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“Shakespeare as the centre of the canon” and motive of “literary immortality”

**Ковбасенко Юрій. «Шекспір як центр канону» і мотив
«літературного безсмертя».**

У статті розглянуто специфіку, основні закономірності та результати саморефлексії тих письменників, що перебувають у центрі своїх національних (світових) літературних канонів і чия творчість уникла забуття протягом століть (Квінт Гораций Флакк, Вільям Шекспір, Джон Мільтон, Роберт Бернс, Адам Міцкевич, Шарль Бодлер, Олександр Пушкін, Тарас Шевченко, Максим Рильський та ін.). Акцентовуються естетичний та аксіологічний аспекти функціонування мотиву літературного безсмертя в їхніх творах. Зокрема, у постколоніальному ключі розглянуто зміщення акцентів з естетичного аспекту на аксіологічний як засіб мімікрії імперських письменників.

Ключові слова: антропологія; античність; середньовіччя; ренесанс; бароко; романтизм; компаративістика; літературний канон; література XX – початку XXI століть; постколоніальні студії.

“We possess the Canon because we are mortal ...”

Harold Bloom. *The Western Canon*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays the problem of literary canon formation (preservation, transformation, destruction) called “Canon Theory” is the world scientific mainstream.¹ In particular, researchers wonder

¹ Fiedler L. A., Baker H. A. *English Literature: Opening Up The Canon*. Baltimore, 1979; Guillory J. *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation*. Chicago, 1993; Lauter P. *Race and Gender in the Shaping of the American Literary Canon. Feminist Criticism and Social Change: Sex, Class and Race in Literature and Culture*. New York, 1985. P. 19–44; Nemoianu V. *Literary Canons and Social Value Options. The Hospitable Canon*. Philadelphia, 1991. P. 215–249; Павлишин М.

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why do some literary works “mock man’s common fate in realms infernal” (Horace), sinking into the Lethe but other live through millennia, bringing back to life for a while in the memory of new generations and living after their authors’ death? Why does a particular writer get to be the focus of readers’ attention in a certain period as though taking the shine out of his colleagues but over time he falls back into the shadows and instead of him the former “dark horses” become new leaders of these specific literary races? And at the last, what characteristics of a literary work afford grounds for considering it canonical (perfect, best, exemplary) and what features must writers and their works be indued with to claim to a place in the national or even world canon?²

The Professor of Yale University Harold Bloom is considered to be one of the most remarkable researchers of “Canon Theory”. He is famous for his fundamental works *The Western Canon*, *Shakespeare. The invention of the human*, which conceptual ideas are taken into consideration in this study, that is devoted to researching of those particular characteristics, which allow William Shakespeare to take the centre stage in the world literary canon, first of all, his view of his place and achievements in the context of world literature.³ By the way, the expression “Shakespeare, Center of the Canon” is the direct quote and the title of the first chapter in Harold Bloom’s well-known monograph *The Western Canon*.

On the one hand, a writer’s self-perception or auto-reflection lacks to prove a person’s “scaling” and define the actual value of any writer’s creative body of work (in particular William Shakespeare). It is also necessary to introduce some certain, so to speak, “defining points on the map of world literature”, some valid and canonized with tradition coordinates and scale of values. Beyond all doubt The Great Bard had every reason to declare: “*Not marble, nor the gilded*

Канон та іконостас. *Канон та іконостас: Літературно-критичні статті*. Київ, 1997. С. 184–198.

² Ковбасенко Ю. І. Літературний Канон і куррикулум літературної освіти: світовий досвід і український шлях. *Всесвітня література в середніх навчальних закладах України*. 2011. № 9. С. 4–17; № 10. С. 12–29.
URL: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343365676_FORMUVANNA_LITERATURNOGO_KANONU_TA_KURRIKULUMU_LITERATURNOI_OS_VITI_SVITOVII_DOSVID_I_UKRAINS_KIJ_SLAH.

³ For a detailed account of the reasons for Shakespeare placement in the center of the literary canon, see: Торкут Н. М. Шекспірознавчий дискурс ХХ століття: специфіка і тенденції. Український шекспірівський портал. URL: <http://shakespeare.zp.ua/texts>. Item.

monuments of princes, / Shall outlive this powerful rhyme ...";⁴ but he couldn't make himself a centre of literary canon because it is a prerogative of descendants and only after that a particular writer's body of work has withstood the test of time.

On the other side, there is no way to downplay the significance of the writer's auto-reflection which is embodied most brightly in the motive of summing up the results of his own creative life, which was founded by Roman Horace in the ode *To Melpomene* ("*Exegi monumentum ...*"). It is an old tradition on which Shakespeare drew composing just quoted lines: "*Not marble, nor the gilded monuments of princes, / Shall outlive this powerful rhyme ...*".

That's why the important task of this study is to examine the specific character of the auto-reflection and self-assessment of the creative work by those writers who are in the high light of their national (world) literary canons and whose creative work has escaped oblivion throughout centuries.

Under auto-reflection I mean and a person's comprehension of self-action (including the creative work – Y. K.), self-cognition activity that unravels the specific features of man's inner world, alike self-examination, man's insights (excessive sometimes, heightened oversensitive) into the own state of mind".⁵

Epistolary, memoirs of contemporaries can provide the material for the research of the artist's auto-reflection but the most important source is peculiarly literary works in which the writer-demiurge can become both subject and object of the own art or literary-critical thought at the same time. This auto-reflection often occurs thanks to writers' self-assessment of those parameters which according to them can provide "the eternal continuation" for their works in the memory of many generations, peculiar "literary immortality", in other words, place in the Canon. In fact "literary memory" is based on the Canon that is a system of recalling".⁶

1. Motive of "Literary immortality": aesthetic aspect

The auto-reflection, writers' self-assessment of their contribution in literature, their claims to "literary immortality" are

⁴ Shakespeare W. Sonnet 55. *Shakespeare's sonnets* / Ed. by K. Duncan-Jones. Bloomsbury, 2010. P. 122.

⁵ Словник іншомовних слів. Київ, 2010. С. 501.

⁶ See: Bloom H. The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages. New York, 1994. P. 48; Лотман Ю. М. Память в культурологическом освещении. *Лотман Ю. М. Избранные статьи: В 3 т.* Таллинн : Александра, 1992. Т. 1. С. 200–202.

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embodied very brightly in the motive of summing up results of the creative life, so-called “the motive of a monument”, on the first line of the ancient Roman poet Horace’s ode written in the first century BC *Ad Melpomenen (To Melpomene)*: “Exegi monumentum...” (“I have erected a monument”). A poem, novel or play contains the whole complex of human phobias, including the fear of death that turns into the desire of canonization and need to be present to society’s mind in literary art. Everything turns on mortality and immortality of literary works. Where did the idea of the eternal duration of work, which “wouldn’t die and wouldn’t be forgotten by the world”,⁷ start from?”

One of the first and brightest embodiments of the motive of the poet’s literary immortality is already mentioned ode *To Melpomene*, one of the most quoted precedent texts in world literature:

<i>Exegi monumentum aere perennius Regalique situ pyramidum altius, Quod non imber edax, non aquilo impotens Possit diruere aut innumerabilis Annorum series et fuga temporum. Non omnis moriar multaque pars mei Vitabit Libitinam: usque ego postera Crescam laude recens, dum Capitolium Scandet cum tacita virgine pontifex: Dicar, qua violens obstrepit Aufidus Et qua pauper aquae Daunus agrestium Regnavit populorum, ex humili potens Princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos Deduxisse modos. Sume superbiam Quaesitam meritis et mihi Delphica Lauro cinge volens, Melpomene, comam.⁸</i>	<i>Звів я пам’ятник свій. Довше, ніж м і д ь дзвінка, Вищий од п і р а м і д царських, простоїть він. Доц його не роз’їсть, не сколихне взимі, Впавши в люті, Акваїлон; низка років стрімких – Часу біг коловий – в прах не зітре його. Смерті весь не скорюся; не западе в імлу Частка краща моя. Поміж потомками Буду в славі цвісти, поки з Весталкою Йтиме Понтифік-жрець до Капітолію. Там, де Авфід бурлить, де рільникам колись Давн за владаря був серед полів сухих, – Будуть знати, що я – славний з убогого – Вперше скласти зумів по-італійському Еолійські пісні. Горда по праву будь, Мельпомено, й звінчай, мило всміхаючись, Лавром сонячних Дельф нині й моє чоло. (Переклад з латин. Андрія Содомори)⁹</i>
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⁷ Bloom H. Op. cit. P. 24, 47.

⁸ Horace. Odes / Trans. N. Rudd. London : Penguin Classics, 2004. (Original work published ca. 23 BCE).

⁹ Гораций. Оди. Еподи. Сатири. Послання / Перекл. А. Содомора. Львів : Апріорі, 2021.

The poetical embodiment of the idea of the immortality of the creative body of work demanded the development of a new system of images from Horace and he did it brilliantly having connected the concept "immortality" with two images:

- 1) "brass" (the metal is incorrodible, that's why it is almost eternal);
- 2) "The Pyramids": a) as the highest and as a result the most noticeable building in the world in his day; b) as a symbol of high officials' desire to underline their splendours and perpetuate the memory.

The genius of Horace is that he discovered a fact that many people don't notice: the sacral artistic chronotope is embodied in these images:

- cronosis – span of time ("brass");
- topos – extension in space (the height of Pyramids; allied figurative meaning: the value of the Pharaohs' social status).

Thus according to Horace, the writer's creative body of work is his "monument" ("monumentum") that is more durable than the most lasting metal ("aere perennius") and higher / more noticeable /more prestigious than the highest Pyramids of the most remarkable rulers ("pyramidum altius").

Then the artists of different epochs and peoples used actively this Roman's creative discovery. William Shakespeare drew upon Horace's "brass" and "stone" in his famous 55 sonnet¹⁰:

<i>Not marble nor the gilded monuments Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme, But you shall shine more bright in these contents Than unswept stone besmeared with sluttish time. When wasteful war shall statues overturn, And broils root out the work of masonry, Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn The living record of your memory.</i>	<i>Надгробків царських мармурові плити Переживе потужний мій рядок, І образ твій, немов із міді литий, У вічність перейде. Хоч воєн крок Зруйнує все – і статуї, і трони, Каменярми тесаний граніт, Але твоєї із пісень корони В тисячоліттях не забуде світ... Ти смерті й забуття минеш дорогу</i>
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¹⁰ For the intertextuality of Shakespeare's sonnets, see: Торкут Н. М. Інтерпретація сонетів В. Шекспіра в методологічному просторі міждисциплінарного діалогу. *Ренесансні студії*. Запоріжжя, 2006. Вип. 11. С. 3–20.

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<i>'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room Even in the eyes of all posterity That wear this world out to the ending doom. So, till the Judgement that yourself arise, You live in this and dwell in lovers' eyes.¹¹</i>	<i>І, подолавши путь в людські серця, Вперед ітимеш із віками в ногу, Аж поки дійде світ свого кінця. І в День Суда ти житимеш у слові, В піснях моїх, що сповнені любові. (Переклад з англ. Дмитра Паламарчука).¹²</i>
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Though Horace suggested first of all about himself and his creative body of work and Shakespeare did more about “a man’s image who is glorified” (Harold Bloom), the tonality and image systems¹³ of their works are comparable first of all through invariant – it is the motive of “the elixir of immortality” for the character who is praised by the poet because he put it into the text of his immortal work.

William Shakespeare had a fine appreciation of efficiency of Horace’s discovery: underlining the dualism of the writer’s figure: Horace emphasized on the one hand on the mortal body that as well as in any person “die” and on the other side the immortal creative body of work, “his greater part” that is timeless (“Shall mock in realms infernal”) as long as the new generations remembered him every time. That’s why the high esthetic quality (inspiration) and significance heritage for many generations of readers give a chance for writers and characters of their works to get “literary immortality”.

The late romantic Charles Baudelaire kept to the beaten by Shakespeare track. He shocked the refined tastes of the 19th century French readers with his theory “extracting the beauty out of ugliness”. In his infamous poem “Carrion” (fr. “Une charogne”)¹⁴ he gave the horrifying description of the dead sphacelated horse’s corpse (that’s why we have got such a title). And the loving couple strumbled across it during the summer walk outdoors. The poet uses the extremely sharp antithesis, opposing the celestial beauty of the lyric heroine to the ugliness of just mentioned carrion’s description and concludes

¹¹ Shakespeare W. *Sonnets* = *Сонети* / Перекл. Д. Павличко, Львів: Літопис, 1998. С. 70.

¹² Там само. С. 71.

¹³ “Royal Pyramids”, “Marble slabs of royal tombstones”; “Longer than ringing copper”, “Your image, as if cast from copper”, etc.

¹⁴ It was from this outrageous headline that opponents of Baudelaire (a well known as “King of Poets”), pushed back contemptuously calling him “the King of Carrion”.

frailty of all fresh and consequently about the inevitability of lyric heroine's death. And the semantics of just analyzed Shakespeare's lines ("So, till the Judgement that yourself arise, / You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes ...") gets an outrageous form in Baudelaire's poem:

<i>... – Et pourtant vous serez semblable à cette ordure, À cette horrible infection, Étoile de mes yeux, soleil de ma nature, Vous, mon ange et ma passion!</i>	<i>... – О! Станете ж і ви колись, моя кохана Мій ангеле і світе мій, Як ця падлятина, як ця заразна рана, Як цей стліваючий погній!</i>
<i>Oui! Telle vous serez, ô la reine des grâces, Après les derniers sacrements Quand vous irez, sous l'herbe et les floraisons grasses, Moisir parmi les ossements.</i>	<i>Після останнього причастя, моя мила, Під володіннями трави, Коли поглине вас безжалісна могила, Такою будете і ви!</i>
<i>Alors, ô ma beauté! Dites à la vermine Qui vous mangera de baisers, Que j'ai gardé la forme et l'essence divine De mes amours décomposés!¹⁵</i>	<i>Красо, скажіть тоді черві, що підло рине З цілунками на вашу груди, Що ваші форми я зберіг, моя богине Зберіг мого кохання суть! (Переклад з французької Михайла Москаленка)¹⁶</i>

Shakespeare not only adopted but developed the opposition which is hardly marked by Horace. In the Roman, the antithesis "thy celebrated son from one most lowly born" can be interpreted as "the biographic text",¹⁷ because Horace was a son of an emancipated serf, in other words, the former slave (socially persecuted, low, poor). He could rise high thanks to his creative work, not only has become a famous poet in the Roman society ("Shall cultivate my praise") but also having rubbed elbows with the inner circle of the powerful Roman Princes and later the emperor Octavian Augustus.

¹⁵ Baudelaire C. Les Fleurs du mal. Paris : Poulet-Malassis et De Broise, 1857.

¹⁶ Бодлер Ш. Поезії / Перекл. М. Москаленко. Київ : Дніпро. 1999.

¹⁷ See: Торкут Н. М., Марінеско В. Ю. Біографістика як метажанр: спроба теоретико-літературної ідентифікації феномена. *Держава та регіони. Серія: Гуманітарні науки*, 2014. С. 4–11.

In Shakespeare's poem, we find an opposition "destroyed thrones" – "immortal crown of songs" (interpreted by Dmytro Palamarchuk). The semantic invariant of the lexical items "thrones/crown" is the attributes of the monarchical power. That's why his antithesis spreads as on the axis "death/immortality" ("destroyed/immortal") and on the social opposition: the crown of songs of any person (even socially not remarkable) is more lasting than the thrones of monarchs!

That's why it is no wonder that John Milton used the same images in his poem *On Shakespeare. 1630*, having put it into the shape of English sonnet (so-called Shakespearean sonnet) (4-4-4-2):

*What needs my Shakespeare for his honour'd Bones,
The labour of an age in pilèd Stones,
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a stary pointing Pyramid?
Dear son of Memory, great heir of Fame,
What need'st thou such weak witnes of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thy self a live-long Monument.
For whilst to th' shame of slow-endeavouring art,
Thy easie numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalu'd Book
Those Delphick lines with deep impression took,
Then thou our fancy of it self bereaving,
Dost make us Marble with too much conceaving;
And so Sepulcher'd in such pomp dost lie,
That Kings for such a Tomb would wish to die.¹⁸*

As we see John Milton based not only upon Horace's prototext (for example, reference to "a stary pointing Pyramid" but also upon the transformation of this prototext by Shakespeare: he underlined the duration of the creative body of work based on its comparison with "duration" of stone monuments for the worldly rulers, monarchs. It is also necessary to mention Milton's wonderful discovery: he associated readers who bent their heads over Shakespeare's works with marble figures on the monarchs' grave-stones because both memorize.

It is also interesting to study how the poets of different historical epochs and peoples imagined the duration of their desirable "literary

¹⁸ Milton J. On Shakespeare. *John Milton: The Complete Shorter Poems* / Ed. J. Carey. London : Longman, 1997. P. 13.

immortality". Horace wrote that the monument would preserve his glory as long as the Vestal Maid and the priest went to the Capitol. Maybe it is Horace's ingenious Providence or worthy of astonishment historical consilience but nowadays the Pope lives near the Capitol, pontifex is one of his titles and Horace's creative work is not forgotten for more than two thousand years (sic!).

William Shakespeare went on having expanded "expectation limits" both chronologically and geographically: he hopes that his works will live, that wear this world out to the ending doom.

The motif of Horace-Shakespeare about the eternal duration of creative work was localized by Alexander Pushkin to the presence of poets in the world.

Taras Shevchenko realized this motive of world poetry fully (he resembles Horace, "thy celebrated son from one most lowly born" because he was the Ukrainian peasant serf who became the academician in St. Petersburg). He developed it tremendously in his poem *«На вічну пам'ять Котляревському»: «Будеш, батьку, панувати, / Поки живуть люди; / Поки сонце з неба сяє, / Тебе не забудуть!»*¹⁹

2. Motive of "Literary immortality": axiological aspect

The most interesting thing is how writers themselves estimate the importance of those possessions and achievements which, to their mind, will allow them to claim the memory of the future generations and place in the canon. What merits won't the writer be forgotten for, and "cultivate the praise" (Horace), "be loved by the people" (Alexander Pushkin), what will descendants "remember him with softly spoken, kindly word for" (Taras Shevchenko)?

Of course, the foremost condition for inclusion the writer to the canon is his poetic talent, the genius. Artists often consider that the most important achievement is art innovation, creative originality, and "a peculiar mark of originality that can provide the work with the place in the canon, is its strangeness".²⁰ For example, Horace considered that his biggest merit and chance for the place in the canon was that he "was the first to bend to Roman measure Grecian verse", it means that he achieved many Romans' dream, having reached the heights of poesy that was scaled only by the Hellenic lyric poets, first of all,

¹⁹ Шевченко Т. На вічну пам'ять Котляревському. Шевченко Т. Повне зібрання творів: У 12 т. Київ : Наукова думка, 2001. Т. I. С. 109–112.

²⁰ Bloom H. Shakespeare. The invention of the human. Riverhead books. New York, 1998.

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Sappho and Alkey (7 century BC), natives of the island Lesbos; they composed their poems in “divine” (Platon) Aeolian dialect (“Eolian songs” originated from this). Thus, Horace thought that the most valuable in his creative work is the aesthetic aspect.

At the same time in the course of reception and transformation of Horace's prototext his numerous followers developed their versions, making sometimes a virtue of esthetic parameters. Taking example by Horace (“*I have erected a monument to myself / Not built by hands ...*”²¹), Pushkin emphasized not esthetic, but moral, axiological aspects of his creative work:

*In centuries to come, I shall be loved by the people
For having awakened noble thoughts with my lyre,
For having glorified freedom in my harsh age
And called for mercy towards the fallen.*²²

Many people don't know that these nowadays iconic lines in Pushkin's text appeared not right away, but after a difficult spiritual struggle, perhaps, even crisis. The poem was written in 1836, shortly before the death of the author. Let's compare the initial and final versions in the original:

Initially:	Finally:
<i>And long the people yet will reverence me Because new harmonies in song I found, And, like Radishchev, sang of liberty, And let my lyre to mercy's praise resound.</i> ²³	<i>In centuries to come, I shall be loved by the people For having awakened noble thoughts with my lyre, For having glorified freedom in my harsh age And called for mercy towards the fallen.</i>

As we see, initially Pushkin's poem was much closer to Horace's “esthetically focused” prototext: “I was the first to bend to Roman measure Grecian verse” – “new harmonies in song I found”. Why did he refuse his discovery and choose another (finally it was a weaker variant in the context of art) version?

As the person with a sharp mind, he understood that having become the court historiographer and poet and having become

²¹ Pushkin A. Selected Lyric Poetry / Trans. J. E. Falen, Evanston, IL : Northwestern University Press. 2009.

²² Pushkin A. S. Exegi monumentum [Poem]. *Pushkin A. Selected Lyric Poetry* / Trans. J. E. Falen, Evanston, IL : Northwestern University Press. 2009. C. 45–46.

²³ Pushkin A. Exegi monumentum [Poem] / Trans. Avril Pyman. URL: <https://rvb.ru/pt/pushkin/0617f-ru-en.html>.

addicted to Mykola I (he owed the huge sum at the time – 45 000 rubles in gold (= \$ 10 000 000)!), he “dubbed up” for it with the emperor writing frankly populist poems and consequently he began to lose national love and respect of general public to which he had already accustomed.

Chauvinistic notes in the works of Alexander Pushkin were felt earlier, especially in relation to the peoples of the Caucasus (as a manifestation of Orientalism), which was also inherent in Mikhail Lermontov and others. Russian writers of that era.²⁴

The outstanding example of Pushkin's undisguised obsequiousness in the face of the czar was chauvinistic poem *Ode to defamers of Russia* (1831), approved personally by Mykola I and therefore instantly published, devoted as to the justification of the Russian chasteners for extremely cruel suppression of the Polish revolt in 1830–31, and cynical blackmail of Europe that was indignant with atrocities of the Russian soldiers.²⁵ Despite all undoubted art advantages, this poem was extremely populist and improperly obsequious that was noted even in Russia. For example, Pushkin's friend and poet Petr Viazemsky called this poem «overcoat ode». The respected Russian literary critic Vissarion Belinsky noticed that Pushkin should have written only two-three allegiant poems and put on a chamber junker mandilion as he suddenly lost the love of the people.

The Polish Adam Mitskevych was sensitive about atrocities of Russians in Poland and the justification of these atrocities by Pushkin. He accused Pushkin (without having told the name) not only of chanting of Russian aggression but also of grovelling in front of the despot in the poem *To Muscovite friends* written behind borders of the Russian Empire:

... Хтось інший, може, з вас покараний надміру;
Хтось чином, орденом зганьбив ім'я своє
І з милості царя запродав душу щирю,
І перед деспотом низькі поклони б'є.
А, може, славите його тріумфи грізні,

²⁴ See: Ковбасенко Ю. І. Орієнталізм російської літератури як маркер імперської ментальності.

TEKA Komisji Polsko-Ukraińskich Związków Kulturowych. V. 6, No. 19.

URL: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/392493726_ORIENTALISM_ROSIJSKOI_LITERATURI_AK_MARKER_IMPERSKOI_MENTALNOSTI.

²⁵ See: Ковбасенко Ю. І. Адам Міцкевич і Віктор Гюго VS Олександр Пушкін і Микола I, або Сучасний погляд на розв'язку однієї «дружби-ворожнечі». *Всесвіт*. 2016. № 9–10. С. 250–253.

URL: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343365676_FORMUVANNA_LITERATURNOGO_KANONU_TA_KURRIKULUMU_LITERATURNOI_OS_VITI_SVITOVII_DOSVID_I_UKRAINSKIJ_SLAH.

IV. Свіжий погляд на давні тексти

За приятелями шкодуєте тихцем,
Рікою кров мою лете в мойй Вітчизні,
З проклять хизуючись перед своїм царем.
(From the Polish by Vsevolod Tkachenko²⁶)

After the publishing of this and several other “allegiant” poems, Pushkin realized clearly that his image of “the freedom-loving poet” and “the singer of freedom” began to fade and the writer can't make the future with such baggage (Voltaire). Maybe because of this he began to look for means to “cleanse image” in the public eye. In particular, he used Horace's discovery. It was a development of motive of “monument” in which it was possible, to sum up, the results of own life and get priorities straight, having shown the positive (or necessary) features of the creative work, thereby blocking out the ugly traits.

It is interesting that he began to compose the poems *I have erected a monument to myself not built by hands* and *From Pindemonte*²⁷ almost simultaneously. In the last, he declared that the true poet should not kowtow to anybody. However, in real life, he cringed. And especially caustic sarcasm consisted in getting a chamber junker mandilion that was usually worn by 18–20-aged men from the czar. Keeping in mind his status and age (the 30-aged married man) it was humiliation.

Thus it is very probable that the aspiration to remain in the memory of descendants as a singer of freedom, but not as a “pocket” imperial dithyrambic made Pushkin shift the emphasis from the aesthetic aspects of his creative work (“new harmonies in the song I found”) to moral and axiological ones (“for having awakened noble thoughts with my lyre”) in the poem *I have erected a monument to myself not built by hands*.

It is a shining example of influence an auto-reflection on a creative paradigm and view of the life of the artist who wants to get in the canon, aspires “literary immortality”. This moment of summing up the results of the life and creative work that it was embodied ingeniously by Horace and his numerous followers in “the motive of

²⁶ From the personal archive of Y. Kovbasenko.

²⁷ It is noteworthy that this was not without Shakespeare's influence: in his poem Pushkin singled out the intertext from the tragedy “Hamlet” attributing it as the protagonist's remark: “Words, words, words ...” (more about the “semantic radiation” of this work in Ukrainian cultural paradigm, see: Черняк Ю. І. Специфіка актуалізації ціннісної семантики «Гамлета» В. Шекспіра в українському шекспірівському дискурсі: автореф. дис. ... канд. філол. наук: 10.01.05. Київ, 2011).

the monument", makes artists – as on a confession in the church – it is honest (or at least externally, "for a façade") estimate honestly (or at least externally) everything that they came to this world for.

At the same time in the course of development of the "motive of the monument" among those poets who come from prevailing nations (Roman Kvint Horace Flakk, Englishman William Shakespeare, Russian Alexander Pushkin, etc.) the moral auto-reflection takes the insignificant place in general. Mainly their attention concentrated on aesthetic innovation.

The other situation is typical of artists who represented the literature of the unfree nations (the Scottish Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns, Polish Adam Mitskevych, Ukrainians Taras Shevchenko and Maxim Rylsky, etc.). Although they drew on Horace's and Shakespeare's prototexts too, their attention in the course of inclusion and, perhaps, the formation of national literary canons often concentrated on axiological problems and the fate of their peoples.

The absence of formal recognition, hopelessness on contempt and neglect of representatives of the imperial culture, on persecutions and, eventually, on oblivion was very painful for those poets who came from the stateless, enslaved nations but did not want to join to the course of imperial culture. As it happened, for example, in Great Britain with the talented Scottish poet Robert Fergusson (1750–1774) who did not want to follow the British imperial literary fashion and wrote in native Scottish, using the Scottish subjects and died, having hardly arrived at the age of twenty. Later, having been impressed with the simplicity of Fergusson's gravestone, the Scottish Robert Burns embodied the pain and bitterness, drawing on Horace's and Shakespeare's prototexts:

*No sculptur'd m a r b l e here, nor pompous lay,
No storied urn nor animated bust;
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way
To pour her sorrows o'er her Poet's dust.*²⁸

While there is not any stone monument for Fergusson in London, Burns has erected the verbal one to his "elder brother" (as he called Fergusson), following Horace and Shakespeare. Not casually his poem is called *Inscription on the Tombstone Erected By Burns To The Memory Of Fergusson*. The poet's words «N o sculptur'd m a r b l e here...» is allusion on Shakespeare: «N o t m a r b l e nor the gilded

²⁸ Inscription. On The Headstone Of Fergusson. By Robert Burns. URL: <https://www.public-domain-poetry.com/robert-burns/inscription-on-the-headstone-of-fergusson-10068>.

monuments ...”, and all these elements together are the reminiscence of Horace’s : “Exegi monumentum ...».

Then the Ukrainian Taras Shevchenko suffered the difficult fate of the Scottish Fergusson and Burns. They lived and created in the British Empire and Taras Shevchenko did it in the conditions of the Russian Empire. He did not want to write in the imperial language, in Russian (he mastered it perfectly) too, and to follow the Russian imperial ideology. The Ukrainian speech, topics and ideology of Shevchenko's works made not only the Russian courtiers and so-called “democrats”, but also even his Ukrainian countrymen wrinkle a nose fastidiously. The resident of Poltava Mykola Gogol considered that “it is more tar than poetry” in Shevchenko's works (read: Shevchenko's poetry is rustic, “for house use”).

Any official recognition or award, and least of all monument from the Russian Empire remained out of the question for Shevchenko in such situation. The czar “awarded” the Ukrainian poet with 10 years of heavy military service and with the ban to read and write. It was right for Shevchenko to compare his exilement by the emperor Mykola I with Ovidius' relegation by the emperor Octavian Augustus, having called both monarchs executioners.

To overcome “a colonialist trauma” – not visible, but painful emotional stress – Shevchenko drew on the same Horace's and Shakespeare's prototexts, we can see it from the system of images in his poem *To Osnovianenko* (1840):

... Наша дума, наша пісня
Не вмере, не загине...
От де, люде, наша слава,
Слава України!
Без золота, без каменю (граніта),
Без хитрої мови,
А голосна та правдива,
Як Господа слово ...²⁹

Using Horace's formulas “more durable than brass And higher than the pyramids that stand Laid out for kings” (or Shakespearean: “Not marble nor the gilded monuments / Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme”), Shevchenko is designing the image of “monument” to the Ukrainian writer in the hostile Russian Empire. The true Ukrainian writer had no authority to get the official imperial

²⁹ Шевченко Т. До Основ'яненка. *Тарас Шевченко. Зібрання творів*: У 6 т. Київ, 2003. Т. 1: С. 119–121 URL: <http://litopys.org.ua/shevchenko/shev113.htm>.

recognition and the line «без золота, без граніту» emphasized this fact. As the creative work of Osnovianenko and Shevchenko did not belong to the official doctrine of "Prosperity" of a great number of the peoples in the Russian Empire and to the noble literary fashion of that time, the Ukrainian writers could never claim to the official recognition and "the granite and gold" of imperial monuments. The image of the monument (pyramids, a monument, a marble monument or sculptures, the Alexandria column, etc.), built to perpetuate the memory of "rulers", was a symbol of greatness and durability in Horace's, Shakespeare's, Milton's, Pushkin's and other representatives' of imperial nations works. In such a way the mentioned poets could compare greatness and duration of their own literary body of work.

But this image gets essentially other semantics in Shevchenko's works as a representative of the stateless, enslaved nation. It is connected with a radical existential antithesis: on the one hand, "gold, granite, sly (illusive – Y. K.) language of "the Russian imperial monuments, on the other hand," loud and true, as God's word" the Ukrainian duma and the song, the Ukrainian word which will overcome the lie collected throughout the centuries even it is covered with "gold and granite" of the splendid imperial monuments.

And, though the young Ukrainian poet from the province saw ways to imperial money and glory, grandiose "granite and gold" in Russian capital St. Petersburg, he consciously chose "not prestigious, rustic" Ukrainian literature:

... if you aim
To make yourself a mint
Of money, and a lot of fame,
Then of Matryosha sing,
And of Parasha, charming witch,
Parquet, gold braid and spurs.
Then you'll make good!! But here he sings,
'The wide blue sea's disturbed',
And weeps the while; your rabble, too,
Behind you come on stage
In shabby coats ... " My thanks to you
For your advice so sage!
The coat is warm, but I'm afraid
It's not cut to my size, (Taras Shevchenko. "Haidamaki"³⁰, 1841)

³⁰ Shevchenko T. Haidamaki. URL: <https://taras-shevchenko.storinka.org/taras-shevchenko-poem-haidamaki-english-translation-by-john-weir.html>.

Here is the main existential watershed, dividing the central figures of two canons: the Russian imperial (Alexander Pushkin) and Ukrainian democratic (Taras Shevchenko). Figuratively saying Shevchenko refused the imperial “mandilion”, but Pushkin could not or did not want to do this.

Some researchers of Shevchenko's creative work consider that “spiritual treasure of the nation does not need official praises”. I should take exception: the spiritual treasure of any nation always needs official praises. But such praises are possible only in own, really sovereign state. And Taras Shevchenko as none of his contemporaries understood that in the Russian Empire where *«від молдаванина до фінна, на всіх языках все мовчить»*, it is impossible to recognize officially and glorify the true Ukrainian heritage. Therefore he also writes that in such conditions the Ukrainian writer could not rely on magnificent official monuments of granite and gold, but only on the good reputation among people who didn't sell themselves and appreciate not *«хумру мову»*, but the sincerity of the poet and truthfulness of his poetry.

In centuries this motive was picked up by Maxim Rylsky in whose poem notes of Taras Shevchenko and genetically Horace and Shakespeare are visible:

*Я пам'ятник собі поставив нетривалий –
Не з м і д і гордої, не з м а р м у р о в и х брил.
Скупі слова мої, що на папері стали,
Укряє завтра пил.
Ні сили віщої не дарувала доля,
Ні слави славної мені не прирекла,
І час мене змете, як сохле листя з поля,
Мов крихти зо стола.
І я забудуся, і, може, лиш припадком
Хтось, розглядаючи старих книжок сміття,
Незацікавленим напам'яне нащадкам
Мале моє життя.
І скаже: жив, писав; приймав хвали й образи;
А втім, ніколи нам не бракне диваків ...
... Та що, коли додасть: зате в житті ні разу
Неправді не служив!
(Максим Рильський. «Пам'ятник»³¹)*

³¹ Рильський М. Пам'ятник. URL: http://www.ebk.net.ua/Book/buunt/ukr_lit_tvory/part4/4109.htm.

Except filigree using of intertext («не з м і д і гордої» – Horace's "brass"; «не з м а р м у р о в и х брил» – it is Shakespearean "Not m a r b l e nor the gilded monuments"; «приймав х в а л и й о б р а з и» – Pushkin's «Спокійна завжди будь на к р и в д и й на х в а л і н н я», except the great stylization of Horace's epoda (which is often not noticed even by philologists): conscious reduction of the fourth, final lines of the stanza, – Maxim Rylsky's skill is also in that he is, maybe, the only among developers of the motive of "literary immortality" – was against the thousand-year tradition, focusing attention, not on duration («д о в ш е ніж мідь дзвінка»), but the contrary – on momentariness («н е т р и в а л и й») of his "monument"! Of course, it is poetic reception on the verge "coquetry", or even "masochism", however, the writer reached the necessary effect.

Thus, almost in a century, Maxim Rylsky prolonged to Taras Shevchenko's opinion: important high aspiration of a poet – to profess the truth, "not to serve a lie".

Researching the features of the embodiment of motive "literary immortality" by the most outstanding writers who have entered the world and national literary canons, could be continued as this motive runs like a scarlet thread through all world literature from antiquity to the present (perhaps, at this moment some poet draws on Horace and Shakespeare). However, the analysed material is enough to make such conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The aspiration of writers to place in the literary canon, to "literary" immortality, made, makes and, certainly, will make a notable influence on world literary process.

2. This aspiration induces writers to an auto-reflection over own achievements, living destination and creative mission, embodied in the artworks devoted to the judgment of why the writer can rely on grateful "the general and public memory" (H. Blum) in the new generations.

3. The mentioned auto-reflection is embodied brightly in so-called "the motive of the monument" (on the first line of Horace's ode *Ad melpomenen*: "Exegi monumentum" – "Lofty and enduring is the monument I've reared"). At the same time, it is not necessary each artist who developed "the motive of the monument" appeared certainly in the centre of the literary canon, but those, who were in the

IV. Свіжий погляд на давні тексти

centre of the canon, drew on the motive of “monument” (a striking example of “revival” of this motive is William Shakespeare's works). Thus, an auto-reflection is connected with inclusion/presence of the artist dialectically in a literary canon.

4. The reference to Horace's prototext happens differently: A) direct quotation (most often uses the first line: “Exegi monumentum”); B) explicit and/or implicit intertextual reference to details of the Roman prototext (brass – gold – metal ...; The Pyramid – granite – marble – a stone ...; “I shall not wholly die” – *«нет, весь я не умру»*, etc.); C) Horace's image and motives transformation to antithetical, but necessary with and/or implicit support on the antique prototext.

5. William Shakespeare, on the one hand, adopted Horace's prototext, however, on the other hand, changed it hardily, becoming the writer of new prototext for the numerous followers.

6. Realization invariant of “the motive of the monument” by different writers is underlining of their innovation, “canonical originality” (Harold Bloom). The writers frequently considered the esthetic innovation to be their main creative achievement and merit before the future generations, more rarely they mentioned moral and ethical, axiological parameters of creative work. At the same time, a certain regularity is traced: the representatives of prevailing nations (Roman Kvint Horace Flakk, Englishman William Shakespeare, Russian Alexander Pushkin, etc.) credited with the aesthetic aspects, and the poets of the unfree, stateless nations – with moral and axiological parameters (the Scottish Robert Fergusson and Robert Burns, Polish Adam Mitskevych, Ukrainians Taras Shevchenko and Maxim Rylsky).

And in conclusion. Nobody will give concrete and limiting catalogue of features in the writer's creative work which provide him with the place in the literary canon, “the recipe of the literary immortality”. However, the search of such features allows a better understanding of regularities of the world literary process, special aspects of the artist's creative work and objective laws of formation the literary canon.

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