Passing, Nights are Passing', 'O My Thoughts, My Heartfelt Thoughts', 'Beside the House, the Cherry's Flowering', 'Testament') have several translations.

Ethel Lilian Voynich, an English writer, translator and composer, is counted to be one of the most pre-eminent English interpreters of T. Shevchenko. She took an active part in the common European democratic movement of the end of the XIX-th century, was personally acquainted with Ivan Franko and some other outstanding Slavonic figures of culture. E. Voynich learned the Ukrainian language and was well acquainted with the Ukrainian literary heritage. An active life position, poetic and musical talent gave E. Voynich the opportunity, as to nobody earlier, to perceive the spirit of Shevchenko's poems and render their specific song-like melodiousness, national tonality, freedom-loving ideas into the English-language transformations.

Only in 1911 in London the translator published a collection of 'Six lyrics by Taras Shevchenko and 'The Lay of Merchant Kalashnikov' by Mykhail Lermontov' devoted to the 50-th anniversary of the Ukrainian poet's death date. The published collection included 'Dig my grave', 'From Day to Day', 'I care not...', 'The Reaper', 'Winter' and a lyrical preface to the poem 'Princess'. The translations by E. Voynich differ in esteem to a profound contents of the original. The poetess skillfully conveys the singularity of the style, the beauty of artistic peculiarities, the rhythmical structure and melodic reiterations used by Shevchenko in the English-language variant:

І все заснуло, і не знаю,
Чи я живу,
чи доживаю [2, p. 255]

Everything sleeps; and I? I ponder:
Do I yet live,
or do I wander [10, p. 25].

Минають дні,
минають ночі [2, p. 255].
А дай жити,
серцем жити [2, p. 255].

From day to day,
from night to night [10, p. 25].
Let me live,
and live in spirit [10, p. 25].

In her translation of 'Dig my grave' E. Voynich preserves original rhythmic, a strong stress and the inner tension of the verse that allows to consider it up to now one of the most perfect English-language interpretations:

Поховайте та вставляйте,
Кайдани порвіте
І вражою злою кров'ю
Волю окропіте [2, p. 257].

Bury me, be done with me,
Rise and break your chain,
Water your new liberty
With blood for rain [10, p. 32].

John Weir (Ivan Fedorovych Viv'yurskiy), a Canadian of the Ukrainian lineage, was a talented English-speaking translator of the second half of the 19th century. During his life he translated 29 Shevchenko's poetic works, a prosaic foreword to the poem of 'The Haidamaky', the narrative 'The Artist', the poet's autobiographic letter and some excerpts from his diary. John Weir, being a translator with the Ukrainian root, felt melodiousness of Shevchenko's lines, understood a social foundation of the poet's artistic images.

The translation of the poem 'The Caucasus' in John Weir's interpretation is reckoned as one of the best acquisitions of the English-language Shevchenkiana. It should be noted that this work ranks a particular place in creativeness of T. Shevchenko himself and his translators. The poet embodied the idea which is common to mankind, that is the idea of peoples' struggle for freedom as an expression of higher justice. When in 1840 and later years the tsarist Russia led the war of grasp against the liberation movement of highlanders, the official press cynically called those actions the subduing of wild tribes. A common thinking of the Russians was offended by the vice of chauvinism and the imperial patriotism. Only some people had the boldness to send a voice for the defense of freedom. T. Shevchenko was amongst them. The lines from 'The Caucasus' seem to sound actually as never before, and the English-language rendering bears the idea of will, freedom and human dignity in the whole world:

Не вмирає душа наша,
Не вмирає воля.
І неситий не виоре
На дні моря поле [2, p. 241].

Our spirit never can be downed,
Our striving to be free.
The sateless one will never plow
The bottom of the sea [11, p. 187].

Vira Rich (Faith Elizabeth Joan Rich), the British poetess, specialist of literature, journalist belongs to the most outstanding and talented translators of Shevchenko's works in the second half of the 19-th century. Studying at Oxford University and later in the Institute of Slav Languages and Literature in London University she was keen on the power and beauty of the Ukrainian artistic word. Even her first name Faith the poetess translated into Ukrainian. In 1959 the first translation by Vira Rich that is the poem 'The Caucasus' and her exploration of the work was published in London. The translator rendered the wealth of the poetic language and its emotionality in a talented way, maintained thematic and stylistic diversity of the work, brought T. Shevchenko's idea of the impossibility of ruining the will of peoples for freedom to the English-language readers:

Встане правда!
встане воля! [2, p. 241].

Liberty and right
shall triumph! [3, p. 289].

Vira Rich was full of responsibility for each word of the original in her numerous translations, skillfully preserved artistic form of the poems, professionally reproduced stylistic elements immanent in Shevchenko's creative manner: reiterations, metaphors, transformations:

Якби знала, що покине –
Була б не любила;
Якби знала, що загине –
Була б не пустила;
Якби знала – не ходила б
Пізно за водою [2, p. 45].

Had she known he'd go away,
She'd have refrained from loving,
Had she known that he would perish,
She'd have stopped him leaving;
Had she known – she'd not have gone
So late to fetch the water [3, p. 117].

Вітре буйний,
вітре буйний!
Ти з морем говориш,
Збуди його, заграй ти з ним,
Спитай, синє море [2, p. 14].

Wild wind blowing,
wild wind blowing!
With the sea you're speaking,
Rouse the dark-blue sea, play with it,
Ask the news I'm seeking [3, p. 87].

Широкий Дніпр не гомонить:
Розбивши вітер
чорні хмари
Ліг біля моря
одпочить [2, p. 10].

The Dnipro flows on silently,
The wind has scattered
the black clouds
And lain to rest
beside the sea [3, p. 77].

Vira Rich' translations carry the poetic beauty of the Ukrainian word to world literature and belong to the brightest achievements of the English-language Shevchenkiana.

Conclusions. Taras Shevchenko's poetry long before has become an imperishable and important part of the inner nature of the Ukrainian nation. 'Shevchenko for us is not only what is studied but also what is lived with', I. Dzyuba noted fairly [4, p. 15]. Shevchenko is also the symbol of all those who struggle for their dignity wherever in the world. Really, as far as people will withstand their own and national dignity, strive for liberty in a broad sense of the word, the creativity of the great poet will be contemporary, close to all mankind, just as each Shevchenko's word and each his thought about Ukraine:

Свою Україну любіть,
Любіть її... Во время люте,
В остатню тяжкую минуту
За неї Господа
моліть [2, p. 284].

Love your dear Ukraine, adore her,
Love her... in fierce time of evil,
In the last dread hour of struggle
Fervently beseech
God for her [3, p. 351].

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**Тарас Шевченко і сучасність.
До 200-річчя з дня народження**

Розглядається сприйняття творчості Тараса Шевченка в сучасних реаліях. Показано, що національні проблеми в його творах піднесені до рівня загальнолюдських. Стилю характеризується розвиток німецькомовної та англomовної шевченкіани, аналізуються деякі лінгвостилістичні особливості поезії Т. Шевченка у відомих перекладах його творів на англійську мову, виконаних Е. Л. Войнич і Віри Річ.

Ключові слова: сучасність поезії Т. Шевченка, переклади, індивідуальний стиль.

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**Тарас Шевченко и современность.
К 200-летию со дня рождения**

Рассматривается восприятие творчества Тараса Шевченко в современных реалиях. Показано, что национальные проблемы в его произведениях поднимаются до уровня общечеловеческих. Дается краткая характеристика развития немецко-язычной и англоязычной шевченкианы, анализируются некоторые лингвостилстические особенности поэзии Т. Шевченко в известных английских переводах его произведений, выполненных Э. Л. Войнич и Веры Рич.

Ключевые слова: современность поэзии Т. Шевченко, переводы, индивидуальный стиль.

