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***The Stone Master* by Lesya Ukrainka: The Imagology of Don Juan's Image in the Context of Ukrainian Gender Issues of the Early 20th Century**

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The aim of the article is to analyse the genesis of Don Juan's image and substantiate the imagology of the legendary character in the context of Ukrainian gender issues at the time Lesya Ukrainka wrote *The Stone Master*. *Results*. The article presents the basic principles of imagology as a comprehensive direction of cultural research and defines the meaning of using its tools in contemporary theatre studies. Attention is also paid to the gender studies of Ukrainian scholars, which are at the intersection with imagological issues. The study focuses on the image of Don Juan from the dramatic poem *The Stone Master*. The genesis of the character is traced from the 17th to the 19th century in order to demonstrate that his imagology is studied at the intersection of the stereotype concept and cultural iconography provisions. The Ukrainian poetess deliberately did not violate the canonical image of the seducer of Seville that was formed over three centuries. However, the obvious Byronic inspirations of the artistic ideology of the dramatic poem and the polemic with Hoffmannism and Nietzscheism, as well as gender issues, caused the transformation of the image, influenced the formation of the literary model, in a certain sense alien to the entire world context of the legend of Don Juan. *Scientific novelty*. For the first time in Ukrainian theatre studies, an attempt has been made to analyse the imagology of the legendary image created by Lesya Ukrainka in the context of Ukrainian gender issues at the beginning of the last century. *Conclusions*. *The Stone Master*, as well as a number of other dramatic poems by Lesya Ukrainka, provides rich factual material for research in the categories of imagology. They are facilitated by the transitive nature of the Ukrainian poetess's dramatic works. Therefore, we consider the study of the images of foreign countries and peoples in a broad historical and cultural context based on Lesya Ukrainka's dramatic poems to be one of the most promising directions of contemporary interdisciplinary research at the intersection of historical literature and theatre studies.

Keywords: imagology; character; gender issues; new woman; stereotype; transformation of image

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Introduction

The present post-cultural era, characterised by the ability to redefine aesthetic priorities and values and rapidly create new practices, evidently requires a transition to a methodologically multilevel research model. The application of the tools of imagology — scientific knowledge, a priori focused on an interdisciplinary approach to the subject of study — in particular, in theatre studies modernises the artistic studios themselves, expands their research field, and contributes to obtaining higher-level scientific results that correspond to the “comprehensive direction of cultural research” (Yudkin-Ripun, 2009, p. 42).

At the same time, the number of modernisations of national classics in Ukrainian theatres, which has been growing rapidly since the beginning of the century and which was presented by representatives of several generations of domestic directors (from V. Kuchynskiy to I. Uryvskiy), forms a request for rethinking and modern scientific substantiation of its special role in the formation of the Ukrainian post-cultural paradigm.

Recent research and publication analysis. The works of leading European (Guyard, (1961); D. Pageaux (1981); M. Beller and J. T. Leerssen (2007); M. Fischer (1981)) and Ukrainian (I. Yudkin-Ripun (2009)) scholars in the field of imagology, which formulated the main concepts and foundations of this section of scientific knowledge, were used to reveal the topic. The works of literary scholars L. Smoliar (1998), S. Pavlychko (1999), O. Zabuzhko (2003) present the Ukrainian gender issues of the early 20th century, contributing to the formation of an appropriate context for the literary and dramatic history of Lesya Ukrainka’s work. The substantiation of the imagology of the central image of *The Stone Master* took place on the basis of the author’s researches of various formats introduced into the scientific discourse of Ukrainian theatre studies in the current century.

Aim of the article

The aim of the article is to analyse the genesis of Don Juan’s image and substantiate the imagology of the legendary character in the context of Ukrainian gender issues at the time Lesya Ukrainka wrote *The Stone Master*.

Main research material

Literary imagology explores various techniques and methodologies for creating both individual images and image systems. It examines the figurativeness of literature and the possibilities of conveying literary images in translation from one language to another. However, recently, the focus of literary imagology has shifted towards the ethnic image, which refers to the literary representation of other cultures. The beginning of the imagological direction in comparative studies was laid by the work of M.-F. Guyard (1961) *La Littérature Comparée*, in which the researcher proposed moving away from the somewhat speculative theory of the *influence* of one national literature on another, switching research attention to the problem of the reception of *the other*.

Throughout the 1960s, research in the new scientific field reflected to some extent the concept of *nation virtualisation* (K. Popper, H. Dyserinck, and their followers). Therefore, contemporary imagology studies examine *image type structures*, which are the mental models that serve as the basis for national identity and self-identification of a particular nation, as well as their objectification in literature. Thus, while remaining one of the branches of comparative literature, imagological methodology simultaneously expands comparative research into a broader space of intercultural relations, elevating its results to a global cross-cultural level.

One of the contemporary trends in imagology — *cultural iconography* — was set in the last third of the previous century by the French researcher D.-A. Pageaux (1981). The purpose of cultural iconography is to study the complex mechanisms of the formation of images of *the other* under the influence of historical, political, socio-cultural, and other factors. The scientist offered not to separate the study of the image of the *other* in literature from the investigation of mental structures (cultural models, value systems inherent in a particular historical era), which set the writer the criteria for selecting material and the principles of creating the image of *the other*, which involves researching the images of foreign countries and peoples in a broad historical and cultural context.

Within imagology, there exists an opposite concept, presented in the works of M. Fischer (1981) and J.-M. Moura (1999), where the imagological issues, on the contrary, narrow down to purely literary studies. They focus, in particular, on the concept of *stereotypes* — stable, standard, and slow-moving notions about the foreign culture and its carriers, representatives, as well as monotonous, repetitive foreign cultural images. In the dramaturgical and scenic cluster, they correspond to the concept of *type* — a character that is easily recognized because it's devoid of bright individual features.

From the end of the 20th century to the present day, Ukrainian art and literary studies have shown an increased interest in gender studies intersecting with imagological issues. Literary critic Vira Aheyeva (2002) directly linked the appearance of this scientific trend with the growing popularity of both Lesya Ukrainka herself and her creative works. Since the end of the 1990s, this scientific direction has been presented by academic and journalistic publications of V. Aheyeva (1999), as well as S. Pavlychko (1999), O. Zabuzhko (2003), T. Hundorova (2023), and others. Thus, S. Pavlychko (2002), studying the development and establishment of Ukrainian feminism, paid attention to feminist ideas and attitudes in the creative activity and private life of Lesya Ukrainka, as well as the efforts made by the poetess (together with O. Kobylanska) to introduce Ukrainian feminist discourse into the European context. O. Zabuzhko's works (2003) focus on the topic of the difference between the poetess and her environment and Lesya Ukrainka's rejection of generally accepted ideas about the social roles of men and women in Ukrainian society at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. V. Aheyeva (2002) concentrates on the ideas of free will and personal rights repeatedly raised by the poetess, considering in this sense “the destruction of the courtly myth of love” that Lesya Ukrainka accomplished through her creative work. T. Hundorova (Yermolaieva, 2021) sees her as a woman of a new formation, for whom mental similarity, ideological closeness, and creative collaboration acquire significant importance in personal relationships. She considers the poetess to be one of the leading feminists in Ukrainian literature because she not only wrote about women but also examined topical issues of our time from a female point of view. Lyudmyla Smoliar (1998) declares that Lesya

Ukrainka dispelled the age-old myth of female weakness and passivity, asserting instead a strong female personality capable of fighting against spiritual slavery. In this way, she advocated ideas of women's emancipation and feminism.

It should be noted that on its historical path, the feminist movement has changed, or rather expanded its agenda. From the very beginning, it was opposed to the existing social order, in particular, to social orthodoxy and political autocracy, and defined itself as a movement against gender inequality and the restriction of women's rights. However, over time, feminism increasingly manifested as an intellectual phenomenon and philosophical trend (feminist criticism, gender philosophical studies). Famous American literary critic and feminist Elaine Showalter identified three stages of the development of literary feminism:

- imitation of the leading tradition;
- protest against existing literary standards, accompanied by the theme of the struggle for women's equality;
- self-knowledge; the search for one's own identity, free from any opposition (Showalter, 1985, p. 325).

According to S. Pavlychko (1999), at the end of the 19th century, in Ukrainian literature, there was a transition to the second stage, primarily in the works of Olena Pchilka and Nataliya Kobrynska: they “laid the foundation for a different tradition, in which there were no male pseudonyms, no male narrators, and no attempts to imitate the male voice. Thanks to these authors, an intelligent female voice was heard in Ukrainian literature in the 80s, and with it a feminist idea” (p. 70). In that period, the establishment of a new type of culture — the culture of modernism — on Ukrainian territory, as, in fact, throughout Europe, was not thought of without broad female emancipation, without changes in gender issues at all levels of public life.

Lesya Ukrainka's work, like her life, moved precisely in the direction of female self-affirmation, so it completely merged and even coincided with the ideas of feminism. Although the poetess did not accept radical feminist forms, she treated their extreme manifestations ironically. According to T. Hundorova (Yermolaieva, 2021), Lesya Ukrainka defended the right of every woman to be herself, the right to self-realisation, the right to be a subject of history and her own life, to be present not only in everyday life, but also in history and culture. The poetess introduced a whole cohort of female protagonists into Ukrainian dramatic literature — complex and vivid personalities, unique and outstanding characters.

The type of a new woman emerged in Lesya Ukrainka's works (2021) since the beginning of the last century. Her article *New Perspectives and Old Shadows: The New Woman of Western European Fiction* is devoted to the topic of European feminism. The author links this movement with socialist ideas, in the context of which a new woman appears, liberated from patriarchal conventions and prohibitions. Lesya Ukrainka's new woman is primarily active, she does not need paternalism from others, she is educated and capable of critically examining the surrounding life, conscious of both her time and history. She respects herself and has an open-minded attitude towards others.

A new type of individualistic woman is seen in the drama *The Stone Master*. At the beginning of the 20th century, the theme of Don Juan remained fashionable, acquiring a new breath and continuing to exist in various national versions, and thanks to Lesya Ukrainka, it also appeared in Ukrainian dramatic literature. It should also be noted that

Lesya Ukrainka's creativity as a whole is characterized by *going beyond* the boundaries of one's own modernity, one's own country, one's own culture, a kind of *journey* through other historical periods, other cultures, and worlds. Therefore, in her dramatic poems, issues relevant to Ukrainian culture and society were often presented in a historical framework and had, so to speak, a foreign flavour. In the case of *The Stone Master*, the poetess treated the European legend in a similar manner as she had previously done with ancient and Christian myths: on the one hand, she modernised them, shaking off the patriarchal dust and giving them a more contemporary resonance, on the other hand, she retold them in a feminine way, appropriately emphasising ideological aspects in her works. Thus, the story of the fall of Troy, in Lesya Ukrainka's interpretation, is directly tied to the personal tragedy of the prophetess Cassandra, whose prophecies went unheard by her compatriots. The story of Jesus is viewed through the fates of Mary Magdalene and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, known from the Gospels, the existence of the first Christian communities in the ancient Roman era is personified in the relationships of Rufinus and Priscilla, and so on.

However, primarily, the poet's personal understanding of *gender* issues relevant to Ukrainian social and cultural context manifested itself in the image of Don Juan, or more precisely, in the imagology of this "eternal image" of European literature, with its prehistory dating back to the 14th century. In its artistic form, it first appeared in the Spanish drama of the 17th century, and since then it has undergone many interpretations. The historical prototype of this character was Don Juan de Tenorio, a representative of one of the aristocratic Seville families. He went down in history as a seducer and duellist, whose immoral deeds included the seduction and kidnapping of the daughter of the commander of the Calatrava Order and the murder of her father. Not receiving just punishment from the authorities, other members of the order took justice into their own hands: inviting him on a date on behalf of the young beauty, they lured Don Juan to the church where the commander was buried, killed him, and spread rumours that the statue had dragged the murderer into hell.

In the 17th century, Don Juan had another prototype, also from Seville — Miguel de Manjra, who also led a dissolute life, but one night had a terrifying dream of his own burial. The unfortunate man repented of his sins and, atoning for his guilt, built a hospital for beggars and cripples in his hometown — the House of Mercy. Therefore, since then, the plot about the Sevillian roué acquired two connotations: in the first case, the hero did not fear sudden death without repentance and eternal hellish torments, while in the second case, on the contrary, the ghost of death compelled the philanderer to repentance and led him to the righteous path. Both versions of the legend would subsequently appear in various artistic works.

Tirso de Molina in his play *The Trickster of Seville and The Stone Guest* (around 1630), combined both narratives — the plot about the seduction of women by a handsome aristocrat, a bold and witty man, and the plot about the banquet of the murderer with his victim and the image of the dead man. The combination turned out to be quite organic, in fact, the Spanish playwright, who also had a church rank, created the stereotype of the image of Don Juan, which to some extent subsequent authors would emulate. However, the adventures of the Seville seducer, his immorality and the expected punishment for it would be interpreted somewhat differently depending on the historical period, country, and national theatrical tradition.

In Italian versions of the plays, which were successfully performed along with the *commedia dell'arte* in numerous folk theatres, Don Juan's adventures often acquired a playful character: Giliberti (1652) introduced explicit comic elements into the Spanish text, and Ciccognini (1670) completely excluded not only everything gloomy but also everything instructive from it.

As social mores softened, Don Juan also became more attractive, gradually acquiring a certain sincerity of feelings, so in the 17th century the image of the legendary Seville seducer was somewhat different from its prototype, although it did not get rid of stereotypical features.

Among European playwrights, the first to create the image of *another* Don Juan was J. B. Molière. In his play *Don Juan or The Feast of Stone* (1665), he deprived the character of distinctly Spanish traits and introduced many features of contemporary French society. He discarded the comedic elements added by the Italians and the clericalism that characterised the Spanish versions. Molière's Don Juan was a conqueror of hearts and a collector of passions.

Carlo Goldoni, in his comedy *Don Giovanni Tenorio, or The Libertine* (1736), seemingly following the French playwright's lead, portrayed the main character as a Neapolitan cavalier — a coward and a dishonest man without honour or conscience.

During the 19th century, Don Juan repeatedly emerged as the central character in prose and dramatic works, which, although did not significantly alter the image's imagology, but supplemented it with new nuances and emphases. The ideological poles of this literary cluster are, on the one hand, E. T. A. Hoffmann's short story *Don Juan* (1812), where the central character resembled a titanic personality like Goethe's Faust, an enthusiast of endless journeys in pursuit for the unattainable ideal of love, on the other, the J. G. Byron's satirical poem *Don Juan* (1817–1824), in which the eternal seducer, instead of being the subject of seduction, first became the object of encroachment by a female. The author ironically reinterpreted the canons of *high* epic poetry, as well as the corresponding national and heroic narratives, and subjected the moral and ethical ideals of British society to devastating criticism.

For Ukrainian literature in the early 20th century, Lesya Ukrainka's *The Stone Master* meant the emergence of "an own, untranslated" version of the world-famous legend of Don Juan, also original because "it was written by a woman". The author understood the central idea of the drama as "the victory of the stony, conservative principle, embodied in the Commander, over the split soul of a proud, selfish woman — Donna Anna, and through her, over Don Juan, the *knight of will*" (Grynshyna, 2013, pp. 288–289). So, first of all, the Ukrainian poetess placed her own accents in one of the world's most famous plots. Among them, in our opinion, it's worth highlighting, firstly, the denial of Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the *superman*, and at the same time the ideas of Hoffmannism, which were quite widespread in the European literature of the time, and secondly, on the contrary, a kind of succession with Byron's reduced-ironic view of Don Juanism.

It should be noted that on the eve of the publication of the dramatic poem, Lesya Ukrainka stated that she refused to add anything "new to the established literary type of Don Juan" and that "he, in fact, had to be what most people were accustomed to imagining him" (Grynshyna, 2013, p. 298). One might get the impression that while depicting the image of the Seville seducer, the author followed the canon, trying not to

break the stereotype that had formed over the past three centuries. In fact, this statement applies only to the iconography of the image of Don Juan, but his artistic ideology and psychology, as well as his place and role in the conflict confrontation, are evidently different from the other versions of the legend. Ye. Nenadkevych (Aheyeva, 2002) was one of the first to draw attention to the “female establishment of the theme” of *The Stone Master*, explaining this change in the author’s perspective with the literary realities of the “era of intense female emancipation” in which Lesya Ukrainka wrote her drama: “Anna, speaking to us in the voices of Ibsen and Hauptmann’s women (Hedda Gabler, Anna Mar), ‘Ukrainian Nora’ — Kobylanska’s heroines, has her own ideological world, ‘a proud dream’, and wants to convert her beloved to her faith, to force him to serve her idea”. The literary critic argued that Lesya Ukrainka’s concept of “Don Juanism” was related to the “discussion of revolutionary political groups of the then Ukrainian intelligentsia: the struggle between the idea of taking the state apparatus and the anarchic denial of all statehood” (p. 33, p. 37). A similar idea was expressed by O. Deich (1988), who, after analysing the genealogy of the famous Spanish hero, concluded that “the poetess seemed to merge two images into one, giving the ancient plot a new, fully contemporary philosophical and social resonance” (p. 96).

In the literary interpretations of the beginning of this century, the social aspect of the conflict in the dramatic poem and the image of Don Juan were pushed into the background, giving way to gender aspects. For example, M. Shkandrii (2004) argues that “Lesya Ukrainka’s interpretation of the legend turned out to be a demythologisation of the traditional image of Don Juan and a critique of male power and its realities” (p. 316). V. Aheyeva (2002) gives the conflict of the dramatic poem a generalised sound, stating that “the basis of dramatic conflict here is the discrepancy between women’s and men’s values, the obligatory subordination of some to others” (p. 413).

Conclusions

Thus, the imagology of Lesya Ukrainka’s dramatic poem and, in particular, the image of Don Juan is studied at the intersection of the *stereotype* concept and the provisions of *cultural iconography*. The Ukrainian poetess deliberately did not violate the canonical image of the Seville seducer, which had been formed over three centuries. To some extent, she adhered to the traditional iconography of this character, portraying a rather *familiar* portrait of Don Juan in *The Stone Master*. However, the obvious Byronic inspirations of the artistic ideology of the dramatic poem and the polemic with Hoffmannism and Nietzscheism, as well as gender issues (the concept of the “new woman”), to which the poetess once again contributed with this work, radically changed the configuration of the conflict in the dramatic poem and led to a *reshaping* of the image, influencing the formation of the literary model, in a certain sense *alien* to the entire world context of the Don Juan legend.

Scientific novelty. For the first time in Ukrainian theatre studies, has been made an attempt to analyse the imagology of the legendary image of Don Juan created by Lesya Ukrainka in the context of Ukrainian gender issues at the beginning of the last century.

Prospects for further research. *The Stone Master*, as well as a number of other dramatic poems by Lesya Ukrainka (in particular, *The Boyar Woman*, *Rufinus and Priscilla*,

Orgy), provides rich factual material for research in the categories of imagology. They are facilitated by the transitive nature of the Ukrainian poetess's dramatic works — her search for plots, characters, and themes in, so to speak, peculiar *journeys* through other historical periods, cultures, and worlds. Therefore, we consider the study of the images of foreign countries and peoples in a broad historical and cultural context based on Lesya Ukrainka's dramatic poems to be one of the most promising directions of contemporary interdisciplinary research at the intersection of historical literature and theatre studies.

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«Камінний господар» Лесі Українки: імагологія образу Дон Жуана в контексті української гендерної проблематики початку ХХ століття

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Мета статті — проаналізувати генезу образу Дон Жуана та обґрунтувати імагологію легендарного персонажа в контексті української гендерної проблематики періоду написання Лесею Українкою «Камінного господаря». *Результати дослідження*. У статті представлено базові засади імагології як комплексного напрямку дослідження культури та визначено сенс застосування її інструментарію в сучасних театрознавчих студіях. Також приділено увагу гендерним студіям вітчизняних науковців, що перебувають на перетині з імагологічною проблематикою. У фокус дослідження поставлено образ Дон Жуана з драматичної поеми «Камінний господар». Простежено генезу персонажа від XVII до XIX ст. з метою продемонструвати, що його імагологія досліджується на перетині концепту стереотипу та положень культурної іконографії. Українська поетка свідомо не порушувала канонічного образу севільського спокусника, який склався за три

століття. Проте очевидні байронівські інспірації художньої ідеології драматичної поеми й полеміка з гофманіанством і ніцшеанством, а також гендерна проблематика спричинили переінакшення образу, вплинули на формування літературної моделі, у певному сенсі чужої щодо всього світового контексту побутування легенди про Дон Жуана. *Наукова новизна*. Вперше у вітчизняному театрознавстві здійснено спробу проаналізувати імагологію легендарного образу, створеного Лесею Українкою в контексті української гендерної проблематики початку минулого століття. *Висновки*. «Камінний господар», як і низка інших драматичних поем Лесі Українки, надають багатий фактологічний матеріал для наукових розвідок у категоріях імагології. Їм сприяє транзитивний характер драматургічної творчості української поетки. Тож дослідження образів чужих країн і народів у широкому історико-культурному контексті на основі драматичних поем Лесі Українки вважаємо одним із найперспективніших напрямів сучасних міждисциплінарних досліджень на перетині історичного літературознавства й театрознавства.

Ключові слова: імагологія; персонаж; гендерна проблематика; нова жінка; стереотип; трансформація образу

