

СТИЛІСТИКА, ТЕОРІЯ ФІГУР І ПРОБЛЕМИ ХУДОЖНЬОГО ПЕРЕКЛАДУ. СТИЛІСТИЧНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ ЛЕКСИКОЛОГІЇ І ГРАМАТИКИ

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UKRAINIAN IDENTITY IN POETRY: FROM SHEVCHENKO TO BU-BA-BU AND BEYOND²⁶

This article analyzes Ukrainian identity in poetry from national bard Taras Shevchenko to present-day poets writing about the war in Eastern Ukraine. Shevchenko creates a poetics of Ukrainian identity first and foremost by writing in Ukrainian (instead of the lingua franca of the Russian Empire) on a lofty intellectual level that was simultaneously accessible to all layers of Ukrainian society and not just to the small number of highly educated cultural elite of his time. Thus, Shevchenko elevated the status of the Ukrainian language as a form of higher discourse. Magic-like incantation comprises one of the most powerful aspects of Shevchenko's poetry that generates a message for readers that is felt aesthetically and that transcends mere semantics. A third method of identity-building comprises the use of unifying emblems of the "sacred" Ukrainian land, including the Dnipro River, its steep banks, the wide steppe, and the broad-tilled fields. Shevchenko also promotes a strategy of focusing on indigenous Ukrainian folklore and songs of the common people, using folk rhythms such as the kolomyjka and the genre of the "duma," thereby connecting with people of all classes of society and elevating "peasant" cultural status to a unifying "national" level. In the role of the kobzar, he relates the suffering of the Ukrainian people for healing the past and emotionally connects to readers through archetypes such as abused young girls, orphaned children, the elderly, and the pejorative image of the moskal, the Russian soldier exploiting Ukraine. Ivan Franko creates a multi-genre intellectual primer for the Ukrainian cultural elite to educate the Western Ukrainian people in the power of literature to shape civic discourse as well as to show the people's struggles in his realistic depiction of their lives and their journeys toward self-realization. To promote Ukrainian identity Lesia Ukrainka utilizes indigenous folklore in "Forest Song" and historical parallels and allegories with ancient Roman civilization along with Scottish history.

²⁶ My gratitude to Lada Kolomiyets for her comments that have served to improve this article.

Volodymyr Sosiura and Maksym Rylsky focus on the melodic nature of the Ukrainian language in their poetry and also write exhortative statement poetry during World War II when Ukraine was under existential threat. Among the writers of the sixties, Lina Kostenko produced refined lyrical poetry with a profound sound orchestration as well as her masterpiece novel in verse "Marusia Churai" that captured the imagination of the reading public. Vasyl Symonenko focused on sacred Ukrainian nature along with exhortations against the repressive Soviet regime. Ivan Drach promoted Ukrainian identity through emotionally charged emblems such as the kalyna (guelder rose) and sunflower. Vasyl Stus became an open symbol of resistance against the regime. The Bu-Ba-Bu generation of poets rejected both Socialist Realism and national realism, preferring instead to parody national emblems such as kozaks and classics such as Sosiura's "Love Ukraine." Post-glasnost and post-independence Ukrainian poets also looked to the West for literary and musical models for expansion beyond the traditional canon, which functioned as an extension of Mykola Khvylovy's Western orientation in the 1920s. Current poets such as Serhiy Zhadan, Lyuba Yakimchuk, and Borys Humeniuk return partly to statement poetry about the war in Eastern Ukraine when the existence of the country is threatened. Thus, all the poets mentioned to some degree employ strategies for identity-creation developed by Shevchenko (except for parody), moving back and forth on a pendulum from the purely aesthetic lyrical on one side to statement poetry when the nation is most endangered on the other. Parody harkens back to older genres, particularly Ivan Kotlyarevsky's "The Aeneid"(Eneida) that served to establish the modern Ukrainian literary language.

Key words: *Identity, National Identity, Taras Shevchenko, Volodymyr Sosiura, Maksym Rylsky, Poets of the Sixties, Lina Kostenko, Ivan Drach, Vasyl Symonenko, Vasyl Stus, Bu-Ba-Bu, Yuri Andrukhovych, Oleksandr Irvanets, Viktor Neborak, Lyubov Yakimchuk, Serhiy Zhadan, Borys Humeniuk.*

My discussion here will examine notions of how Ukrainian poets represent and articulate their Ukrainian identity in their poetry from the nineteenth through the twenty-first centuries. It is a given that Ukrainian poets have presented their identity first and foremost by the very fact that they wrote in Ukrainian, a language considered a peasant dialect by many in the Russian empire, who often historically have even referred to it as the "quaint" (in their eyes and demeaning to Ukrainians) term "little" Russian. The Ukrainian language has survived and ultimately thrived despite being banned in print and in public discourse during tsarist times as a result of the Ukase at Ems in 1876 and despite considerable repression during the Soviet period when the Russian language was promoted as the lingua franca of the

USSR – to the detriment of other minority languages. It has survived, in fact, largely as a result of the writings and concomitant political activities of Ukrainian poets, who managed to galvanize support for the "Ukrainian idea." They accomplished this in large part by their focus on the beauty of and their love of the Ukrainian land along with a depiction of the suffering of the indigenous Ukrainian people tied to that land.

While the first great Ukrainian poet Hryhory Skovoroda writes a considerable amount of poetry focused on the Ukrainian land, particularly in his *Garden of Divine Songs* (Sad bozhestvennykh pisnei), his idyllic vision of nature in his poetry is largely generic without any specific realia linking it to Ukraine per se. The earth was sacred to him, but largely as a symbol of the Garden of Eden and God's creation: it indicates the locus where man can commune with God most intimately and best see His divine design. Although Ivan Kotlyarevsky's mock epic *Eneida* (The Aeneid) occurs on the backdrop of the Ukrainian land, the poet uses fairly stock nature imagery and does not raise it up to the level of a symbol. All discussion on this topic truly begins with the national bard Taras Shevchenko, who established the paradigm for Ukrainian identity with the publication of his slim eight-poem collection *Kobzar* in 1840. In that volume, he created a poetics of Ukrainian identity first and foremost by writing in Ukrainian on a lofty intellectual level that was simultaneously accessible to all layers of Ukrainian society and not just to the relatively small number of highly educated cultural elite of his time. In my discussion here, I plan first to present a taxonomy of the strategies Shevchenko employs in his poetics for identity-building. Since poets that follow Shevchenko inexorably fall in his long shadow in the literary tradition, I will discuss ways in which they, perhaps, appropriate strategies similar to Shevchenko's and develop their own.

I would argue that magic-like incantation comprises the most powerful aspect of identity-creation in Shevchenko's poetry. By the nature of his acoustically flawless verbal virtuosity, Shevchenko connected immediately with his contemporary readers as well as with future generations of Ukrainians. Through the musicality of his verse he creates a magic sound that captivates Ukrainian readers on both a visceral and subliminal level that intertwines with the meaning of the words.

A few of the main examples, which most Ukrainians know by heart, should suffice. In "Prychynna" (The Moonstruck Girl), Shevchenko writes:

*Реве та стогне Дніпр широкий,
Сердитий вітер завива,
Додолу верби гне високі,
Горами хвилю підійма.
І блідий місяць на ту пору
Із хмари де-де виглядав,
Неначе човен в синім морі,
То виринав, то потонав.
Ще третій півні не співали,
Ніхто нігде не гомонів,
Сичі в гаю перекликались,
Та ясен раз і раз скрипів.*

*The wide Dnipro roars and moans,
An angry wind whips it up.
It bends the tall willows down,
Lifting waves as high as mountains.
And at that time a pale moon
Peeks from behind a cloud at times
Like a tiny boat in a deep blue sea
It jumps up and dives down.
The cocks had yet to crow three times,
No one anywhere making a sound,
The owls in the field called to each other,
And from time to time the ash tree creaked*

The profound musicality of lines such as these provide a sumptuous verbal feast for the Ukrainian reader that carries him or her to a deeper intuitive understanding of how the Ukrainian language comprises an essential aspect of being. Another prime example can be found in perhaps Shevchenko's most famous poem that has come to be known as "Zapovit" (My Testament):

*Як умру, то поховайте
Мене на могилі,
Серед степу широкого,*

*На Вкраїні милій,
Щоб лани широкополі,
І Дніпро, і кручі
Було видно, було чути,
Як реве ревучий.*

*When I die, bury me
On a grave mound
Amid the wide-wide steppe
In my beloved Ukraine,
In a place from where the wide-tilled fields
And both the Dnipro, and its steep banks
Can be seen and
Its roaring rapids heard.*

The poem comprises an intimate dialog between Shevchenko the man contemplating his mortality and the meaning of his life for posterity. It contains the essential central emblems of the Ukrainian land in highly compressed form (the wide Dnipro River, its steep banks, the wide steppe, the broad tilled fields), which largely through Shevchenko's poetic representations have been elevated to sacred status for the Ukrainian people.

Shevchenko also promotes a strategy of focusing on indigenous Ukrainian folklore and songs of the common people, using folk rhythms such as the *kolomyjka* and the genre of the "duma," thereby connecting with people of all classes of society and elevating "peasant" cultural status to a common "national" level. The majority of the eight poems of the original *Kobzar*, in fact, are in the *kolomyjka* rhythm, which, according to Mykola Mushinka in an article in *The Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, consists "usually of two rhyming lines with a set rhythmic pattern: a 14-syllable line with feminine ending and a caesura after the eighth syllable (4 + 4 + 6)."²⁷ Even Shevchenko's quite serious in terms of content "Testament" is written in the

²⁷ <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CK%5CO%5CKolomyjkaIT.htm>

kolomyjka rhythm, which is traditionally a lively improvisational and often humorous song that covers myriad topics of everyday life.

Shevchenko additionally appropriates the central image of the blind Ukrainian minstrel, the Kobzar, who sang of the Kozaks' (Cossack) courage and glory as well as their shortcomings in Ukrainian history in poems such as "Ivan Pidkova," "Haidamaky," and others. He combines several strategies of identity-building in his historical poems in much the same way that Robert Burns does in his historical Scottish poems and songs such as "Bannockburn," "The Battle of Sherramuir," and "Scots wha Hae." By recreating the historical past that coalesces in Ukrainian identity, Burns allows for his readers to recreate it inside themselves through individual as well as collective (for the Scots people) anamnesis. The sorrowful stories retold by *kobzars* such as Perebendya in the eponymous poem (and by analogy Shevchenko in his hypostasis as the *Kobzar* in his collection), allow, according to Natalie Kononenko, listeners and readers to heal their emotional wounds from past tragedies. At certain moments Shevchenko's lyrical "I" intervenes to create declarative poetry that exhorts his fellow-Ukrainians to rise up from their chains and to generate inside themselves the courage of the Kozak past. Shevchenko much like Robert Burns strategizes to turn past failure and loss into eventual success.

Additionally, in a number of his poems Shevchenko portrays the suffering of his people as well as his own suffering through the archetypal images of a young girl abused and abandoned by a Russian soldier, of an orphan, and of the elderly (note particularly the poems "Prychynna" and "Kateryna" in this regard). The poet emotionally connects with his readers in the stories he tells of these archetypal lives and also presents his own psychological state at times when he is separated from his homeland and people. Although he rarely openly makes political attacks in his poetry, Shevchenko, in an obvious allegory for the enlightened reader, does criticize the Russian tsar in poems such as "The Dream." In that particular poem his discourse becomes declarative. In his poetry he also consistently rails against the "moskal'" or "moskali" (the name for a Russian soldier among Ukrainians in the nineteenth century) that reaches the level of a pejorative for him and his reader receiving his message.

Ukrainian poets who followed after Shevchenko on the one hand both had the obligation to write in Ukrainian and place themselves in dialog with Shevchenko, and on the other hand to expand on that to present their Ukrainian identity in variations on the themes. Ivan Franko, the second major figure in the Ukrainian literary pantheon, developed a naturalistic trend in his writing that focused on a European orientation as an integral part of Ukrainian identity. He became a defender of the downtrodden, particularly exploited workers and peasants. He conveyed his message of Ukrainianness in openly allegorical ways such as in his long poem "Moses":

МОЙСЕЙ

Пролог

*Народе мій, замучений, розбитий,
Мов паралітик той на роздорожжю,
Людським презирством, ніби струпом, вкритий!*

*Твоїм будучим душу я тривожу,
Від сорому, який нащадків пізніх
Палитиме, заснути я не можу.*

MOSES

Prologue

*My people tormented and broken,
Like a cripple at a crossroads
Covered like a scab with human scorn!*

*My soul becomes troubled with your future,
I'm unable to fall asleep from the shame
That will continue to scorch your offspring.*

Also take note of these lines from Franko's early poem "Kameniari":

*Та слави людської зовсім ми не бажали,
Бо не герої ми і не богатири.
Ні, ми невольники, хоч добровільно взяли
На себе пута. Ми рабами волі стали:
На шляху поступу ми лиш каменярі.*

*І всі ми вірили, що своїми руками
Розіб'ємо скалу, роздробимо граніт,
Що кров'ю власною і власними кістками
Твердий змуруємо гостинець і за нами
Прийде нове життя, добро нове у світ.*

*We have not desired earthly fame at all,
Because we are not heroes or bohatyrs.
No, we are slaves, though willingly we've taken
The shackles on ourselves. We became slaves of will;
On the path of progress we are just masons.
And we all believed that with our own hands
We will break apart a cliff, we will shatter granite,
That with our own blood and our own bones
We will lay the bricks of a strong path and after us
A new life will come, a new good into the world.*

Franko also shifted to writing naturalistic prose to convey that direct message in showing the travails of the Ukrainian people. His extensive writings by and large provide a broadly-based intellectual primer for the Ukrainian cultural elite to educate the Western Ukrainian people in the power of literature to shape civic discourse as well as to show the people's struggles in his realistic depiction of their lives and their journeys toward self-realization. His message served to fuse Western Ukrainian intellectual thought with European values and to unite West Bank and East Bank Ukraine.

Lesia Ukrainka, who ranks third in the pantheon of Ukrainian poets, resorted to a strategy of making allegorical parallels to the Ukrainian situation in her long poems that hearken back to ancient history such as "In the Catacombs" and to heroic actions in other cultures such as the Scots in her long poem "Robert the Bruce, Scottish King," which parallels the political situation in Ukraine in search of a strong and decisive leader, who could call them to action. Additionally, she delves deeply into Ukrainian folklore and the depiction of Ukrainian nature in her poetic masterpiece play in verse "Forest Song."

In the modern period, Pavlo Tychyna, the most prominent poet of the twentieth century, embodied the Ukrainian idea in his early poetry.

Although many of his early poems were joyful explorations of a childlike love of life and Ukrainian nature, he later focused on the tribulations the people during the revolutionary and civil war years, and embedded his Ukrainian identity in his later period in a more Aesopian way under repressive Soviet rule. He was, in fact, accused of bourgeois nationalism for his 1925 poem "Mother Was Peeling Potatoes" (*Maty chystyla kartoplju*) for his representation of the Bolshevik leader Lenin as the Antichrist. His early religiosity and the moralizing tone found in his masterful cycle *Instead of Sonnets and Octaves* gave way to panegyrics to the Soviet state, though in 1942–1945 he penned a number of pro-Ukrainian anti-fascist statement poems including "My People" (*Mii narod*, 1942), "To the Ukrainian People" (1943), and "Ukraine will shine, will come to life" (*Ukraina zasiaie, ozhyve*; 1943). These were sanctioned from above during the period of the so-called Great Patriotic War (World War II), when ethnic Ukrainian patriotism was permitted by the Communist Party. In the same time period Volodymyr Sosiura was able to publish his sentimental poem "Love Ukraine," for which he was later condemned by Soviet officials for bourgeois nationalism.

ЛЮБИТЬ УКРАЇНУ

*Любить Україну, як сонце, любить,
як вітер, і трави, і води,
в годину щасливу і в радості мить,
любить у годину негоди!*

*Любить Україну у сні й наяву,
вишневу свою Україну,
красу її, вічно живу і нову, і
і мову її солов'їну.*

*Між братніх народів, мов садом рясним,
сіяє вона над віками...
Любить Україну всім серцем своїм
і всіми своїми ділами.*

*Для нас вона в світі єдина, одна
в просторів солодкому чарі...
Вона у зірках, і у вербах вона,
і в кожному серця ударі...*

*у квітці, в пташині, в електровогнях,
у пісні у кожній, у думі,
в дитячий усмішці, в дівочих очах
і в стягів багрянному шумі...*

*Як та купина, що горить – не згора,
живе у стежках, у дібровах,
у зойках гудків, і у хвилях Дніпра,
і в хмарах отих пурпурових.*

*в грому канонад, що розвіяли в прах
чужинців в зелених мундирах,
в багнетах, що в темі пробивали нам шлях
до весен і світлих, і щирих.*

*Юначе! Хай буде для неї твій сміх,
і сльози, і все до загину...
Не можна любити народів других,
коли ти не любиш Україну!..*

*Дівчино! Як небо її голубе,
люби її кожну хвилину.
Коханий любить не захоче тебе,
коли ти не любиш Україну...*

*Любїть у коханні, в труді, у бою,
як пісню, що лине зорею...
Всім серцем любїть Україну свою –
і вічні ми будемо з нею!*

LOVE UKRAINE

*Love Ukraine like the sun, o love her,
like the wind, the grass, the water,
in an hour of happiness, in a moment of joy,
love her in a time of disaster.*

*Love Ukraine in sleep and awake,
your cherry-red colored Ukraine,
love her beauty, forever alive and new,
as well as her nightingale language.*

*Like an abundant garden amid brotherly nations,
she shines above the centuries...
Love Ukraine with all your heart
as well as all your deeds!..*

*For us she's unique in the world, alone
in the sweet charm of open expanses...
She's in the stars, and in the willows,
and in every beat of the heart...*

*In flowers, in birds, in electric lights,
in every song and thought,
in a child's smile, in a young girl's eyes,
in the crimson rustle of banners...*

*Like that hillock that burns without burning out,
she lives in footpaths and groves,
in the screeches of whistles, in the waves of the
Dnipro, and in these purple clouds.*

*In the thunder of cannonades that have scattered
green-uniformed foreigners to dust,
in bayonets that in darkness have hewn a path
for us to bright and open-hearted spring...*

*Young boy! Let your laughter be for her,
as well as tears, completely till you die...
You cannot love any other nations
until you love your own!..*

*Young girl! Just like her blue sky,
love her every moment.
Your sweetheart won't want to love you anymore
if you don't love your own Ukraine...*

*Love her in love, in your work, and in battle,
like a song that rushes like a star...
With all your heart love your Ukraine,
And eternal we'll be with her!*

1944

In times of existential crisis such as World War II (called the Great Patriotic War by the Soviet state), when the Ukrainian nation is threatened with defeat or extinction, the tendency was for poets (with permission from the authorities) to address the people in a more direct way and to call on them to save the Ukrainian land as part of their patriotic duty.

Maksym Rylsky, too, during that same wartime period expressed his open love for the Ukrainian land in his long poem "Thirst," which later was attacked for its excessive Ukrainian patriotism. It also extensively uses religious and folkloric imagery²⁸ with the former considered anathema in Soviet times other than during World War II. Both Sosiura and Rylsky, the former of peasant origin and the latter from the recently formed urban cultural elite, in their later works tended to sublimate their Ukrainian identity in nature poetry, which was more generic and safer, as well as in what might be perceived somewhat as a colonial cliché, the melodiousness of the Ukrainian language.

The Shestydesiatnyky (Poets of the Sixties) expressed their patriotic fervor somewhat more openly but in various ways, focusing largely on personal emblems of freedom. Lina Kostenko wrote refined metaphorical lyric poetry as well as on heroic topics such as the legendary seventeenth-century songstress in her novel in verse *Marusia Churai* and made use of national emblems such as the Dnipro River, which often appears as an animate allegorical figure in her poetry, just as it does in Shevchenko's poetry. By expressing her inner emotional life in poems, she rejected the tenets of Socialist Realism imposed on her from above. Here is an example of one her earliest love lyrics:

²⁸For a discussion of these motifs in Rylsky's "Thirst" (Zhaha) see my article "Fol'klorni, relihiini i literaturni motyvy v poemi Maksyma Ryl's'koho Zhaha". *Slovo i chas* 6 (June 1998): 6–11. It has also been republished in Mykhailo M. Naidan, *Vid Hoholia do Andrukhovycha: literaturoznavchi esei*. Lviv: Piramida, 2017: 46–55.

*Сходить сонце, ясний обагрянок
Заглядає у вічі мені:
А чи добрий у мене ранок,
Чи не плакала я вві сні?*

*Ранок – добрий.
А ночі, ночі!
Снишся ти і чужі краї...*

*Плакали сині очі.
Плакали сірі очі.
Плакала чорні очі.
І всі – мої.*

1957

*The sun rises, a clear bloodred
looks up into my face:
do I have a good morning,
or did I cry in sleep?*

*The morning is good.
But the nights, the nights!
I dream of you and foreign lands...*

*Blue eyes wept.
Gray eyes wept.
Black eyes wept.
And all of them were mine.*

1957

And here is an example of how she connects with her Ukrainian reader through a deeper musical connection by means of sound orchestration and verbal virtuosity in her poem "Landscape of Memory":

ПЕЙЗАЖ ІЗ ПАМ'ЯТІ

*Ледь-ледь торкаю слово аквареллю –
прив'ялий ранок, тиша, паранет.
З кленового туманного тунелю
виходить Рильський, майже силует.*

*Різьба по небу – дерево черлене.
Я теж з туману обрисом з'явлюсь.
Він сумно-сумно дивиться на мене, –
хто я така, чого я так дивлюсь.
А я дивлюся... Я хвилююсь трохи...
І розминулись. Тільки силует.
Оце і все. Зустрілись дві епохи.
Дурне дівчатко і старий поет.
Кружляє листя, і не чути кроків.
Пейзаж, котрому років, років, років.*

LANDSCAPE FROM MY MEMORY

*Just barely I touch a word with watercolor–
faded morning, silence, a parapet.
From a misty tunnel of maples
Rylsky steps out, almost a silhouette.
A woodcarving along the sky–mahogany.
I, too, appear from mists as an outline.
Sadly-sadly he looks at me–
wanting to know who I am and why I stare.
And I continue to gaze... I am somewhat moved...
And we passed each other. Only the silhouette.
This is all. Two epochs met.
A stupid little girl and an old poet.
Leaves circle, and you can't hear the footsteps.
A landscape that is years, years old...*

And in what I consider one of her best poems "Van Gogh" (1968), she deals head on with the issue of madness as a path to personal creative freedom while living under an authoritarian regime:

*Він божевільний, кажуть.
Божевільний!
Що ж, може бути. Він – це значить я.*

*Боже – вільний...
Боже, я – вільний!
На добраніч, Свободо моя!*

1968

*He is a madman, they say a madman!
What else can it be? He—that means me.
Lord—free...
Lord—I am free.
Good night, my Freedom!*

1968

"Bozhe-vil'nyi" (madness or literally freedom from one's mind) leads to the recognition of the centripetal, inwardly directed path of freedom that madness allows both for the artist (Van Gogh) as well as for the poet by analogy. Kostenko grew silent in terms of publication of her poetry for seventeen years rather than acquiesce to the demands of Soviet authorities.

From among the poet of the sixties Vasyl Symonenko expresses his Ukrainian identity in nature poetry that focuses on the beauty of and inherent sufferings witnessed by the Ukrainian land, which exists as a living, breathing organism in symbiosis with the Ukrainian people. Note the following brief poem that resonates with a quiet acoustic power:

ЧУЮ

*Чую, земле, твоє дихання,
Розумію твій тихий сум,
Як на тебе холодні світання
Ронять пригорщами росу.*

*Знаю – зливи, та буйні грози,
І роса в шумовинні віт –
То сирітські, вдовині сльози,
То замучених предків піт.*

*Назбирала ти їх без ліку
На роздоллі полів, дібров,
Щоб живили тебе довіку,
Людські сльози і людська любов.*

I HEAR

*I hear, earth, your breathing,
I understand your quiet grief,
As cold dawns shed the dew
In handfuls on you.*

*I know the downpours and violent storms,
And dew in the rustle of boughs—
First an orphan's, then a widow's tears,
Then the sweat of our tortured ancestors.*

*You collected them without number
On the expanse of fields and forests of oak,
In order that human tears and human love
Might nourish you for eternity.*

January 3, 1961

He also expresses his Ukrainian identity in humanistic appeals and in powerful statement poems, the latter of which led to him being crushed by the Soviet state. Note the opening three strophes of his poem "Prophesy of 1917" (Prorotstvo 17-ho roku):

*Гранітні обеліски, як медузи,
Повзли, повзли і вибилися з сил.
На цвинтарі розстріляних ілюзій
Уже нема місця для могил.*

*Мільярди вір – зариті у чорнозем,
Мільярди щасть – розвіяні у прах...
Душа горить, палає лютий розум,
І ненависть регоче на вітрах.*

*Коли б усі одурені прозріли,
Коли б усі убиті ожили,
То небо, від прокльонів посіріле,
Напевно б репнуло від сорому й хули.*

*Granite obelisks, like medusas,
Crawled and crawled and spent themselves.*

*At the churchyard of executed illusions
There's no more room for the graves.*

*A billion faiths, dug into the chornozem,
A billion fortunes, scattered to dust...
The soul burns, fierce reason flames,
And hate bellows in the winds.*

*When all those duped begin to see clearly,
When all those murdered come alive,
The sky all gray from curses
Surely will burst from shame and abuse.*

The remainder of the poem continues in an even more elevated tone to damn the "unnamed" enemies of Symonenko's people, who clearly are the Soviet oppressors and occupiers of the Ukrainian lands.

The poet of the sixties Ivan Drach, who later turned into a pro-independence political figure, expresses his Ukrainian identity in charged Ukrainian nature emblems such as the guelder rose in "Ballad of the Guelder Rose" (Kalynova ballada, 1962) and sunflowers in "Ballad of a Sunflower" (Ballada pro soniashnyk).

БАЛАДА ПРО СОНЯШНИК

*В соняшника були руки і ноги,
Було тіло, шортке і зелене.
Він бігав наввипередки з вітром,
Він вилазив на грушу,
і рвав у пазуху гнилиці,
І купався коло млина, і лежав у піску,
І стріляв горобців з рогатки.
Він стрибав на одній нозі,
Щоб вилити з вуха воду,
І раптом побачив сонце,
Красиве засмагле сонце, –
В золотих переливах кучерів,
У червоній сорочці навипуск,
Що їхало на велосипеді,
Обминаючи хмари на небі...*

*І застиг він на роки й століття
В золотому німому захопленні:
– Дайте покататися, дядьку!
А ні, то візьміть хоч на раму.
Дядьку, хіба вам шкода?!*

*Поезіє, сонце моє оранжеве!
Щомиті якийсь хлопчисько
Відкриває тебе для себе,
Щоб стати навіки соняшником.*

BALLAD OF A SUNFLOWER

*The sunflower had arms and legs,
It had a body, rough and green.
It tried to outrun the wind,
It climbed onto a pear tree
and tore wild pears into its lap,
and bathed near a mill, and lay in the sand,
and shot at sparrows from a slingshot.
It jumped on one leg
To clear out water from its ear
And suddenly saw the sun,
A beautiful bronzed sun,
In the golden modulations a rider,
In a red shirt with tails hanging out,
Riding on a bicycle,
Avoiding the clouds in the sky...
And it froze for years and centuries
In mute golden rapture:
"Let me ride, uncle!
If not, then at least take me on the crossbar.
Uncle, will that be a problem?!"*

*Poetry, my orange sun!
Each moment a little boy
Discovers you for himself
To become a sunflower forever.*

Vasyl Stus, who experienced imprisonment and ultimately death in the Soviet GULAG, expresses his Ukrainian identity through his poetry of personal anguish as a prisoner of conscience. Note the first three strophes of this poem written in 1963 that harkens back to Kozak times:

*Сто років як сконала Січ.
Сибір. І соловецькі келії,
і глупа облягає ніч
пекельний край і крик пекельний.*

*Сто років мучених надій,
і сподівань, і вір, і крові
синів, що за любов тавровані,
сто серць, як сто палахкотінь.*

*Та виростають з личаків,
із шаровар, з курної хати
раби зростають до синів
своєї України-матері.*

*A hundred years since Sich perished.
Siberia. And Solovetsky cells,
deep night all around
a hellish land and a hellish scream.*

*A hundred years of tortured hopes,
expectations, faith, and blood
of sons, who are branded for their love,
a hundred hearts like a hundred blazes.*

*They grow up out of bast shoes,
sharovary, from a smoky hut
slaves grow up to be sons
of their mother – Ukraine.*

The imagery of Ukrainians as having a slave mentality directly echoes that of the poetry of Shevchenko. Unabashed in his disdain for the Soviet regime, Stus chose a path of conscience and resistance until the regime destroyed him. Visuals of the gaunt Stus carried in public demonstrations

and posted in public places even transcended the power of his often complex poetry. He became THE living emblem of resistance for Ukrainians by the unwavering stance he took in his life. His later prison camp poetry became more inwardly directed, liminal, and hermetic.

What I call the Bu-Ba-Bu generation of poets in the mid-to-late 1980s consciously exhibited its Ukrainian identity by, paradoxically, openly avoiding it through carnivalization and parody – of Kozaks, of blatant sentimental Ukrainian nationalism of a type found in Sosiura's "Love Ukraine," as well as among the Poets of the Sixties. By *not* emphasizing the traditional Ukrainian folk song, but rather focusing on world music instead (particularly rock, jazz, reggae, and rap), they thereby elevated their Ukrainian identity as part of greater world citizenship. Instead of centripetal tendencies, centrifugal forces became more dominant. This also served as a parallel to the European orientation that has existed at several stages of Ukrainian cultural and historical development from Mykola Khyvylovy's literary call to the West in the 1920s to current ideas on Eurointegration that became pronounced during the Orange Revolution of 2004 and the Euromaidan of 2014. The West, just as the music of the Beatles did in the 1960s, for Ukrainian culture represents both abstract and concrete notions of freedom as well as a higher historical level of democratic and cultural development. The notion of parody comes full circle to classical genres in the Ukrainian tradition, particularly to Ivan Kotlyarevsky's mock-epic *The Aeneid* (Eneida), which marks the beginning of the modern Ukrainian literary language.

In a parallel cultural development this need to forge a new path for the younger generation also occurred in the realm of rock music with Shevchenko's poetry put to Gothic rock versions by the group Komu vnyz (For Some It's Down) in their songs "Subotiv" and "Rozryta mohyla" (The Plundered Grave). Rock versions of Shevchenko's poetry appeared in versions by Mertvyi piven' (Dead Rooster), Tartak, and others. These, however, did not represent parody per se, but rather an updating of Shevchenko's message in a more readily accessible genre for Ukrainian youth culture.

Note Yuri Andrukhovych's parodic "The Kozak Yamaika" (Yamaika the Kozak) as well his neo-romantic "The Griffin" (Hryfon), the latter of which seamlessly has been transformed into the popular rock song by Taras Chubai of the group Jeremiah's Cry (Plach Ieremii):

ГРИФОН

*Мій пане, який нерозумний світ!..
Яка на румовище сходить журба!
Під небом, чорним, ніби графіт,
конаю в піску. І грифон з герба.*

*З дерев погаслих кричать граки.
Я впав з коня і програв турнір.
Тепер крізь мене ростуть гілки,
пробивши в панцирі триста дір.*

THE GRIFFIN

*My Lord, what a foolish world this is!
What anguish falls over the ruins!
Beneath a graphite sky,
I fall in the sand. A griffin descends from the crest.*

*Jackdaws crow from the darkened trees.
I've fallen from my steed and lost the joust.
Now branches are growing through me,
driving hundreds of shafts in my armor.*

Chubai also later released a CD entitled *Nash Ivasiuk* (2003) of Volodmyr Ivasiuk songs that reinvented the latter's artistry in updated interpretations that resonate with new audiences.

Oleksander Irvanets' "Love!" comprises an outrageous parody of Sosiura's original, the latter of which is oversaturated with the image of Ukraine:

ЛЮБИТЬ!

*Любить Оклахому! Вночі і в обід,
Як неньку і дедді достоту!
Любить Індіану! Й так само любить
Північну й Південну Дакоту.*

*Любить Алабаму в загравах пожеж,
Любить її в радощі й біди!
Айову любить! Каліфорнію теж!
І пальми крислаті Флориди!*

*Дівчино! Хай око твоє голубе,
Та не за фізичнії вади –
Коханий любити не встане тебе,
Якщо ти не любиш Невади!*

*Юначе! Ти мусиш любити стократ
Сильніше, ніж любиш кохану,
Колумбію-округ і Джорджію-штат,
Монтану і Луїзіану!*

*Любити не зможеш ти штатів других,
Коли ти не любиш по-братськи
Полів Арізони й таких дорогих
Просторів Аляски й Небраски.*

*Любов цю, сильнішу, ніж потяг до вульв,
Плекай у душі незникому.
Вірджінію-штат, як Вірджінію Вулф
Люби! І люби – Оклахому!*

1992 рік, весна

LOVE!

*Love Oklahoma! At night and at supper,
Like your mom and your dad quite equal.
Love Indiana. And the very same way
Love Northern and Southern Dakota!*

*Love Alabama in the red glow of fires,
Love her in joy in misfortune.
Be sure to love Iowa. And California, too.
And the branchy palms of Florida.*

*Teenybopper! It's not for your eye so blue,
And not for your physical defects,
If you stop loving Nevada
Your love will stop loving you too.*

*Hey guy! You have to love a hundred times
Stronger than you love your Love,*

*The District of Columbia and Georgia the state,
Montana along with Louisiana.*

*You can't love any other states
If you don't brotherly love
The Arizona fields and the charming
Alaskan Nebraskan wide-open space.*

*This love is stronger than the yearning for vulvas,
Cultivate the eternal in your soul.
Love Virginia the state like you do Virginia the Woolf.
And be sure to love – Oklahoma!...*

While excluding any mention of Ukraine whatsoever in the poem, Irvanets even carnivalizes the nature of spiritual love with the image of "potiah do vul'v" (the yearning for vulvas) in the final strophe. Also observe Viktor Neborak's many different rock and rap songs in his collection *The Flying Head* (Litaiucha holova), which in a way parody the need of previous generations of Ukrainian poets to focus on indigenous Ukrainian song and folklore. And in the Kyivan group of poets particularly take note of Yuri Pozayak's experimental verse and parodies of an alcoholic in his "Alcohaiku." Bu-Ba-Bu and the post-independence generation freed themselves of the obligation to save the nation as Oksana Zabuzhko once stated regarding the status of her generation of Ukrainian poets following Ukrainian independence. Centrifugal forces generated a movement away from a microcosmic understanding of Ukrainian culture into a macrocosmic wider world culture, which was largely closed off to Ukrainian poets in Soviet times.

In conclusion, I would argue that Shevchenko set the paradigm for all Ukrainian poets who followed him with the plethora of strategies he used to coalesce Ukrainian identity in his poetry. In Shevchenko's time, when Ukraine was fading into a memory for him in exile and into a place and entity that existed for him in historical time, there was a need for a multifaceted strategy to promote that Ukrainian identity, which was under threat of extinction by being absorbed into Russian culture. It seems that in times of greatest peril to the very existence of

Ukraine and the Ukrainian language and culture, poets seem most intensely to focus on Ukrainian identity in their poetry in a direct way.

During the Soviet period – there was a top-down focus on the commune and "Soviet" identity, sublimating individual and ethnic identity for the great homogenizing (and linguistically Russian) good of the state. Bu-Ba-Bu and its generation of poets was a direct reaction against coercive identity (both Soviet and the one imposed on them by the overtly patriotic Shestydesiatnyky, Poets of the Sixties), therefore they focused on world and individual identity and parodied sharovarna Ukraina (a Ukraine in Kozak riding pants), a sentimentalized Ukraine. Their motivation simply seems to have been the fact that a truly free people should not be forced into accepting a top-down identity. By carnivalizing identity politics, they were able to carve out their own new microcosmic as well as expanded macrocosmic identity. While arguing for aesthetic freedom in their works, Ukrainian poets of the last twenty-five years, however, uniformly remain staunchly pro-Ukrainian in their public stances with writers such as Yuri Andrukhovych, Oksana Zabuzhko, Serhiy Zhadan, and many others playing active leadership roles during the Orange Revolution in 2004 and on the Maidan during the Revolution of Dignity in 2014 and early 2015 as well as during the current wartime period in Eastern Ukraine. The war in Eastern Ukraine itself has brought a group of poets including Serhiy Zhadan, Lyubov Yakimchuk, Borys Humeniuk, as well as many others to react to the threat to the independence of Ukraine by the ongoing events of the war in a visceral way. While they still do focus on the personal in their poetry, they embed that in the real experiences and effects of the war. Note the recent volume *Words for War: New Poems from Ukraine*²⁹ that documents poetry in English translation by Ukrainian poets on the war. Thus, whether they write statement poetry or parodies, Ukrainian poets by and large inherently remain staunch defenders of the Ukrainian language, culture, and independent state. A mature culture should have room for a variety of approaches to literature for audiences from the most conservative to

²⁹ Oksana Maksymchuk and Max Rosochinsky, eds. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2018.

the avantgarde. That is a natural phenomenon in an open democratic culture. Thus, all the poets mentioned here to some degree employ strategies for identity-creation developed by Shevchenko and other poets who followed him, moving back and forth on a pendulum from the purely aesthetic lyrical to statement poetry when the nation is most endangered all the way back to parody.

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УКРАЇНЬСЬКА НАЦІОНАЛЬНА ІДЕНТИЧНІСТЬ У ПОЕЗІЇ: ВІД ШЕВЧЕНКА ДО БУ-БА-БУ І ДАЛІ

Присвячено окресленню проблеми української національної ідентичності у поезії. Матеріалом дослідження слугували твори цілої плеяди українських авторів від Тараса Шевченка до сучасних поетів, зокрема представників літературно-мистецького угруповання Бу-Ба-Бу. Вивчення способів оприявлення української національної ідентичності у творах І. Драча, В. Симоненка, В. Стуса, Ю. Андруховича, О. Ірванца, В. Неборака, Л. Якимчук, С. Жадана, Б. Гуменюка дозволили дійти висновку, що майже усі вони (окрім пародії) були започатковані Т. Шевченком.

Ключові слова: ідентичність, національна ідентичність, Тарас Шевченко, Бу-Ба-Бу.

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УКРАИНСКАЯ НАЦИОНАЛЬНАЯ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТЬ В ПОЭЗИИ: ОТ ШЕВЧЕНКО ДО БУ-БА-БУ И ДАЛЕЕ

Статья посвящена проблеме украинской национальной идентичности, выраженной в поэзии. Материалом послужили произведения целой плеяды украинских авторов от Тараса Шевченко до современных поэтов, в частности представителей литературно-художественного объединения Бу-Ба-Бу. Изучение способов выражения украинской национальной идентичности в произведениях И. Драча, В. Симоненко, В. Стуса, Ю. Андруховича, А. Ирванца, В. Неборака, Л. Якимчук, С. Жадана, Б. Гуменюка позволили сделать вывод, что практически все (кроме пародии) были введены тарасом Шевченко.

Ключевые слова: идентичность, национальная идентичность, Тарас Шевченко, Бу-Ба-Бу.