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CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINIAN LITERARY STUDIES

(Рецензія: *Демська-Будзуляк Л. (2019) Українське літературознавство від ідеї до тексту: неокласичний дискурс. — Київ : Смолоскип, ISBN 978-617-7622-24-5 / Review: Demska-Budzuliak, L.Ukrainske literaturoznavstvo vid idei do tekstu: neoklasychnyi dyskurs. Kyiv:Smoloskyp, ISBN 978-617-7622-24-5*)

Nowadays, the Ukrainian literary studies have few "pure" theoretical works, most of them are of synthetic nature and are built on the border between theory and history of literature. Although this phenomenon showcases certain advantages, the problem is that there is no way to trace the process of constructing a theory by a researcher. In her pursuit to answer the question "What methodology does modern humanities require?" Ewa Domańska notes accurately: "Methodologies of theory; a methodology that will show how to build a theory from the ground up; a methodology that comes from in-depth analysis of research material" (Domanska, 2012, p. 204).

I think peer is a strong evidence of that. The well-known literary critic Lesia Demska-Budzuliak not only identified all the problems of modern humanities but also defined her scholarly mission: "to theoretically comprehend the ways of formation of modern Ukrainian literary studies of the first third of the 20th century as a academic /intellectual practice" (Demska-Budzuliak, 2019, p. 19).

The unique findings presented, for the most part, by the scientific practice of neo-classical discourse scholars (M. Zerov, V. Petrov, and P. Filippovich), should have determined the particular approach in the structuring of the narrative. After all the representatives of the Ukrainian literary neo-classicism have given a significant role to the form, the mastery of which testifies to the mastery of style. Instead, we see a traditional structure of synthetic research. The first chapter, "Tradition and Modernity in Ukrainian Literary Studies", is devoted to the state-of-the-art review, the expression of the trends of modern literary studies. Demska-Budzuliak introduces two models of scholarly studies: structural, employed by Ukrainian academics and functional/interpretive, exercised by Western scholars. Undoubtedly, the latter has many positive points and only in the presence of a functional approach is there a reason to talk about holistic research. This is expected from the peer-reviewed study.

The second ("Ukrainian Literary Studies in Intellectual Practices of Cultural Modernization (end of 19th — first third of 20th century) ") and the third ("Theory and Method of Neoclassical Discourse in Ukrainian Literary Studies") chapters are an attempt to characterize the modern period of Ukrainian literary studies in the historical plane. A notable feature of modern literary studies is its encyclopedic nature. Encyclopedic nature itself is an advantage of peer-reviewed work. The genesis of Ukrainian modern literary studies went hand-in-hand with with literary scholarly criticism. Scholars work hard to "create a symbolic space for the national culture of the new state" (p. 225). Thus a transition from traditional to modern literary criticism occurs celebrated by the work of M. Zerov "New Ukrainian Writing". The development of textology and contextual studies is observed. Apart from that, "representatives of the neoclassical discourse of literary criticism propose their own historical canon, several authors whose texts differ from the populist ones with their aesthetic views" (Demska-Budzuliak, 2019, p. 254).

The fourth ("The Intellectual Life of Neoclassical Discourse of Ukrainian Literary Studies") and the fifth ("Formation of the Modern Literary Canon by Neoclassical Scholars") chapters discuss a theoretical proposal that crystallized the model of "theoretical analysis of text from a morphological approach" (Demska-Budzuliak, 2019, p. 345), translation theory "as an opportunity to recode the cultural identity of Ukrainian literature through the inoculation of new forms (themes, subjects, genres, technical means)" (Demska-Budzuliak, 2019, pp. 351–352), new principles of the canon, including the interpretative nature of the text.

Of course, all the patterns observed and named by the researcher do not raise any objections. But perhaps a more beneficial step would be a scholarly

narrative built on a different principle. New vectors of observation would be revealed to readers if the subchapters and chapters were based on those aspects (the process of modernization and the image of the philologist) that make up the resulting portrait of neoclassical literary studies. That way the cause and effect and the cause and comparative relationships would be expressed as M. Kostova-Panayotova states in the article "The Priorities of the Priority": "Furthermore, these disciplines can no longer be just separate forms of knowledge, but they should be generated by a new, global, comparative episteme and aim at global-comparative knowledge. And finally, the understanding of the means and criteria according to which the scholars from the past epochs grounded their claims to veracity should be part of our own understanding of what truth is" (Kostova-Panayotova, 2018, p. 90).

For example, the work would be strengthened by structural units built on the criteria that defined matrix of Ukrainian literature history of that time; the methodological paradigm for the analysis of a fictional text. This would allow, not in individuals, but in structural categories to express evolutionary changes, after all, as Janusz Slavinsky rightly points out "reflection on a research instrument is no longer the beginning of the build-up movement; it produces the opposite effect" (Janusz Slavinsky, 2017, p. 3). Putting the principles of formation of the literary canon under the microscope's lens would concentrate the readers' attention and would widen their horizons: from heredity, gravity and tradition continuation associated with populism — to the free choice of cultural tradition, to the canonization of the texts that "caused by time awareness, have the inner potential to form a cultural perspective" (Demska-Budzuliak, 2019, p. 396). In this way, the freedom of thought of the modernists would become more noticeable, and the historical path to understanding literature as a powerful means of forming national identity would become clearer.

The approaches to understanding the history of Ukrainian literature evolve, too. So, O. Ogonovsky defines the three factors as fundamental: the presence of a fundamental basis (history of the people, the language, the outlook on the world), internal factors of self-development, and dominant reading methods (biographical, aesthetic). In the understanding of the essence of the history of Ukrainian literature by M. Zerov we encounter other factors that have a more pronounced literary color: aesthetic styles (their circulation) and the literary awareness of the era.

The previous scholarly literary studies from the times of I. Franko, when the aesthetic and psychological analyses of individual works had been dominant, changed and prevailed the morphological approach, which enabled to "focus on the question of the formation of national cultural classics and the formation/revision of the literary canon" (Demska-Budzuliak, 2019, p. 240). The genetic, structural-functional and historic methods have become determinant.

A new way of comprehending literature also required new qualities of a philologist — a person with a professional education, a formed aesthetic awareness and the ability to work with foreign texts. However, the evolution of this image in the peer-reviewed monograph remains dashed.

Contemporary literary studies have been replenished with a holistic, systematic work that requires thoughtful reading, a compelling research that provokes thought, re-reading and the creative heritage of neoclassics, and their scholarly achievements. Scientific exploration is based on the contrast, the opposing of two models, where the development of the second would be impossible without the formation of the first. The reviewed monograph is undoubtedly an intellectual breakthrough, so therefore, I'd like to congratulate Ms. Lesia Demska-Budzuliak and the affiliated university.

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