

HISTORIOSOPHICAL INSIGHTS IN M. HRUSHEVSKYI'S PROSE

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INTRODUCTION

Prose forms a substantial part of M. Hrushevskiy's literary legacy, revealing his outstanding writing talent and presenting him as a remarkable phenomenon in Ukrainian literature. M. Hrushevskiy's fairy tale, sketch, novella, short story, essay, etc. offer an impressive variety of genre and style features, calling for ever new perspectives across time periods.

Since his early years, M. Hrushevskiy had dreamt of becoming a writer, and although it was mainly Clio, the muse of history, who served to inspire him in his life, he was striving to do literary writing. Thus there appeared historical sketches, short stories, essays, philosophical pieces, novellas, and dramas. In his prose works, the author traditionally showed the fate of one character, with the plot unfolding against the vividly described historical background, which was the key principle of the composition he applied in his works. Due to this fictionalization, his early short stories bear similarity to historical adventure novels of Walter Scottian type, which have been popular in Ukrainian literature since the early 19th century. Historical themes of M. Hrushevskiy's literary writing are consonant with his interests of both a writer and a historian. Being in tune with his historical studies, his prose works reflect real historical events in the life of people, personalize the socio-historical atmosphere of the past. As if complementing his own historical research, the writer used his literary imagination to see missing links between historical documents. Meanwhile, as a scholar M. Hrushevskiy resorted to artistic intuition if the document was lacking in detail or the author was eager to see the human temper, intents, and fates behind it.

Back in the day, I. Franko made an incisive comment in his review of the first seven volumes of *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy* [History of Ukraine-Rus], *Ocherk istorii ukrainskogo naroda* [The Study of the History of the Ukrainian People], and *Iliustrovana istoriia Ukrainy* [The Illustrated History of Ukraine] stating that M. Hrushevskiy – “will always fill in the gaps in historical detail with his own reasoning and combinations”, “his style may be termed ‘cold prose’ ”¹. Sharing I. Franko's feelings, M. Zerov reviewed

¹ Franko I. (1986) *Zibrannia tvoriv*: in 50 vol., vol. 47: *Istorychni pratsi* [Works in history] (1898–1913). Kyiv: Naukova dumka. pp. 453–454.

M. Hrushevskyyi's *Iliustrovana istoriia Ukrainy* [The Illustrated History of Ukraine] maintaining that "there is no need to discuss the scientific level of the book. The name of the author alone being regarded as belonging to the best-known and most authoritative researcher of Ukrainian history lends credence to its high standards.

The literary talent of the author is beyond any doubt. Having read the book once, you won't be able to put it aside – the narrative is so vivid, simple and dramatic, devoid of any unnecessary and commonplace words, clichéd phrases and expressions. So powerful and realistic do historical figures and pictures of people's campaigns come up, lit and warmed by the author's attitude"². This is an excerpt from the review of a historical study, although the critic suggests the style of the *Iliustrovana istoriia Ukrainy* [The Illustrated History of Ukraine] has elements of feature writing.

M. Hrushevskyyi's literary writing has often been seen just as a makeweight to his research work (the author himself thought he was a guest in the literary domain). His pieces have been taken as literary works, describing episodes in Ukrainian history, unearthing figures and their fates from dusty archives, adding human interest to historical science, breathing life into it.

M. Hrushevskyyi's flair for literature was prominently displayed in his lyrico-philosophical cycles of short stories *Sub divo: Pid holym nebom* [Under the Open Sky] and *Iz starykh kartok* [From the Old Cards]. The short stories reveal deep layers of spiritual history, combining the author's time period and the ancient past. Historical memory preserves psychological mechanisms underlying the national character, which come out as outlook archetypes. Not only does the socio-economic background change, but also spiritual, religious in particular. New civilization phenomena absorb continuous manifestations of people's self-identity testifying to the continuity of traditions, self-preservation of the 'collective soul' – a cultural model, accumulate distant past experience and reveal themselves through mythologeme symbols. New layers gradually grow over the archaic collective subconscious; in most cases, the new layers do not ruin the foundation, but are transformed within it.

In prose works, M. Hrushevskyyi addressed the eternal themes of pursuit of happiness, struggle for personal freedom, national self-esteem. The figure of B. Khmelnytskyi and his epoch held a special place in M. Hrushevskyyi's writings. Throughout his life, M. Hrushevskyyi reflected on the epoch of B. Khmelnytskyi from the perspective of a serious scholar and a creative

² Zerov M. (2002) *Ukrainske pysmenstvo* [Ukrainian literary writing]. Kyiv: Osnovy. P. 124.

artist. He believed that B. Khmelnytskyi made a radical political change, although he had never meant it before, as he acted in the interests of senior Cossacks. During the national liberation uprising, the Hetman erred by camping at Bila Tserkva and wasting time after crushing the Commonwealth army and taking Naddniprianshchyna. Instead of going into firm action, he wrote an explanatory letter to the Sejm and Polish officials, issuing a list of minimal demands: cancelling the Ordinance of 1638 and raising the number of Registered Cossacks. Analyzing the events, M. Hrushevskiyi was convinced B. Khmelnytskyi had not at first realized his leading role in the national liberation movement.

M. Hrushevskiyi also explored the key world literature theme – pursuit of happiness. He developed the theme in such works of his as *Yasnovelmozhnyi svat* [His Grace the Matchmaker], *Nerobochyi Hrytsko Kryvyi* [Vagabond Hrytsko Kryvyi], *Osobyste shchastia* [Personal Happiness], *Bidna divchyna* [A Poor Girl], *Testament* [Testament], *Istoriia odnoi nochi* [A Story of One Night] representing in them a distinct definition of happiness: “The main happiness of a person is to do what his / her head and conscience tell him / her to. The rest carries no weight; it is ἀδύνατον (Greek), which totally fades against eternal and unceasing life, as well as the everlasting Trinity of the truth, goodness, and beauty”³.

1. Historical themes in M. Hrushevskiyi’s prose as an expression of the writer’s individuality

The short story *Pro batka kozatskoho Bohdana Khmelnytskoho* [About Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, the Father of Cossacks] (1909), is interesting and compelling. M. Hrushevskiyi refers the genre of the story to a popular illustrated story. Put in simple terms, the material helps comprehend what was going on during the age of B. Khmelnytskyi. The author starts the story with the young years of B. Khmelnytskyi and finishes it with his death, lending the story a hagiographic colouring. Meanwhile, M. Hrushevskiyi answered the principal historical questions: what Khmel was for the people; what led to the protest movements of people; what the socio-political, national and religious structure was like in the Ukraine of the time; why the Upper and the Lower supported B. Khmelnytskyi and were ready to act under his leadership. Answering the questions allowed considering and comprehending what was going on in that time period in Ukraine.

The short story *Rozmova z Kryvonosom* [A Conversation with Kryvonis] (1914) is a kind of historical vision with the plot that can be regarded as

³ Martseniuk S. (1992) *Z hlybyn tysiacholit / Hrushevskiyi M. S. Predok: Opovidannia, narysy*. [From the depth of the millennia / Hrushevskiyi M. S. The ancestor: Stories, essays]. Donbas, no. 1–2, pp. 218–219.

parabolic. The author drew on a Carpathian legend on the army hidden in the mountains (similar plots were developed by M. Yatskiv in his *Skamianila kraina* [A Petrified Country] and by V. Pachovskyi in his *Son ukrainskoi nochi* [A Dream in the Ukrainian Night]). Maksym Kryvonis with his regiments made an appearance in the mountainous forest abatis; he had stayed alive at Lviv. Disagreeing with B. Khmelnytskyi's decision to retreat from the city, Kryvonis withdrew to the mountains to wait for a good moment to send in his troops. His dream here is rather a premonition. It is the image of Maksym Kryvonis which reveals the attitude of M. Hrushevskyi to B. Khmelnytskyi's figure.

Historiographic sources present different facts on the conflict between the Hetman and the colonel. As a historian, M. Hrushevskyi directs attention to the Hetman's reaction: "Knowing Khmelnytskyi's suspicious and envious nature with regards to power and authority (as the later facts show it), one would not think he was able to look on calmly as the influence and weight of Bratslav's leader were growing"⁴. Clearly, only Maksym Kryvonis's death at the end of 1648 brought that confrontation to an end.

The short story *Yasnovelmozhnyi svat* [His Grace the Matchmaker] (1897) was written to commemorate the anniversary of the national liberation war under the leadership of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi. It reflects the inner disposition of the future historian to "a strong and independent individuality with a well-established goal, who is pursuing this goal relentlessly, not giving way to either trivial temptations of life or the opinion of the world"⁵. While constructing the plot, the writer practises his favourite technique: making use of the fact given in the historical document, he looks at a person's fate applying the principle of historical probability and describing the events of the Khmelnytskyi Uprising throughout the period from December 30, 1647 to December 28, 1648.

The historical figure of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi takes a leading part in the story. The author colourfully shows his triumphant entrance to Kyiv. "On December 17, 1648, Kyiv held a big celebration, Khmelnytskyi was to come by Volyn Roadway from Bilhorodka. The sea of people from Kyiv and its suburbs made for the Bilhorodka Roadway as well. As Khmelnytskyi was coming nearer at the head of starshyna officers, riding a lovely black, richly decorated horse, wearing a sable hat with white feathers, the Patriarch with

⁴ Hrushevskyi M. (1957) *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy* [History of Ukraine-Rus], vol. 9, book 1: *Persha polovyna. Khmelnychchyna, roky 1650–1653* [First half. Khmelnytskyi Uprising, 1650–1653]. New York: Knyhospilka, p. 660.

⁵ Hrushevskyi M. (1898) *Yasnovelmozhnyi svat: Rizdviane opovidannia M. Zavoloka* [His Grace the matchmaker: A Christmas story of M. Zavoloka]. *Literaturno-naukovyi visnyk (Lviv)*, vol. I, p. 12.

the Metropolitan left the sleigh to meet him with the cross and holy water...”⁶ The Academy greeted the Hetman with “oration and acclamation”, ceremonial speeches and songs, called him “the new Moses, a custodian, savior, and liberator from the Polish Egyptian yoke”; thus he had been named Bohdan, meaning given the Rusky people by the Lord”⁷.

The writer tries the technique of psychologization by describing the emotional states of the Hetman: “Khmelnyskyi was cheerful and talkative; he was often being like that these days. He underwent apparently some important inner changes, being often pensive and then talkative again, in some exultant mood. It was mostly thought to be the influence of his conversations with the Patriarch, a highly educated person, with broad political views”⁸. It was, according to the author, “an extremely hard moment in Khmelnyskyi’s life”. Perhaps, that was the reason why he revived the tradition started by Sahaidachnyi of involving “religious matter” in his cause.

M. Hrushevskyi was inclined to purify the history of the Khmelnyskyi Uprising from any mythologization. His rejection of the legendary and the mysterious interpretation of the developments in the past should be linked to his positivist view of the historical process denying the excessive fictional element in literary descriptions of the events. Giving account of the Khmelnyskyi Uprising, he sticks to this principle as closely as possible, selecting the factual material concerning the real and not the legendary things about the Uprising. Meanwhile, he admitted that the legendary had peculiar durability and permeated even the scholarly papers of the 20th century. For all that, he could justify legends in the literary history of the Uprising.

The short story is written in the realistic key with some folklore elements (matchmaking and wedding rites), descriptions of the intelligentsia’s life. The work is full of everyday life details in the descriptions of the ceremonial meeting of the Hetman with the Metropolitan, the banquet on Khmelnyskyi’s name day, etc.

The social oppression inducing dreams of freedom left an imprint on the everyday life of the people. M. Hrushevskyi’s short stories *Bidna divchyna* [A Poor Girl], *Z pokhoronu* [From the Funeral], *Nerobochyi Hrytsko Kryvyi* [Vagabond Hrytsko Kryvyi], *Testament* [Testament], *Vykhrest Oleksander* [Apostate Oleksander] do not give an answer to the question who was to blame for the misery and poverty of people befallen by the tragic fate.

⁶ Hrushevskyi M. S. (1990) *Predok: Iz beletrystychnoi spadshchyny* [The ancestor: from literary legacy]. Kyiv: Veselka. P. 100.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., p. 104.

In the short stories *Bekh-al-Dzhugur, Yasnovelmozhnyi svat* [His Grace the Matchmaker] the reader sees the unique individuality of the writer: his scholarly attention to the historical fact, exactness of detail and atmosphere, combined with psychologically authentic descriptions of what the characters think and do. This makes M. Hrushevskiy's early short stories similar to historical adventure novels of Walter Scottian type. Representing just one of the style peculiarities of the writer's prose, they are organically linked to his interests of a historian and integrally related to his future works on history. The prose clearly illustrates how M. Hrushevskiy as an author of fiction, relying on his scholarly erudition, was not afraid to turn to conjectures and use his imagination to make up for the lack of facts. The mentioned affinity is seen in his constant efforts to personalize history, to re-establish links broken by time. As a scholar, M. Hrushevskiy used intuition when it was impossible to fill in the gap with documentary materials, never being reluctant to see people's emotions, intentions, fates behind the document.

2. Historiosophical reflections on man and life in M. Hrushevskiy's literary works

The short story *Predok* [The Ancestor] proves the author's ability to get into a historical event. Exploiting the literary device of a dream vision, M. Hrushevskiy describes an encounter with an ancestor, millennia apart. The short story clearly shows the writer delving into the deepest levels of consciousness. For him, the ancestor is "something miserable and close", yet as far as some "painful experience he had already got over". Only a brilliant scholar possessing a literary talent and creative intuition could ideate and express himself in such a way. I. Franko stated that "a person is the product of their environment, the evolution of their ancestors, nature and society they live in, and they are linked to all these influences with thousands of unbroken threads"⁹. The truth of the statement is proven by M. Hrushevskiy in this short story.

The narrator of the short story *Predok* [The Ancestor] feels unity with nature, realizes he is back to his ancestors to "live their plain, unpretentious life of millennia apart"¹⁰. Just as the characters of O. Kobylianska's and B. Lepkyi's works, in his search for the truth, he looks into nature where he can be sincere, honest, and genuine. The character integrates into the environment. The short story provides deep philosophical reflections on a

⁹ Franko I. (1978) *Zibrannia tvoriv*: in 50 vol., vol. 18: *Povisti ta opovidannia* [Novellas and stories] (1888–1892). Kyiv: Naukova dumka. P. 82.

¹⁰ Hrushevskiy M. S. (1990) *Predok: Iz beletrystychnoi spadshchyny* [The ancestor: from literary legacy]. Kyiv: Veselka. P. 123.

human being outside what we traditionally think as civilized to spend time alone with nature and reflect on life and the past. The imaginary encounter with the ancestor stimulates the character to revive memories of the past and re-evaluate life.

The short story *Penaty* [Penates] (1910) is linked to the historical realia in a different way. In Roman mythology, Penates were the benevolent gods of the household; the transferred meaning of the word 'penates' is a hearth, a native home. The writer himself and his wife Mariia Sylvestrivna Voiakivska served as the prototypes for the main characters of the story Ivan Petrovych (an embodiment of mind and feelings) and his wife Varvara Karpovna ("the active and creative element of the home"). Ivan Petrovych believed that "the things a person has around him exert their influence and power over him. They make the superstructure that lies between him and the world. His feelings and emotions, his thoughts and images created by his mind and impressions relate to some objects around, are represented by them"¹¹. Things influence people, as they render opinions, doubts, wishes, and each house is a whole microcosm. M. Hrushevskiy was born to a religious family; thus the issues of faith seemed inevitable to him. His ancestors belonged to the clergy; grandfather on his mother's side was a village priest. Therefore, the writer was always seeking for spiritual support in faith. Ivan Petrovych sees the scientific perspective of the principles of all major world religions (Christianity, Islam, Buddhism). For him the icon was intended to protect; it was a tutelary deity, an embodiment of household and family spirits; in difficult moments, he would even turn to it for a blessing. Ivan Petrovych and his parents, "who did not have any portraits of their ancestors, had their 'guardian angels', patron saints for their ancestral portrait gallery"¹². Looking at the portraits, the main hero had a sense of unity with his forefathers and contemporaries; he believed that peoples of the rational type can combine the cult of the ancestors with the intellectual outlook. "When a newborn was to be brought to ce penetrable (the innermost part of the temple or the house) to be introduced to my family line members and be given to their patronage and tutelage, I should state that I performed the ceremony without any sophisticated motives. I gave way to real feelings. However, the ceremony was truly the one of initiation of a new family member into the patronage of the household spirits"¹³.

¹¹ Hrushevskiy M. (1918) *Sub divo: Opovidannia, nacherky, zamitky* [Sub divo: Stories, essays, notes]. Kyiv: P. Barskyi u Kyivi. p. 23.

¹² Ibid., p. 32.

¹³ Ibid., p. 33.

The cult of the ancestors embodied in iconic images was deeply revered, just as Penates, or in other words the family icons that had always functioned as a kind of Penates, or household gods: as the proverb goes “As long as you have icons, you have a home”. The children were given the names of saints; each house had the icons of patron saints. “Ivan Petrovych climbed a ladder to untie the old icons hanging above...

– They are the Penates of my family now, giving the icon...

– I knowingly hid them away in my farthest room not to provoke any false thinking about my personality. I keep them to remember my own past experiences as well as to have treasured family memories...”¹⁴. In the short story, the author showed the spiritual impact of the forefathers on the psychological motives of actions and the way a person adapted to their life circumstances that are linked to memories and traditions.

The essay *Na horakh* [In the mountains] (1912), first published in the collection *Sub divo*, warned against the barbaric destruction of the primeval forests in the Carpathians, becoming a literary reflection on the issue of a possible ecological catastrophe, which newly arose at that time. From the typological perspective, M. Hrushevskiy’s essay resembles the short story *Bytva* [The Battle] by O. Kobylianska: both works feature prose poetry. The essay by M. Hrushevskiy is a prophetic work telling that the time and human activities damage and devastate the green Carpathians. Century-old trees die, the land dries out, the rich soil becomes degraded. An “insatiable tribe” seeks to ruin and destroy. The author makes the reader think about the vital issues of saving nature and hopes to see the land free from the insatiable human will. Nature is shown as an active element in history. It reflects the author’s holistic understanding of the world. If the harmony of the universal interdependence and freedom is undermined, the crisis is provoked and degradations are brought on. Civilization and culture are to develop on the basis of love of freedom and humanity.

The theme of sacral experience continues in the short story *Nich* [The Night] (1909), with the Easter Night, fire and earth as the central heroes at the time of joy and ecstasy: “The night fell, damp and warm, but the touch of its tender fragrant cover spreading over the earth teased and generated the energy of life... The buds that were ready to open burst and filled the air full of dense vapour of life and desire with a sweet balsamic aroma. The breathing life fermented as a thick foam in an overflowing cup”¹⁵.

¹⁴ Hrushevskiy M. (1918) *Sub divo: Opovidannia, nacherky, zamitky* [Sub divo: Stories, essays, notes]. Kyiv: P. Barskyi u Kyivi. p. 28.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

The fire occupies a special place in the event structure of the text: “The sacred purifying fire burns and destroys the dead parts and clears the earth for the new life. It drives away the hostile spirits of the cold and death and helps the earth give birth. A cheerful, noisy companies get together at the fires”¹⁶.

The people are “impatient to see the beginning of a triumphal procession of life. And when the singers at last start the triumphal song of resurrection... That’s an ecstatic joy!”¹⁷ In the joyful singing of the holiday, one can also hear “some different chords which only in a general way resemble the Easter singing”¹⁸; as if the choirs of earlier generations “sang the song of the spring rebirth not knowing of Christ (there was the Great God Pan, then the suffering Dionysus; nineteen centuries ago there came Christ). This Christian cult is quite new”¹⁹. Nature sings a hymn to the Great God Pan, and cheerful people unknowingly follow this ancient cult. M. Hrushevskiy describes the triumph of the Spirit that is eternally alive over the physical death. This short story features prose poetry with an impressionistic colouring.

The short story *Bizhnytsia v Zomemberhu* [The Church in Sommemberg] (1911) boasting an exquisite form and deep content is a fantasy, although the historical background is real. M. Hrushevskiy looks into the issue of the role and essence of art, which has become traditional for a great number of writers, in particular, T. Mann. The principal question he raises is whether art is to serve the community and perform pragmatic social or national functions or whether its primary purpose is to remain a domain of pure beauty, of literary transformed artist’s experiences. The author gives an answer to the question himself: “He [an artist – *N. Ya.*] is a master of his own feelings and his own ideas, his own artistic experiences and his own artistic creativity. He evaluates them in terms of the truth and genuineness, and not by what impression they might leave on this one and that one, and another one, on cattle breeders without even a slight artistic sense or usurers who assess an art piece from the perspective of being attractive for other usurers or merchants whose opinion they appreciate”²⁰. M. Hrushevskiy continues to reflect on the role and essence of art from the main hero’s point of view: “Art is for the audience, for the public, it is mutilation of art.

¹⁶ Hrushevskiy M. S. (1990) *Predok: Iz beletrystychnoi spadshchyny* [The ancestor: from literary legacy]. Kyiv: Veselka. P. 114.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Hrushevskiy M. (1928) *Pid zoriamy. Opovidannia, nacherky, zamitky, istorychni obrazy* [Under the stars. Stories, essays, notes, historical images]. Kyiv: Rukh. Pp. 354–355.

One mutilates oneself more, another less, but who will remain free of this damned adaptation to someone's taste, requirements and judgements? Who will remain his own master and won't serve the public?"²¹

The hero's ideas are not in conflict with the social function of art, as an artist bears responsibility towards society, 'art for art's sake' principle gives grounds to irresponsibility, since "the public need art pieces that would serve them, delight them, help them get away from the filth and wrongs in life that threat to stifle it. They tempt the artist by ambitions, fame, money. They tempt him from generation to generation, from father to son, offering the persuasion that a person creates not for himself and his own sense of beauty, but for people, fame, to beat other artists with his efforts, to be higher than his contemporaries and be worthy of attention among his predecessors and successors.

Let the artist and his art perish while serving the public and hiding the filth and emptiness of life"²². Examining the issue of the role of art, M. Hrushevskiy analyses its nature; in his views, he is close to the attitudes of T. Mann expressed in his novella *Tonio Kröger*. M. Hrushevskiy gives a similar conception of art and its origin: "In the wonder chalice of art, gall, blood and tears of humiliation and violence melt into the pure crystals of beauty. The filth and wrongs of life turn into golden pieces. But they are transformed by hard work and labour torments of creativity"²³. This statement is similar to T. Mann's idea of art as a curse upon an artist.

Unlike T. Mann, he tries to answer the question "if it is good to create an illusion that this creative work is full of joy, is easy and free when it is strenuous and drags the man through the mud, tears, and blood?"²⁴ In his work, he describes Israel as if it were Ukraine and likens the Jewish people to the Ukrainians. The main hero, Mark, has never let anyone into his inner world of feelings and dreams; he differentiates artistic beauty and physical human beauty. His abstract thoughts are embodied in material things: "For him, a slender column was an image of free, joyful plunge into a life full of beauty and delight.

A wide and flat arch was an image of timeserving and suppression, slavish resignation and dullness.

Low protuberant pilasters supported a twisted arch; they were a prosaic element, immersed headlong in the material troubles of life, while peaked

²¹ Hrushevskiy M. (1928) *Pid zoriamy. Opovidannia, nacherky, zamitky, istorychni obrazy* [Under the stars. Stories, essays, notes, historical images]. Kyiv: Rukh. Pp. 354–355.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., p. 359.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 354–355.

domes featured harmoniously balanced natures who were able to render secular things to the world and to God the things that are God's"²⁵. Thus he creates synthetic symbolism: a slender column symbolizes a beauty of life, pilasters stand for the routine, an arch is a symbol of suppression, and domes are linked to the Light and God. Further on, we see: "...endless colonnades of slender columns that please the eye with their versatility in unity – don't they tell a sad story of shameless triumphs and bitter humiliation?"²⁶. The colonnades of slender columns are a story of shameless triumphs, the Moresque style does not symbolize the fame of Israel, it embodies its suppression.

M. Hrushevskiy shows the lab of the architect and sculptor Mark Feger. In a literary form, the hero debates the controversial issues of the time, in particular the disputable ones between those who 'went to the people' and modernists: "Oh, heavenly beauty! How often you are an unfaithful slave..."²⁷; "Art is for the audience, for community, it is mutilation of art. ... an artist is one's own master and he won't go to serve the people ... creates for himself and his own sense of beauty ..." ²⁸.

It is an issue of elitist art which is one of the principles of modernism: Man and Art, Beauty of Art and Man's Suffering, Artist – 'Art's Lover'. A tile of porphyry becomes symbolic: "It shone before him as a bloody drop on the white marble of the façade, as a symbol of that bloody way of suffering, humiliation, violence along which art follows its creative path"²⁹. At the beginning of the work, the author uses the frame technique: a blood drop on the girl's face; at the end of the story, he decodes this visual symbol.

Istoriia seniory Zanety Alberigo iz Venetsii [The Story of Senora Zanetta Alberigo from Venice] (1914) with its ironic exoticism and erotism resembles *The Decameron* by G. Boccaccio and *Candide* by Voltaire. There had not been such works in Ukrainian literature before M. Hrushevskiy's. It is an adventure short story by its genre, with its key attributes of kidnapping and pursue. There are also some elements of a fairy tale with the traditional opening and an instructive ending. The plot is cumulative with recurring events; descriptions of nature and everyday life are consolidated; all the events unfold around one heroine; the space and time of the story are closed, and it has a happy end. M. Hrushevskiy addressing the reader persuades them that beauty can hurt; he uses the proverbial statement "Love is weird

²⁵ Hrushevskiy M. (1928) *Pid zoriamy. Opovidannia, nacherky, zamitky, istorychni obrazy* [Under the stars. Stories, essays, notes, historical images]. Kyiv: Rukh. Pp. 340–341.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 352.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 354.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 356.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 361.

and stubborn”, recurrence symbolism (Zanetta leaves Venice and comes back to it; she has had 12 men). Reflecting on the works by M. Hrushevskiyi in the collection *Pid zoriamy* [Under the Stars], M. Zerov claimed: “It is also well worth mentioning some new forms in the writings by M. S. Hrushevskiyi. While Ukrainian prose had stuck to the detailed story and its favorite essay, he offered in his *Bizhnytsia v Zomemberhu* [The Church in Sommemberg] and *Istoriia seniory Zanety Alberigo iz Venetsii* [The Story of Senora Zanetta Alberigo from Venice] the best samples of a laconic crisp novella that should be included in the educational materials for every beginning prose writer”³⁰.

3. Ukraine and Ukrainians in the world: shaping the outlook

In his work *Po svitu: Z podorozhnikh vrazhen* [Around the World: From Traveller’s Impressions] (1908), M. Hrushevskiyi relates the past of Venice, Toscana, Florence, trying to explore their previous and current significance in world culture; therefore, the beauty of the most popular areas in northern and eastern Italy remains in the background. Describing a faraway land, M. Hrushevskiyi spots the things that will win the heart of a Ukrainian as well. These magnificent cities were built in the period of the 15th to 16th centuries by the bloody labour of captives, and almost every third of the thousands of slaves building the Italian cities was Ukrainian. Famous European philanthropists, public figures, artists saw the arts flourishing on the labour of Ukrainian people, perishing in grief and misery without trace and fame. The slaves disappeared in Italy as a foreign element; they were exploited as inanimate inventory, cattle. For the Western world, Ukraine was a little known supplier of raw materials and labour force, mostly brought as captives. It was seen as a distant colony, just like African or American countries with people whose identity was underdeveloped. M. Hrushevskiyi asks a logical question: “When will it change? When will Ukraine get involved not with its raw materials or labour, but with the works of its cultural life stamped with the national make?”³¹ This painful question ends up the impressions of the writer from his trip around the world. As a reply to it, the writer concludes: when the national self-identity activates all the Ukrainian people, both the elite and the commonalty; when the achievements of both our native and world culture will belong not only to the upper class, but to the numerous lower class as well.

³⁰ Zerov M. (2002) *Ukrainske pysmenstvo* [Ukrainian literary writing]. Kyiv: Osnovy. P. 646.

³¹ Hrushevskiyi M. (1908) *Po svitu: Z podorozhnikh vrazhin* [Around the world: From traveller’s impressions]. *Literaturno-naukovyj visnyk*, vol. XLVI, no. V, p. 244.

The novella *Chuzhi i svoi* [Strangers and Natives] (1884) was dedicated to I. Nechui-Levytsky. He started his work on it being a student in Tiflis Gymnasium. In his letter to I. Nechui-Levetsky, he wrote, “I was eager to describe local Ukrainians, and among them a narodovets (a representative of the intelligentsia who preached the so-called ‘going to the people’) and his love affair with a girl. It bears a resemblance to your *Khmary* [Clouds]. It requires a lot of talent and knowledge; I idealized the narodovets, but the things about local Ukrainians are all real”³². M. Hrushevskyi believed in the new intelligentsia. The novella does not describe peasantry; it rather focuses on the city intelligentsia – teachers, officials, students and others.

The novella consists of eight chapters, with the line “The End of the First Part” after the third chapter. It was not finished and published, although the author had been planning to write seven parts and an epilogue. In the completed chapters, he details his thoughts and feelings, lending the hero Ivan Komashynsky his autobiographical features. The hero is looking for his true vocation around people who do not understand him. In numerous arguments, he defends his views on Ukrainian-hood showing the difference between Ukrainians and Little Russians. He was concerned as “in Ukraine, Ukrainians have become actors, and because of these Ukrainophilic actors Ukraine itself has been forgotten; the voice calling them to work drowns in the sound of music; the light at the stage dazzles them not to see what is going on outside the stage”. The young man hopes that the people will open their eyes and “will see, hear, God forbid they should be late!”³³ These statements are still relevant.

The plot of the novella is not complicated: Ivan Komashynsky, a student of Kyiv University, on his holiday comes to Vladikavkaz to take his sister and mother to Kyiv. He is immersed in his studies, books, the Ukrainian cause, he works much, writes much, socializes with people who are in love with their native language and land. He meets a young woman, a younger sister of his friend Tarasovych, Katria and falls in love with her. He takes a liking to the girl’s intelligence and beauty. He starts to teach her Ukrainian, hoping she will make a helpmate in an uneasy life of a Ukrainian narodovets. However, Katria is not ready for it; she chooses a different life and a different rich man. Receiving a bitter blow, Ivan Komashynsky gets ill and on recovery comes back to Kyiv to further the Ukrainian cause.

³² Vynar L. (ed.) (1997) *Lystuvannia Mykhaila Hrushevskoho* [Mykhailo Hrushevskyi’s correspondence]. Kyiv, New York. P. 33.

³³ Vynar L. (ed.) (2000) *Mykhailo Hrushevskyi: Iz literaturnoi spadshchyny* [Mykhailo Hrushevskyi: From his literary legacy]. New York, Kyiv: Knyha. P. 235.

The novella portrays intelligentsia with a clear hint of irony in the style of classical realism. It criticizes the lack of moral principles and petty bourgeois psychology of the representatives of the Ukrainian elite that often do not feel and thus do not regard themselves as the national elite. M. Hrushevskyy's figurative language is rich in similes, epithets, detalization, synonyms. Allusions to the Bible, folk songs, T. Shevchenko's and P. Kulish's poems, I. Kotliarevskyy's *Eneida* add a national colouring to the narrative.

In the novella, the author deals with the issues debated in the Ukrainian society at the turn of the 20th century. One of them is the role of the intelligentsia. O. Hrushevskyy maintained that "this constant and long-standing link between the real life of the Ukrainian society in the 19th century and the themes in Ukrainian literature appeared obvious..." The life of the conscious Ukrainian intelligentsia "provided themes for the writers in the last quarter of a century. They are universal issues of hope and doubts, love and hatred, joy and sorrow or some specific local things the Ukrainian intelligentsia had to solve by themselves..."³⁴ M. Hrushevskyy showed the process of shaping the main hero's outlook on the basis of his own attitudes to the part the Ukrainian intelligentsia was to take at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

CONCLUSIONS

The issues M. Hrushevskyy considered in his works were not only the product of the turbulent period. The writer spotlighted the inner life of a personality, the slightest feelings in the soul in difficult situations.

Being predetermined by M. Hrushevskyy's world view shaped in line with the philosophy of positivism and the mimetic tradition of the second half of the 19th century, the themes and ideas of his literary works explore the social problems of that time. Welcoming the ideas of "going to the people", the Ukrainian writers showed the wrongs against the people, looked at the new ways of solving the social problems while synthesizing the traditional and new methods of writing. The realistic pictures in M. Hrushevskyy's works enhance the expressivity of the plot; they combine the elements of social and psychological principles of writing.

Before the events in October 1917, M. Hrushevskyy was more focused on the people's attitudes and feelings, whereas after them, he adopted an

³⁴ Hrushevskyy O. (1918) *Z suchasnoi ukrainskoi literatury. Nacherky i kharakterystyky* [From modern Ukrainian literature. Essays and characteristics], vol. 1: *Ukrainski povistari druhoi polovyny 19 v* [Ukrainian prose writers of the second half of the 19th century], pp. 219–220.

absolutely different approach to literature. His literary works, according to V. Strashkevych do not attract with “the extraordinary beauty of their form, but yet, his works generate interest with the thoughts expressed in them, the genuine sincerity of feelings, which evokes a sentiment while reading”³⁵. L. Starytska-Cherniakhivska maintained that “M. Hrushevskiy’s works describe not only the actual historical situation, but the historical psychology of the characters, which is the hardest task”³⁶.

The beauty of the scenery, the power of the images, a laconic and crisp narrative style, the use of related situations as well as psychological experiences, dramatic events, unusual associations are the dominant features of M. Hrushevskiy’s manner of writing.

The conception of M. Hrushevskiy’s prose was mimetic, ontologically and socially backed by the tradition of the 19th and early 20th century represented in the works by I. Nechui-Levytsky, B. Hrinchenko, Olena Pchilka et al. Some ideas of M. Hrushevskiy’s short stories *Nich* [The Night], *Rozмова z Kryvonosom* [A Conversation with Kryvonis], *Na horakh* [In the Mountains] find an echo in the works by I. Franko and M. Kotsiubynsky. Thus in his short story *Intermezzo*, M. Kotsiubynsky recounted his personal experience of communing with nature. Similarly, M. Hrushevskiy combines fantasy and reality, the present and the past in the short stories *Nich* [The Night], *Predok* [The Ancestor].

Identifying M. Hrushevskiy’s position and significance in Ukrainian literature, M. Zerov stated, “He is on the borderline between Konysky, Hrinchenko and Kotsiubynsky, following the new technique of writing, although his style is clear, laconic, and rather crisp just as in the best short stories by V. Leontovych (*Smert i zapovit pana Ivana Hrechky* [The Death and Last Will of Master Ivan Hrechka]), and yet it is far from the ornamental impressionism of M. Kotsiubynsky. It is also well worth mentioning some new forms in the writings by M. S. Hrushevskiy”³⁷. His prose shows the features of Ukrainian realism and some elements of modernism; it uses such a device as dream vision which extends beyond the realistic narrative (*Osobyste shchatia* [Personal Happiness], *Predok* [The Ancestor], *Rozмова z Kryvonosom* [A Conversation with Kryvonis]) and a frame narrative

³⁵ Strashkevych V. (1918) *Krasne pysmenstvo*. Mykh. Hrushevskiy. Sub divo. *Opovidannia, nacherky, zamitky* [Literary writing]. *Knyhar. Litopys ukrainskoho pysmenstva*, no.14, p. 842.

³⁶ Starytska-Cherniakhivska L. (1907) *Dvadtsiat piat rokiv ukrainskoho teatru (Spohady ta dumky)* [Twenty-five years of Ukrainian theatre (Reminiscences and thoughts)]. *Ukraina*, no. 10, p. 45.

³⁷ Zerov M. (2002) *Ukrainske pysmenstvo* [Ukrainian literary writing]. Kyiv: Osnovy. P. 646.

technique (*U sviatoi Sofii* [At St. Sophia's] and *Bizhnytsia v Zomemberhu* [The Church in Sommemberg]).

The literary legacy of M. Hrushevskyyi features philosophical insights; he turns to Ukrainian and World History, but primarily to the history of human soul. His works cover a wide range of themes and discuss a great many of issues. As a writer, he feels confident in the Ukraine of Yaroslav Osmomysl, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, in the Sudan of the Mahdi period, in Medieval Venice or the Jewish ghettos in Germany. His works prove he could have become a prominent writer, but for his choice of a scholarly career.

M. Hrushevskyyi aimed at exploring and publishing history of the Ukrainian people, conveying his own view of the past, representing “the great folklore treasure of our people which should stop being a revered but rarely used item in our national inventory, as we see it now, and will become a proverbial book of the life of the people”³⁸. He could not restrict himself to focusing on the events without comprehending the evolution of the social consciousness of the nation, as the history of the Ukrainian people was mostly not the evolution of the state, but the attempts to survive, primarily in cultural and literary life.

The idea of the national revival largely dominates the literary works by M. Hrushevskyyi; it is clearly communicated through the images and the plot. Sometimes the author expresses the philosophical content of the works in the maxims that are not encoded in the images and the plot, but are inferred from the plot; they are formulated rather than formed. An insight into the inner self, an understanding of a person as a link between the preceding and succeeding generations at a metaphysical level complemented the scholar's conception of the people as a structural unit of the historical process and a key to the continuity of tradition.

M. Hrushevskyyi's literary works feature a subjective narrative, which combines two planes: the plot plane (folklore, mythological and real everyday life aspects) with the contextual plane (an associative impact). The figure of the historian narrator determines a peculiar synthesis of the epic and the lyrical manner; therefore, the works present a highly accurate context with a loose plot, objective predetermination through subjective reception (a person's life against a general historical background) to leave room for the reader's imagination.

Psychologism is the stylistic dominant of M. Hrushevskyyi's literary works. The writer promoted his own guidance through his literary images: freedom of thought, ideals of freedom, cherishing tradition. He offered

³⁸ Hrushevskyyi M. S. (1993) *Istoriia ukrainskoi literatury* [History of Ukrainian literature], vol. 1. Kyiv: Lybid. p. 368.

existential motifs, claiming that the freedom of choice is a key to personal development

Historical themes in M. Hrushevskiy's works can be accounted for by his world view of a scholar and a writer, with the scholarly career taking a priority in his life. Obviously, his literary works on historical themes may seem really absorbing: they reflect the conceptions of the author he was unable to cover in his scholarly papers for some objective reasons (a hypothetical proposition). While describing the events in the period of the Kyivan Rus, the 16th to 18th centuries, the Hetmanshchyna period, the writer applies the triad unity of the past (historical), the present (real), and the future (imaginary), which provides the main principles for the creation of a literary image that consist in engaging individual romantic views and Neo-Kantian theory. Thus, the fate, feelings, wishes and fears of a person seeking for the truth are projected onto the fate of humankind. Despite the significance of a fiction element, the historical truth dominates M. Hrushevskiy's texts. He chose a historical document (a life of a saint, a chronicle, the Cossack's Register) or a legend and made them come to life in a literary work with the description of people's lives and fates. The writer proved the continuity in the development of people's community, in particular the Ukrainian community, by renewing the lost time links. He compensated for the lack of facts by his erudition, intuition and imagination applying the principle of historical probability, adding the historical background and some individual traits to the characters. M. Hrushevskiy sought to purify the period of the Khmelnytskyi Uprising from myths.

A rich variety of themes and ideas as well as versatility of images affected the formal aspect of his writing, first and foremost the genre: a poem, a novella, a short story, a lyrical piece, an essay, a literary sketch, a fantasy, a dream vision, a fairy tale, a drama. M. Hrushevskiy adopted folk poetics, symbols, motifs, and images, sometimes transforming and modernizing the ritual, recasting the myth. However, the underlying principles of his creative writing remained unchanged: the principle of describing a character's personality in their direct and indirect contacts with their social environment, the principle of objective predetermination and subjective feelings, spiritual changes and turning points in people's fates.

SUMMARY

The chapter discusses M. Hrushevskiy's literary legacy. The analysis of his literary works demonstrates that the author uses the principle of describing a character's personality in their direct and indirect contacts with their social environment, the principle of objective predetermination and subjective feelings, spiritual changes and turning points in people's fates.

M. Hrushevskiyi focused not only on Ukrainian and World history, but primarily on the history of human soul. The chapter demonstrates that one of the key ideas in M. Hrushevskiyi's works is the idea of the national revival conveyed through versatile images and plots. The author expresses the philosophical content of the works in the maxims that are not encoded in the images and the plot, but are inferred from the plot; they are formulated rather than formed. The literary works provide an insight into the inner self, an understanding of a person as a link between the preceding and succeeding generations at a metaphysical level which complemented the scholar's conception of the people as a structural unit of the historical process and a key to the continuity of tradition.

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