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MODERN STUDIES OF LITERATURE

THE PSALMS IN FRENCH AND UKRAINIAN LITERATURES: VERSIONS BY CLÉMENT MAROT AND TARAS SHEVCHENKO

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Abstract. The article deals with the first exemplars of the psalms translations into French and Ukrainian. Sociohistorical factors leading to a departure from canonical languages are analyzed. Similarities and differences in the process of psalms translation into national languages are identified. Translations of psalms are spread in those countries where the national language and literature are at the stage of search and formation. At that, both in Protestant and Catholic poetry one can easily trace the tendency for the departure from the original, the manifestation of individual author's origin due to the movements for the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation which considerably changed attitude towards individuality. The Book of Psalms, having its problematic and thematic elaboration of the expression of human feelings, distinctive lyricism, strength and intensity of emotions, bright ideas, providential vigour, precision and great simplicity in the poetic representation of religious feeling, in this case became a universal model prototext which inspired poets to its further actualization.

Keywords: Psalms, translation, Reformation, Orthodoxy, culture, Clément Marot, Taras Shevchenko.

1. INTRODUCTION

Between the poetic interpretations of the psalms of Clément Marot and Taras Shevchenko three centuries and different historic cultural epochs have passed, yet exactly these poets made the first attempt to introduce the psalms to the national cultural field.

Clément Marot's poetic psalmody is the subject matter of literary researches not only in France, but also beyond its borders (G. Défaux, A. Ehsan, M. Lasard, C.A. Mayer, F. Preisig, V. Shyshmarev, D. Wursten). For a long time the linguistic and literary world of "The Psalms of David" was a subject matter of researches of native and foreign Shevchenko Study (I. Aizenshtok, I. Betko, T. Bovsunivska, Y. Harasym, I. Danylenko, V. Domashovets, R. Koropetskyi, M. Laslo-Kutsiuk, M. Pavliuk, V. Radutskyi). Although historical and cultural foundation that has caused the emergence of Clément Marot and Taras Shevchenko's psalms often escapes scholars' attention. The article suggests learning poetic translations in the cross context of cultural historical and sociopolitical discourse, intellectual spiritual and artistic visions. Such cross context extends the boundaries of traditional Literary Studies where one can observe the transition from essentialism of literariness to public codes, conventions and

representations. Combining differential cultural contexts one can expand significantly the horizon of a literary text interpretation. This is the advantage of such “culturological break”.

For Europe the psalms were a peculiar “common fund” of Christian book-learning. After East-West Schism ideological and functional pressure of psalmody changes in some way. It is common knowledge that in the West there exist a widespread tradition of writing new psalms that gradually become additional but very significant element of a liturgy. The Reformation had a considerable impact on it, as Protestants interpreted the Holy Scriptures in their own way which allowed them to express easily their religious feelings exactly in new psalms. The Catholic Church considered it necessary to give a poet a total freedom in this sphere. Instead, in Eastern Christian tradition The Book of Psalms was considered an orientation of wandering of a soul (Athanasius of Alexandria) and King David was thought to be a companion in life’s journey (Gregory of Nyssa). In Byzantine tradition The Book of Psalms is held in great respect: it is often published as a separate book, it teaches literacy. The Book of Psalms is used for church and funeral services. One even tells fortune on it. In general, in Orthodox East the writing of new psalms ended with a definite establishment of the liturgical canon.

The connection of the psalms with the Liturgy entails their linguistic specification, as canonical language of the Catholic religious cult was Latin in the West and Church Slavonic – in the Slavonian East. The translations of the Holy Scriptures into a native language appeared due to the Reformation – a religious movement that debunked an excessive use of the Roman Catholic Church and fully formed the idea of translation of the Holy Scriptures into colloquial languages and its usage in church services. Since the time of the translation of sacred texts into national languages The Book of Psalms has become the subject matter of artistic adaptation in European poetry.

Translations of the psalms are spread in those countries where national language and literature are at the stage of searching and formation (French, German, English, Polish, Hungarian, Romanian, Moldovan, Russian, Ukrainian and other literatures). At that, both in Protestant and Catholic poetry one can easily trace the tendency for the departure from the original, the manifestation of individual author’s origin due to the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation movements which considerably changed attitude towards individuality. The Book of Psalms, having its problematic and thematic elaboration of the expression of human feelings, distinctive lyricism, strength and intensity of emotions, bright ideas, providential vigour, precision and great simplicity in the poetic representation of religious feeling, in this case became a universal model prototext which inspired poets to its further actualization.

It is known that the first translations of the psalms in French belong to one of the founder of the Reformation movement Jean Calvin (1509–1564). Although his psalms aimed exclusively at “linguistic” recoding of texts from Latin and that conformed to ideological orientation of the Reformation. The first attempt at poetic translation belongs to Clément Marot (1497–1544). His poetic style is notable for its innovation. He enriched French poetry not only with innovative ideas and forms, but also with the Renaissance outlook. The poet was a master of verses consisting of 10 syllables, his style was called “marotic” because of harmonious combination of naivety, intelligence and candour. Scientists (G. Défaux, V. Shyshmarev, Yu. Vipser, D. Wursten) claim that Clément Marot could have become a decent “father” of French classic poetry, whereas such honour was lately given to Pierre de Ronsard (1524–1585).

The poetry of Clément Marot reflects the whole range of correlation and cooperation between cultural historical tendencies of Renaissance and Humanism and intentions of the Reformation. In his works the poet relies on courtesy and intellectual tradition. Speaking about means of artistic expression one can strongly feel a considerable influence of “great orators” (Jean Molinet, Jean Lemaire de Belges, Pierre Gringoire), that accentuates intellectual level of his poetry. The poet also adds to this aristocratism folk elements borrowed from François Villon. Clément Marot enriches genre variety of French poetry by means of antique exemplars – elegies, panegyrics, epigrams, epistles, odes. He borrows a sonnet from Italian literature. Finally, Clément Marot was the first French poet to refer to the treasury of the Old Testament texts, i.e. the psalms. The poet was an opponent of religious fanaticism. Such notions as freedom of conscience and the dignity of man were important for him. Adherence to

Lutheranism was ascribed to Clément Marot, though the poet did not count himself an orthodox proponent of a certain branch of Christianity. Both Catholics and Protestants now admitted that he was their adept, now excluded him from their communities.

2. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Researchers of Clément Marot's writings tried to interpret his world vision mostly through the perspective of Reformation beliefs. Thus, analyzing the texts of Clément Marot in terms of Lutheran ideas, Michael Screech claims that though the poet does not express openly his Reformation conviction, however his works contain many features in common with Lutheran dogmatic beliefs [5, p. 38]. Claude-Albert Mayer in his book *La Religion de Marot* was against a simplistic interpretation of the philosophy of the French poet. The researcher analyses very carefully Marot's religious views, as in XVI c. criticism of religion and church, its reformation that is the centre of ideological and political conflict, is reflected almost in all significant works of the poet. C.-A. Mayer conclusively proves that the whole poetry of Clément Marot is directed against the Catholic Church, its dogmas, against Catholic ideology in general. Although the poet does not count himself a Protestant. Thus, taking much from Calvinistic ideas, Marot reserves the right to freedom of expression, to own appreciation of reality, which can disagree with Catholic or Protestant dogmas [3, p. 159].

According to Mayer, Marot's humanism is the source of his freethinking and love of liberty. One should mention the fact that it was not matter-of-fact scientific humanism, but benevolence and humanity concerning nation and social struggle of the epoch. Exactly this kind of humanism Marot turned into an implacable enemy of Catholicism and it was he who initially made it a proponent of the Reformation. This humanism increased his strength to shed lost illusions and hopes concerning Protestantism [3, p. 167].

An inclination to universal truth in the poetry of T. Shevchenko (1814–1861) is closely connected to assiduous attention to the Christian idea. First of all, Christianity attracted T. Shevchenko by its ideal humanity, poetization the commandments of love, brotherly love, peace, craving for will, concern about social justice, about the most humiliated and pathetic. The question of spiritual and religious tradition in the works of T. Shevchenko is very important as the literary process of the epoch that is studied beyond in-depth analysis of a culture leads to a surface dialogue of literary movements which do not influence real literature of the epoch. Strong and underlying cultural trends stay undiscovered and sometimes unknown for researches. The writings of T. Shevchenko are notable for the fact that in the Russian Empire of that time Shevchenko had the courage to raise the question of Ukraine as a separate culturally-civilized model. The poet demonstrates it at a quite sensitive level as the question of the Byzantine spiritual tradition. Shevchenko's reception of Byzantism clearly draws the distinction between the models of culturally-civilized orientations. Thus, the Christianity of Kievan Rus concentrated firstly on sociocultural aspect of a new religion. Whereas in the Moscow version political imperatives of Byzantism prevailed: absolute rule of an emperor/tsar, paternalism of an owner, a high level of centralization, the confirmation of religious mythology "The authorities are ministers of God", a close alliance between authority and the Church.

The reason for the difference between perceptions of one and the same spiritual tradition lies in a special emotionally-aesthetic sensitivity of Ukrainians which is considered to be a specific feature of national world view and value orientations of Ukrainian culture. Due to cordocentric intentions of the Ukrainian ethnos, in the Kievan Rus period Byzantine canon was mainly deprived of rigorism and orthodoxy in respect for the Word and bookish wisdom. Whereas in Russia, beginning with the idea of the third Rome of Philotheus of Pskov, from the aesthetics of Byzantine tradition there has remained only a political myth, in which the key principle of superiority of the general over the individual was converted. Shevchenko was indignant about this mythologized religious and culturological model and that is mentioned many times in "the Journal". Thus, in the impressions of the town of Cheboksary the poet makes scathing comment about the religious doctrine of autocratic Russia: "An insignificant but

picturesque town. It is at least half-full with houses and churches, if not more. And all of them are of ancient Moscow architecture. For what and for whom are they built? For the Chuvash people? No, for Orthodoxy. The fundamental unit of old internal policy of Moscow is Orthodoxy" [6, p. 102].

For Shevchenko Christianity was a perfect humanity with its brotherly love, mercy, righteousness, fairness. Shevchenko's deep religiosity was the foundation that contributed to the ability to differentiate between true faith and dogmatic extremes. For Shevchenko Byzantine ceremony of the Moscow Church personified sanctimoniousness and ceremonialism that according to external manifestation of the faith in God invalidated fundamental Christian virtues. Ceremonialism inherently presupposes dogmatic and cultic conflict. It is its essential characteristic. It can be predominantly seen in relation between different movements and structures of one and the same religion, because in that case essential sameness specifically manifests itself in various external forms, inevitably coming to the foreground, especially in the crisis periods of historical development. There is no doubt that Shevchenko realised that the Russian Empire used the Orthodox religion as a means of political aggression.

This thought has also its artistic embodiment. In the poem "The Caucasus" the poet, exposing Russian Orthodoxy, equates it with imperial politics of expansion and oppression:

*Shrines and chapels, candelabra,
Ikons, clouds of incense,
Deep prostrations, never tiring,
Honouring Thine Image;
— Grant them theft and war and murder,
So that they may kill a brother,
Behold, they offer gifts to Thee!
Loot from a fire, fine tapestry!* [7, p. 96].

Shevchenko totally rejected religiosity as Orthodox caesaropapism, as it implies deterioration, defilement, filthifying of a person, ceremonialism. The national bureaucratic hierarchy of churches separates people, destroys fraternity and love, God's grace. It creates dogmatic theology that divides global Christianity.

Every connection between faith and some strategies, national political demands, world missionary proclivity (as in Jesuits and Russian Slavophiles), with compulsion and gregariousness was alien and unacceptable for T. Shevchenko. In the poem "Heretic" he interprets the power of Popes as an immoral phenomenon that is depraved for national societies and completely contradicts the philanthropic nature of Christianity. In "The Haidamaks" and other later poems the poet claimed that it was exactly Jesuits who created Ukrainian-Polish discord. But he also does not show mercy to Orthodoxy. The words "Orthodoxy" and "Orthodox" he uses not for identification of his faith, but predominantly with a negative emotional colouring.

The problem of the confrontation between faith and ceremonialism in Shevchenko's works has an open nature. Advocacy of "sanctified" faith – "fleshless idea of goodness and chastity" (T. Shevchenko) – before the menace of its turning into idolatry is once again an evidence for poet's deep religiosity – "fervent and devoted for the whole life" (M. Dragomanov). Instead, ceremonialism appears when with the form the essence is lost, when ritual becomes so stodgy, there are many of them and they are so complicated that even a priest does not know for sure what they mean. The more perfect and spiritual a person becomes, the less they need these "crutches". The time will come and the term "ritual" will pass into history. It is a question of distant or maybe not-too-distant (only God knows) future, as one can read in the Apocalypse: "And I saw no temple in the city..." (Revelation 21:22), as there is no literal temple, no ceremonial service, no worship of God in a new Church, in the New Jerusalem, but there is worship of spirit and truth. According to Paul the Apostle, faith is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). For a religious person faith appears in unity with God and adherents, in love and rectitude, in keeping the Commandments, in a longing to actively imply faith within the society, in a desire for perfection and salvation.

Although exactly in Orthodox environment Shevchenko has been since his childhood, researches do not exclude typological similarities between certain artistic concepts and the Protestant ideology that originates not only from the ideas of the Tübingen School, but also from a mundane apprehension of The Gospels in a Protestant environment, with which Shevchenko got acquainted when communicating with Petersburg Germans during the education in the Academy of Arts. However, in the works of Shevchenko one is likely to observe profound personified reception of evangelical texts. D. Stepovyk notes, that as to Protestants Shevchenko's critical attitude to formal Christianity, to Orthodox fundamentalism and to its bearers represented by Russian sanctimoniousness of that time – actually coincides with traditional criticism of Protestants. Shevchenko does not come up against any Protestant affiliation of that time – either Lutherans, or Calvinists, Anglicans, Reformists, Methodists, Baptists. On the contrary, the poem "Neophytos" and especially the poem "Heretic" show Shevchenko's religious tolerance. He clearly inclines to positive statements on Christian subject, as well as to critical ones about clerics, who have forgotten about Ten Commandments – to Christianity which was worshiped by Hryhoriy Skovoroda, his great predecessor in the field of Christian intellectualism" [8, p. 266]. Hence, to both C. Marot and T. Shevchenko Christianity of only one tradition, as well as the ideas of "pure", initial Christianity were close.

It takes Marot almost three years to work on the translation of the psalms. This magic of "three years" has something in common with Shevchenko's one of the most creative period of his life, when he wrote numerous masterpieces, that anyway have a number of common features with psalms translations on the ideological thematic level. Careful and thorough reading of the Bible that was a permanent subject of Shevchenko's lectureship of that time induces to an extensive use of Biblical stylization. Thus, using Biblical epigraphs in such works as "A Dream (A Comedy)", "Big cellar", "The Caucasus", the poet creates a certain prescription for a reader – to match the written with high spiritual model. The first psalms interpreted by Shevchenko appeared at the beginning of December, 1845. Living in a landlord S. Samoilov in a village Viunyshche T. Shevchenko completely rewrote the whole cycle to a handwritten collection "Three summers" dated "December, 19, 1845, Viunyshche".

The psalms of Clément Marot were published for the first time in 1541 in Paris. The collection included first thirty psalms in French. Later in Geneva the poet completes the work on nineteen more psalms. Together with "Cantique de Simeon" it constituted fifty of his works which were published for the first time in 1543. The translations of the psalms became the most famous works of Clément Marot, as they became "military songs of Huguenots" (V. Shyshmarev). The psalms of Clément Marot became the core of "The Psalter", which was published in Geneva in 1562. The translations of Théodore de Bèze (1519–1605) constituted the remaining part of "The Huguenot Psalter". He was a prominent representative of Huguenot literature, polemist, the theorist of French Protestantism.

The influence of the Reformation on a literary process was controversial and diverse. On the one hand, the Reformation led to an escalation of a religious fight, it actualised religious questions that caused a rapid increase of the Bible translations into national languages and of religious polemic literature. On the other hand, a new deviation of the center of spiritual life in religious metaphysical area arose in a literary process: God and the relationship of a person with God became a central problem of fiction that was situated in the field of force of the Reformation.

C. Marot's translations became the beginning of the tradition of psalms translation in French literature. In his works one can observe the same tendency, as in later translations of Protestant poets (Jean de Sponde, Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné) – the tendency of easy managing with the original. As opposed to Catholic tradition, for Protestant poets the Biblical texts are active and living tradition and ecclesiastical reality, and a temporal distance between the original text and reality is erased so much that it acquires the traits of the real present. A. Ehsan notes, that Clément Marot makes the psalms more modern, draws parallels between the Jewish and French people, king Francis appears as a good pastor, poet, owner, like King David. The image of the French monarch is built on the basis of medieval "idealization". It can be seen in the dedication where the king is said to be a "superchristian" ("au Roi très chrétien"). Although, one can see the influence of humanism that appears in the poet's expression of a wide range of emotions of the person who is destined to be at the head of his nation [1, p. 67].

The psalms of C. Marot's are notable for rhythmic variety, rich stanzaic construction, melodiousness of verses. Shevchenko's translations are distinctive for its specific rhythm and melody. Thus, analysing the 132nd psalm of Shevchenko and comparing it with the original, V. Radutsky claims that exactly "a sophisticated taste of the poet, his profound understanding of the essence of the Holy Scripture helped him to write a masterpiece in 22 lines out of three poems. The reader who knows well the original Hebraic text, cannot avoid the feeling (almost mystical one, as it is not a drawback of a real poetry) that first two lines of an interpretation have the same number of syllables in comparison with Modern Hebrew where these lines became a favourite at all times folk song. This mystical impression is strengthened by the fact that 22 is the number of letters in Modern Hebrew alphabet [4, p. 7].

In comparison with C. Marot, who sees the image of King Francis in King David, T. Shevchenko takes on himself the image of one more God's elect – King David the psalmist and that fits in the conception of the "profiles" and "masks" of Shevchenko (B. Rubchak). This version can be also proved by the name, though not all the psalms, interpreted by Shevchenko, are known to belong to David (the 43rd and 136th psalms). Probably, the poet chose those psalms which strike a chord in his heart and provide an answer to moral and spiritual questions. In the field of the Theory of Translation this method is equated with the author of the original. Due to close reading a literary text is unfolded as a manifestation of the author's life. In this process the person who interprets a literary text can understand the author more than he can do it; that means that the person has to understand not only another person's thought, language, but also their past.

As well as Shevchenko, C. Marot made translations based on a secondary source. It was a Latin version of The Book of Psalms for the French poet. T. Shevchenko used Church Slavonic text of the Book of Psalms of the Elizabethan Bible published in 1751. The influence of Church Slavonic source is extended on the poetic language of Shevchenko's psalms, enriched by Church Slavonic words and new lexical morphological units that contributed to poetic figurativeness and pathetic style. The "untranslatability" of a great part of Church Slavonic words in "The Psalms of David" is explained by V. Koptilov by the fact that in Ukrainian there are no correspondences at the same level as Church Slavonic words: such specific lexical and phraseological elements cannot be substituted by anything without significant stylistic loss. The poet understood it fully with the help of his perfect sense of language, so translating "The Psalms of David" from the Church Slavonic Bible he did not translate many words and phrases [2, p. 53].

One says that T. Shevchenko did not know the Church Slavonic language well. Analyzing some differences between Shevchenko's translation of the psalm 81 and Church Slavonic text, B. Struminsky believes that the understanding of Shevchenko was close to folk's, Ukrainian, that is approximate, intuitive and imprecise [9, p. 268]. Although V. Radutsky, performing a close poetic analysis of Shevchenko's texts and comparing them to the original in the Hebraic language and then to Church Slavic variant of psalm, definitely proves that the poet preserves a deep meaning of the Biblical texts in his interpretations, appealing to his interpretation. "That is why interpretations sometimes are more comprehensible to readers than the psalms themselves. It gives us the right to confirm that Shevchenko managed to create what he intended to: interpretations, i.e. works that could transfer exotic images of the Ancient Near East to the ground of Ukrainian culture. Shevchenko, probably, has spent years reflecting on original psalms before writing each interpretation" [4, p. 21].

Researches have different presumptions concerning T. Shevchenko's choice of the psalms (they are as follows: 1, 12, 43, 52, 53, 81, 93, 132, 136, 149). The chosen psalms are considered to be key psalms, as they precisely render the whole spiritual strength of this important book. The sacral number 10 draws one's attention – it is the number of the psalms chosen by T. Shevchenko. It must have been a conscious choice because using rich expressive features of psalmody the poet created his "ten commandments" for the Ukrainian people and embodied in them his national politic credo. Sense content of these psalms gave a possibility for extrapolating through associations the Old Testament texts to modern age and for encoding tragic Ukrainian reality in interpretations. An ancient work, belonging to the artistic unity of Ukrainian literature of XIX century that was developing on ungoverned territory in the conditions of ethnic oppression, often continued the analogies: "Israel people – Ukrainian people",

“Babylon – the Russian Empire”. Comparing to Marot’s psalms interpretations, Shevchenko’s translations are distinct for more free interpretation in morally patriotic and national liberation tone.

3. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the poetic interpretations of the psalms of Clément Marot and Taras Shevchenko demonstrate different types of artistic consciousness and multi-vector nature of aesthetic search in the dynamics of fiction evolution, however exactly “psalm” tradition becomes a considerable step in establishing poetic traditions of European national literature which have common general Christian memory for poetic assimilation and for the actualization of the Old Testament past. It is important that in a culturological and historical area the translations of C. Marot and T. Shevchenko show the ideological ambivalence of this phenomenon: on the one hand – the connection with big confessional cultural historical communities; on the other hand – both French and Ukrainian translations that demonstrate the breaking of the tradition of domination “confessio” over “natio” in sociohistorical processes of France and Ukraine.

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Бігун О.А. Псалми у французькій та українській літературах: переспіви Клемана Маро і Тараса Шевченка. *Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника*, 3 (4) (2016), 76–83.

Йдеться про перші зразки перекладів псалмів французькою та українською мовами. Аналізуються суспільно-історичні чинники, що призвели до відходу від канонічних мов. Виявляються спільні моменти та розбіжності у процесі перекладів псалмів національними мовами. З’ясовано, що

Псалтир з його проблемно-тематичним розвоєм відтворення людських переживань, проникливим ліризмом, гостротою й напругою почуттів, глибиною ідей, провіденціальною міццю, точністю та геніальною простотою в поетичному вираженні релігійного почуття, постав у французькій та українській літературах універсальним зразковим прототекстом, який надихнув Клемана Маро і Тараса Шевченка на його подальшу актуалізацію.

Ключові слова: псалми, переклад, Реформація, православ'я, культура, Клеман Маро, Тарас Шевченко.