

## ON TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE TERM 'FICTION' IN UKRAINIAN LITERARY CRITICISM

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### ABSTRACT

У статті висвітлюється проблема історичного становлення концепту 'fiction' (вимисел) в українському літературознавстві. Досліджується його поняттєво-термінологічне вираження на основі праць відомих теоретиків літературознавства XX та XXI століть.

Ключові слова: літературна критика, художня література, fiction.

В статье освещается проблема исторического становления концепта «fiction» (вымысел) в украинском литературоведении. Исследуется его понятийно-терминологическое выражение на основе работ известных теоретиков литературоведения XX и XXI веков.

Ключевые слова: литературная критика, художественная литература, fiction.

In the article, the historical formation of the concept 'fiction' in Ukrainian literary criticism is studied. Based on the works of famous literary theorists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the conceptual and terminological expression of the term 'fiction' is investigated.

Key words: literary criticism, fiction.

Artykuł porusza problem historycznego rozwoju konceptu „fikcja” w ukraińskiej krytyce literackiej. Jego konceptualna i terminologiczna ekspresja jest badana na podstawie prac wybitnych teoretyków literatury XX i XXI wieku.

Słowa kluczowe: krytyka literacka, literatura piękna, fikcja.

Even yet in 1925, Leonid Biletsky, when quoting extensively the originals, stated that in ancient Latin poetics texts the words 'fictio', 'fictione' were frequently used in relation to 'immitatio', 'immitatione'. He translated them in different phrases ('fictio seu immitatio', 'de fictione poetica'). L.Biletsky was the first to offer their Ukrainian equivalents or tracing papers: 'invention or imitation' (вигадка або імітація), 'poetic fiction' (поетична вигадка) [1, 61-62]. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian scientist did not offer motivations that are more detailed. Professor of Higher Pedagogical School named after M.Drahomanov in Prague, Leonid Biletsky, while developing the methodology of Ukrainian literary criticism, concluded that the Ukrainian poetry and especially its theory of that time were in the same prime as the poetry of Western luminaries [1, 70]. The terms-forming practice of L.Biletsky is of great importance in terms of

searching Ukrainian equivalents to Russian words. Thus, he translated 'изящество' in Russian articles of M. Maksymovych as 'artistry' (артистичність) [1, 77].

The Latin terminology of the professors of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was more widely neologized into Ukrainian context by G. Syvokin (1960), V. Maslyuk (1973), and L. Ushkalov (1994). In the research work "Ancient Ukrainian poetics", G. Syvokin considered the meaning of the terms 'fictio', 'effictio', 'imitatio naturae', 'imitatio operis', 'verisimilitudo Poeseo' and offered their counterparts 'fiction' (вимисел), 'image' (зображення), 'imitation of nature' (наслідування природи), 'imitation of work' (наслідування праці), 'truthfulness of poetry' (правдоподібність поезії) [10, 70-71]. Commenting on the relationship of these terms, G. Syvokin drew attention to the fact that the word 'pretend' (effictio) was used along with 'reinvent' (inventio), 'create' (ingere), 'invent' (fictio). He focused on two forms of imitation, as in early "Poetics" in 1685 ("Castalia") one could read: "The poet is the inventor, imitator of all things, who should describe the phenomenon not only as it happened, but how it could be. His mentor will be a fantasy that comes up with events and methods". G. Syvokin accompanied his translation with explanation that this phrase thoroughly summarized the interpretation of F. Prokopovych, who devoted to 'fiction' an entire part "De fictione poetica". According to G. Syvokin, the invention of an event means that the poet invents its entirety; he invents something that maybe never happened. The invention of an event (subject) can also be twofold: 1) fiction that outside does not seem like true fiction. Fiction is considered to be plausible when characters are realistic; they are not attributed to something unusual, supernatural; 2) a clear and outright fiction when something superhuman is depicted, such as "deeds of gods" [10, 75]. The fabrication of method was considered as the transmission of an event. Nevertheless, it does not mean the exact copy of the historical sequence of the facts and details. The event was depicted as if it could take place, as if it seemed to the poet relevant to truth [ibid]. In an inclusive sense, fiction is any literary narrative, whether in prose or verse, which is invented instead of being an account of events that in fact happened. The artist does not only create an expression but also an imaginary world. The historian does not create the past but only a verbal expression, an account of the past. Both activities make demands on the human imagination and intelligence. However, while fiction is a construction, history is reconstruction. In the context of such an interpretation of the Latin text concerning a creative process of a poet, G. Syvokin used another Ukrainian counterpart to 'imitatio operis' — 'creative fiction' (творчий домисел). It allowed him to conclude that it was necessary to distinguish more specific features of imagination and fiction as compared to imitation, as the authors showed here deep and fundamentally true (emphasis added. - ND) understanding of fictive creation [10, 76]. Therefore, the label 'fiction' includes inventions, conceits, figments of the brain, fantasies, imagination, conceptual aid, expedients, devices, artices, chimera, deceptive ideas, unjustified methods, schemata, regulative ideas, and much more besides. We distinguish numerous categories of fictions: abstractive, schematic, paradigmatic, utopian, type, symbolic, juristic, personificatory, summational, heuristic, practical (ethical), and mathematical. And there are fine medley of instances: an immortal god, the virgin birth, atoms, the materialistic conception of the world, vital force in biology, an original social contract, human freedom, and so on, and so on. Thus, in 1960, the young Ukrainian researcher formulated the comments and gave an evaluation to ancient poetics in typical literary terms: 'image' (зображення), 'fiction' (вимисел), 'fictive creation' (художня творчість), keeping

synonymy of the words like fiction / invention, without pointing out, which of the Latin terms he interpreted by the equivalent 'fictional' (художній).

The experts of classical philology V. Masliuk, I. Andriychuk, P. Venhlovskyy, Y. Mushak, who worked in the 70<sup>th</sup> of the last century at Lviv University, and the well-known scholar of aesthetics and baroque I. Ivanio made the next step in the development and systematization of the terms of our interest. The "Poetics (Garden of Poetry)" by M. Dovhalevskyy was published then. V. Masliuk who used the propositions and considerations of the above-mentioned colleagues made the translation, and I. Ivanio wrote a preface. The author of the preface, the famous historian of Ukrainian aesthetic thought, commented in a European context the main concepts of M. Dovhalevskyy. He stressed that "the modern reader would be impressed by the ammount of terms whose meanings were thoroughly studied by the theoretics of XVII-XVIII centuries. The smallest elements of poetic works fetched there a clear definition and are regulated under the rules that are not always aware of the modern poet who composes the original verses or poems" [5, 21].

The translator and commentators of Ukrainian version of Dovhalevskyy's work submitted a text that was understandable and easy to read. It clearly illustrated the above-cited estimation of I. Ivanio, and ultimately entrenched the system of concepts and terms. The cornerstones of this system are two kinds of imitations (mimesis): fiction, image; truth and truthfulness. Unlike G. Syvokin who translated 'imitatio operis' as 'imitation in work' (наслідування в праці), they consistently convey the meaning of this phrase by the formula 'imitation of fiction/ imitation in creative work' (наслідування твору/ наслідування в творчості). For example, referring to the subject of poetry, V. Masliuk submitted the following text: "The subject of poetry is twofold: the things that approach or may approach to poetic fiction, and the poems that express this poetic fiction. Someones call it the closest object and the further object. The closest object [of poetry] are the verses, the further object - the things that you can praise in verses" [5, 40]. In this translation, the emphasis is made on the creativity and difference between 'perfect' and 'imperfect' poetry, between 'natural' and 'artificial' poetry. M. Dovhalevskyy proposed the clearly expressed theses. "The Poet is the creator, who writes his/her essays according to his/her poetic style and the poem is a work, which he/she created and invented according to the rules of poetic art" [5, 45].

V. Masliuk left aside the motivation of his choice of new Ukrainian equivalents of the Latin terms. He drew attention to the differences in the Greek terminology of Aristotle originals, in Latin versions of his works, free interpretation of his thoughts by Dovhalevskyy. That is one of the best examples. Moreover, he interpreted the opinion of Dovhalevskyy, which is based on the ideas of Aristotle ("concept of 'plausible fiction' shows that the poet is necessarily obliged to invent something plausible and to represent this as the true thing, because, as Aristotle teaches, fiction is the soul of poetry"). Then the translator added a note "The "Poetics" of Aristotle (1450) refers to the plot of the tragedy". There we read "The basis and imaginative soul of tragedy is a plot [5, 395]. Remember this information, although it is incomplete because it states that in the Greek text of the "Poetics" the plot was preceded by the word 'mytos'. The historians of aesthetic thought analysed this conflict only in the XXth century.

L. Ushkalov tried to solve the problem of conceptual and terminological equivalents in Greek, Latin, Old Slavonic, Polish, Old Ukrainian texts in his own way (1994). **In the collection of philological etudes "World of Ukrainian Baroque",**

**he emphasised on the context of Christianity, philosophical doctrines of the Church Fathers and the role of the notion 'image' in the system of medieval universals.** We have already seen how in the translation of ancient texts of poetics the tokens of 'image' 'verisimilitude', 'imitation', 'similarity of items' and so on were used. The Greek universal 'Eidos' was omitted. Now L. Ushkalov represents a whole range of multilingual words that are interpreted as "a producing model", which emanation results in a set of forms of "humal being implementation into the Word" (the term of G. Bashliar)" [14, 3]. He reveals such equivalents to the concept 'image' (образ), 'archetypes' (архитип), 'sight' (вид), 'vision' (виденіє), 'sign' (знак), 'portent' (знаменіє), 'reflection' (ізображеніє), 'icon' (ікона), 'likeness' (кшталт), 'similarity' (подобенство), 'proportion' (пропорцію), 'symbol' (символ), 'type' (тип), 'exemplum', 'figura', 'imago', 'similitude', 'symbolum'. The researcher marked that "the essence of this language universal is its mimetism" [ibid]. However, the whole set of interrelated meanings and values extracted from ancient multilingual tokens allowed making the following conclusion: "Thus, the artistic image is a particular illusion of a certain thing. For example, to create ('facere', 'ingere') poetic image means to imitate ('imitare') the thing, which appearance or likeness is being depicted. Consequently, the image is considered as a reflection (imago effigies dicitur)". [14, 6]. Illusionism is generally interpreted as a tribal sign of an artistic image, which is based on the value of certain semantic matches in the word 'myth', 'plot' and 'fable', 'fiction'. In this connection, the following conclusion formulated by L. Ushkalov with the use of the word "fiction" is of great importance: "Artistic image is a mimetic illusion, a fiction, a thing that belongs to man's activity as homo ludens (J. Heyzinha) - that actually defines its essence. Furthermore, this fiction "leads" inherited things from the temporal flow to eternity, it exhorts, excites and entertains, but, above all, epistemologically combines 'visible' and 'invisible' nature, that is, allows a person to become involved in the noumenal level of things" [14, 7]. Therefore, the semantic implication of now common expressions 'imaginative world', 'spiritual world', and 'fictitious world' is fixed in such a way. L. Ushkalov made one more conclusion related to the studies about sacred (heavenly, divine) and profane (earthly, secular) things. "Ukrainian Baroque literature considers the image as a way of existence of heaven and earth hierarchs, as a particular mode of being, one manifestation of which is the art and art in general and the art of words in particular" [14, 10].

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