

VASYL SHCHURAT'S FUNDAMENTALS OF SHEVCHENKO'S RELATIONS WITH THE POLES: BIOGRAPHICAL ASPECT OF THE STUDY.

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Abstract: The article is devoted to Vasyl Shchurat as a researcher of Taras Shevchenko's life and works. It gives a brief look upon this field of the researcher's study, but mainly it is devoted to his largest work *Fundamentals of Shevchenko's Relations with the Poles*, also known as *Shevchenko and the Poles. The Basis of Mutual Relations*, published in 1917 in Lviv. The article deals with the biographical aspect of Shchurat's research. The aim was to analyse the biographical data concerning Shevchenko's knowledge of the Polish language and his contacts and acquaintance with the Poles against more recent works on the topic. The article also contains a short review of the most known Shevchenko researches that appeared after the publication of Vasyl Shchurat's work.

Keywords: Vasyl Shchurat, Taras Shevchenko, the Polish language, revolutionary ideas, Polish progressive circles, Petrashevites, Shevchenko in exile, Shevchenko's Polish acquaintances.

Speaking about the figure of Vasyl Shchurat (1871-1948), it should be noted that both in the Soviet times and now his name is known in scientific circles, but it is mainly mentioned in connection with the figure of Ivan Franko: he usually appears as his disciple and follower. V. Shchurat is considered to be one of the first Franko researcher; at the same time, he is known as a poet, an active figure in education and the first rector of the "secret" Ukrainian University in Lviv. Much less attention is paid to his scientific literary works and translations. Moreover, the activity of Vasyl Shchurat as a teacher and folklorist remains practically unknown, and the works of V. Shchurat, a literary critic and researcher, whose texts became a significant contribution to the development of the Ukrainian-Polish literary relations, are little known. Among the scholars of the Soviet era, Hryhoriy Verves, Myroslav Moroz, Stepan Trofimuk, as well as V. Shchurat's son, Stepan Shchurat, addressed to V. Shchurat's works. Nowadays, the figure of Shchurat also attracts attention of Ukrainian scholars, such researchers as

Larysa Kozak, Oleg Bagan, Margarita Kryvenko and the scholar's granddaughter, Vasylyna Shchurat-Glukha, mainly given to the large amount of information about I. Franko that the scholar left behind.

Another little-studied aspect of V. Shchurat's scientific activity is Shevchenko studies. The Galician scholar devoted a considerable amount of small-scale studies referring to the figure of the famous Ukrainian poet. Among his first works there were *Notes to the Poem by T. Shevchenko "The Monk"* (Shchurat 1894: 1) and *Shevchenko in the Light of Skabychevsky's Criticism* (Shchurat 1895: 95-97), along with the article *In Memory of Taras Shevchenko* (1896); later, V. Shchurat began a series of studies on the works of the Ukrainian poet. During his lifetime, there appeared the articles *Holy Scripture in Shevchenko's Poetry* (1904), *On the History of the Cult of Shevchenko in Galicia* (1906), *Shevchenko's Ivan Pidkova* (1909), *Shevchenko's Message to Gogol* (1909), *Shevchenko - Zheligovsky - Chechot* (1910), *Shevchenko's Warsaw Teacher* (1911), *Shevchenko's "Primer"* (1911), *Shevchenko's Emphasis* (1911), *Shevchenko's First Assessment in Galicia* (1912), *The First Polish Voices about Shevchenko* (1912), *From the Circle of Shevchenko's Acquaintances* (1913), *Shevchenko in a Painting Anecdote* (1913), *Galicia and Shevchenko* (1914), *T. Shevchenko's Kobzar* (1914), *Cultural Idea in the Poetry of Shevchenko* (1914), *Shevchenko and the Haydamaks* (1914), *Shevchenko's Poem of Hope* (1925), *Our Shevchenko* (1926), *Shevchenko in Kyiv, 1846* (1927) and the great work *Fundamentals of Shevchenko's Relations with the Poles* (1917), which was published the same year in a separate print entitled *Shevchenko and the Poles. The Basis of Mutual Relations* (Shchurat 1917). However, Schurat as a Shevchenko researcher was rejected by the Soviet science as being too pro-Western, whereas in 2015 issue of the *Shevchenko Encyclopaedia* there are two pages devoted to him.

This article is devoted to the largest work of V. Shchurat as a Shevchenko scholar. The study of T. Shevchenko's relations with the representatives and ideology of the Polish democratic movement in his work *The Fundamentals of Shevchenko's Relations with the Poles* can be considered in two ways: biographical and contextual. The biographical aspect, presented in this article, includes the analysis of Taras Shevchenko's life from the perspective of studying his ties with the Poles, taking into account the historical and cultural context. This aspect also contains the study of interpersonal ties between Taras Shevchenko and his Polish friends. The aim of the study is to analyse the data presented in the work against later works on the topic.

Investigating T. Shevchenko's connections with Polish literature and culture, Vasyly Shchurat, first of all, tries to find the answers to the question: "What

attracted Shevchenko to Polish poetry? ... Didn't Shevchenko succumb to the influence of Polish poets mainly due to the fact that he had been fascinated by the socio-political ideas surrounding those texts even earlier?" (Shchurat 1963(2): 248 - 249). The author analyzes and clarifies when the Ukrainian poet could first hear the Polish language, when he could get acquainted with the national liberation and revolutionary ideas proclaimed by the progressive Polish circles of that time. The researcher is trying to prove the fact that T. Shevchenko heard and knew the Polish language from an early age and, perhaps, used it. He supports his hypotheses with historical facts, in particular, the appointment of Tadeusz Chatsky the supervisor of the schools of Volyn, Podolsk and Kyiv provinces in 1803, who suspended Russification and began to introduce compulsory study of the Polish language.

If we assume that T. Shevchenko heard the Polish language while still in Kyrylivka, it is quite probable that it was understandable for the poet. V. Shchurat does not agree with the positions of T. Chaly and Oleksandr Konysky who believe that the Ukrainian poet learned Polish out of pity or love: "It was quite natural for Shevchenko that he, having already learned to speak Polish in Kyrylivka and Vilshany, spoke Polish in both Vilnius and Warsaw when it was necessary to speak Polish" (Shchurat 1963(2): 245). Peter Lebedintsev, the landowner of the neighbouring villages, writes in his memoirs that when Vasyl Engelhardt was the landowner of Kyrylivka, the Polish language was not heard in the Vilshany estate. After his death in 1828, when the estate was inherited by his sister Oleksandra Branicka, the wife of the Polish magnate Franciszek Xavery Branicki, the Poles began to appear in various positions as economists and clerks (Lebedintsev 1982: 36). And it is with this time that P. Lebedintsev associates the appearance of the Polish language in Vilshany.

The researcher Jan Tjos believes that T. Shevchenko first heard the Polish language in the Vilshany estate of Paul Engelhardt, where the manager of the house was a Pole Jan Dymowski. It was he who directed T. Shevchenko to study at the Polish amateur artist Stepan Pryvlotsky. This experience became useful for the young T. Shevchenko: later in Vilnius the poet could speak Polish fluently (Tjos 1996: 46 – 47). These contradictory facts show that it cannot be stated unequivocally that T. Shevchenko knew the Polish language while still in Ukraine. However, the trip in the autumn of 1829 to Vilnius as a boy-Cossack of Mr. Peter Engelhardt, of course, was a turning point for the young man.

V. Shchurat provides the information that T. Shevchenko and his master made trips to Vilnius and Warsaw. He explains those journeys by Mr. P. Engelhardt's escape from the revolutionary propaganda carried out at the Right Bank Ukraine by Polish emissaries. However, the move to the centres of revolutionary

ideas and outspoken political speeches on the one hand, and the reluctance of P. Engelhardt to side with the revolutionary on the other hand seems somewhat illogical, because at that time:

the invisible hands at the corners of the streets put up posters, if not with revolutionary programs, and then with, for example, such vicious announcements saying that it would be possible to rent an apartment from the new year in the Warsaw Belvedere that was an allusion to the uprising which was to begin from the chamber of Prince Constantine. That fact itself threw the police into a fever, gave them a reason for numerous searches and arrests, and gave new topics for conversation and reflection to the inhabitants. The whole of Warsaw, long before the outbreak of the revolution, spoke only of it. The enzyme was common (Shchurat 1963 (2): 246).

The poet's stay in Warsaw, which V. Shchurat writes about, could not be confirmed by any documents. Shevchenko studies of that time did not have access to many historical data known today, so the researcher could be wrong in his assumption. In addition, V. Shchurat's words about the purpose of P. Engelhardt's relocations as an escape look like some exaggeration. In fact, he was a Guards officer who was sent to serve in various places, and in Vilnius he was appointed an adjutant of the Governor-General of Vilnius, where he performed his duties in 1829-1830 (Dyakov 1964: 11).

Undoubtedly, Taras Shevchenko's stay in Vilnius played a decisive role in the formation of his life beliefs. Here he began to develop primarily as an artist; this period laid the foundations of his worldview, attitude to the main universal ideals, such as freedom and human rights. At Vilnius University, T. Shevchenko studied painting with Professor Jan Rustemas¹. Jerzy Jędrzejewicz, in his book *Ukrainian Nights or the Pedigree of a Genius. A Story about Shevchenko*, writes: "Professor Jan Rustemas's studio and also the lecture hall were located opposite the palace, on the second floor of the oldest university building, not far from the astronomical observatory" (Jędrzejewicz 1972: 86). At the university, T. Shevchenko could also meet other apprentices of the professor, hear the revolutionary and liberation calls of Polish youth for the first time. On the other hand, Yuri Ivakin points out that T. Shevchenko only left one mention of prof. J. Rustemas, on the basis of which the assumption of Shevchenko scholars about his studies is formed; the researcher also points out that this issue remains open due to the lack of documentary materials (Ivakin 1986: 75). There is no information about Professor J. Rustemas in V. Shchurat's work; instead, the researcher describes

¹ V. Shchurat does not mention Professor Jan Rustemas in his research, but T. Shevchenko himself mentions him in the "Journal". The question of T. Shevchenko's studies in Vilnius at Professor J. Rustemas remains open.

the study of the young T. Shevchenko at the artist Franz Lampi in Warsaw. Shevchenko scholar O. Konysky also gives information about his studies with professor-portraitist F. Lampi, and also, basing on the memoirs of Mykola Kostomarov, gives an interesting fact about T. Shevchenko's stay in Warsaw: "Taras was in Warsaw during the uprising of 1830, where the revolutionary government introduced him into a group with other "Russians", giving them money in the then revolutionary banknotes" (Konysky 1991: 71).

As it was already mentioned, the fact of T. Shevchenko's stay in Warsaw has not been confirmed so far, so the assumption that T. Shevchenko attended Franz Lampi's lectures remains only an assumption. However, a Lithuanian Shevchenko scholar Vladislav Abramavicius claims that T. Shevchenko did meet with the famous artist, arguing that F. Lampi had his studio near Vilnius and painted a portrait of P. Engelhardt's wife, whereas T. Shevchenko as a Cossack-boy was obliged to accompany her (V. Dyakov 1964: 13). It can be assumed that the meetings, not the classes, took place then. The very fact of being in the studio of the great artist must have made a great impression on the young T. Shevchenko.

Despite some inaccuracies about Taras Shevchenko's relocations, the researcher V. Shchurat rightly notes that it was then that the Ukrainian poet had his first opportunity to meet Polish revolutionaries, to get acquainted with their views and program, because at that time Vilnius, namely Vilnius University, was one of the largest Polish revolutionary centres. Vasyl Shchurat calls Dunya Goszowska one of the representatives of the revolutionary movement that T. Shevchenko met who, according to the researcher, was the first to acquaint T. Shevchenko with the Polish revolutionary ideas. Jadwiga (Dunya) Goszowska was a Polish seamstress who may have known and supported revolutionary ideas. Jerzy Jędrzejewicz believes that it is Dunya, as T. Shevchenko called her in his memoirs,

who brought Taras a Polish appeal to the Russians and Ukrainians, calling for a joint fight against tsarism. For the first time in his life the boy heard the words: "For our freedom and yours". He heard Lelewel's name. Dunya also gave him a booklet to read, published twenty-some years before in Vilnius and bearing the title *On Agreements between Heirs and Peasants* (Jędrzejewicz 1972: 90 – 91).

Some researchers believe that Dunya forced T. Shevchenko to speak Polish. This statement seems wrong, given the fact that the young seamstress simply did not know any other language.

As for Shevchenko as a painter, it is also known about his relations with Romuald Podberezky's circle (Shchurat 1963 (2): 325 – 326), which published

"Rocznik Literacki", and that Taras Shevchenko subscribed to this magazine and was recorded as "Szewczenko Taras. Kobzar". It should be noted here that it was R. Podberezky who made the first critical assessments of T. Shevchenko's painting in the magazine "Tygodnik Petersburski", where two of his articles were published. In the first article from 1842, analyzing an exhibition at the Academy of Arts, R. Podberezky criticizes T. Shevchenko's painting *Gypsy Woman – Fortune-Telling to Ukrainian Girl*: "The gypsy is quite good, but the girl is, as they say, coloured; I would think that the disadvantage stems from the fact that the figure does not protrude from the plane, that it is far from relief, flat. There is nothing to be said about *Hermaphrodite*; more mistakes than positive traits; the painter himself must have noticed them already" (Shchurat 1963 (3): 220). Schurat believes that R. Podberezky's criticism is too harsh, because it was for the *Gypsy Woman* that T. Shevchenko received an award from the Academy of Arts.

In the second article from 1844, R. Podberezky highly appreciating T. Shevchenko's *Picturesque Ukraine*, also explained the urgency of the topic of Ukraine for the Polish reader, because it held "an important page in the history of Poland" and could not be "indifferent for our society". And about T. Shevchenko as an artist he wrote: "One has to be a philosopher, a poet and an artist to be able to grasp and so wonderfully reflect the national types. Mr. Taras Shevchenko, a Little Russian Kobzar, or poet, is incomparable in such scenes" (Shchurat 1963 (3): 221 – 222). However, V. Shchurat points out that in St. Petersburg T. Shevchenko belonged to various Russian, Ukrainian and Polish circles, and "he was welcomed everywhere, became fashionable" (Shchurat 1963 (2): 325). He suggests that Taras Shevchenko, as a member of the Ukrainian circle, was also engaged in the theatrical activities, which the researcher connects with the activities of the Women's Union, from which the Ukrainian circle inherited the experience of promoting national ideals and values through theatre. The researcher likewise suggests that T. Shevchenko tried himself in the role of an actor. The fact that T. Shevchenko was an "avid theatregoer" is confirmed by the memoirs of his contemporaries, as well as the studies of Shevchenko scholars, which indicate that T. Shevchenko drew plots and motives from theatrical vaudevilles. For example, Yuri Ivakin, researching the sources of the poem *In Vilnius, the Glorious City ...*, points out to clear echoes with the Polish theatrical vaudeville (Ivakin 1986: 127 – 129).

V. Shchurat also mentions the influences of Mykhailo Petrashevsky's circle on Taras Shevchenko. As a proof of communication with the people of Petrashevsky, V. Shchurat quotes the memories of Mykola Mombelli (Petrashevites) about his meeting with T. Shevchenko at Yevhen Hrebinka (Shchurat 1963 (2): 316 – 318). Yuriy Ivakin, reconstructing T. Shevchenko's ties with M. Mombelli

and Roman Strandman, questions the possibility of T. Shevchenko's political enlightenment by the group of Petrashevites, relying on the same recollections of M. Mombelli, where there are no hints of the existence of any close contacts between them (Ivakin 1986: 90). V. Hnatyuk believes that the central element of T. Shevchenko's ties with the Poles of the St. Petersburg period is the publication of *Kobzar* in 1844 in Latin with illustrations by Yakov de Balmen and Mikhail Bashilov (Hnatyuk 1930: 148-161).

An important stage in Taras Shevchenko's life was belonging to the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood, a secret organization which, according to Vasyl Shchurat, was imbued with the ideas of Polish democratic propaganda, in particular the views of the United Brothers Society.² Analyzing the activities of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood, the researcher first tries to find out the answers to two questions: what Polish organizations could influence the formation of the statutory goals and programs of the Brotherhood, and how the Brotherhood and its members influenced the evolution of Taras Shevchenko's views.³ The researcher suggests that the beginning of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood dates back to 1845, when democratic ideas began to form among the Ukrainian intelligentsia under the influence of United Brothers Society and Masonic organizations. However, most Shevchenko scholars and historians believe that the Brotherhood was established in January, 1846. Instead, Oleksandr Konysky is convinced that the Brotherhood was founded in September, 1845, when T. Shevchen-

² The researcher points out that the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood, in contrast to the Society of United Brothers, proposed a complete rapprochement of the Slavs, who would use the Russian language for better understanding, and church services would be conducted in the Old Slavonic language. The idea of a common language, but Polish, was promoted by the ideologues of the "Grudziąż" group and the leaders of the Konarszczyzna Movement. It is these organizations that the researcher believes influenced the formation of the socio-political and philosophical-ideological concepts of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood (Shchurat 1963 (2): 302).

³ For the first time the general assessment of the Brotherhood's activity was given by the historian Vasyl Semevsky in the work *Cyril and Methodius Society 1846 – 1847* (Semevsky 1918: 101 - 158), published in 1911 in the journal "Russian Wealth", to which the researcher V. Shchurat refers. Analyzing the content of *The Statute and the Book of the Genesis of the Ukrainian People* as the main ideological documents of the Brotherhood, the historian drew attention to the great ideological influence of Taras Shevchenko on the members of the secret organization. In the works *Voice of the Past*, *The History of Ukrainian Literature* and M. Hrushevsky's *Illustrated History of Ukraine* a special role of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood in the history of the new Ukrainian socio-political movement is marked. Alexander Konysky researched the activities of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood in detail. In addition to analyzing the ideology and program of the Brotherhood, the researcher tried to determine the place and role of Taras Shevchenko in this organization (Konysky 1991).

ko met M. Kostomarov, whom, according to the Shevchenko scholar, P. Kulish introduced (Konysky 1991: 190 – 192).

The St. Petersburg period is known as one of the most important in the life of Taras Shevchenko; it is the period of his formation as an artist and poet. Because of the small number of confirmed facts of T. Shevchenko's membership in certain circles, now we have a number of works aimed at proving the poet's contacts with the Polish democratic movement, the Decembrists or other socio-political groups on the basis of little mentioning of T. Shevchenko in the *Journal* and in letters. This type of comparative research (which includes the work of V. Shchurat *Fundamentals of Shevchenko's Relations with the Poles*) is often reduced to determining the influences on each other, instead of drawing parallels between different cultural phenomena to determine the causes of consensual ideas, plots, motives and themes.

In contrast to the St. Petersburg period, the period of exile is more studied, because each step of the poet was known, and his meetings with other exiles can be easily traced with the help of documents. While in exile, Taras Shevchenko met the Poles: Oton Fischer, Tomasz Werner, Ipolyt Zawadski and Stanislaw Krulikiewicz, Sylvester Kilkiewicz, Arkady Wengzynowski, Stanislaw Domaracki, Bronislaw Zaleski, Michał Zelenzałka, Zygmund Serakowski, Antoni Zheligovsky, Mariusz Mostowski and others. All of them were educated people who were forced to serve in the army for revolutionary activities in the 1930's and 1940's or for participating in revolutionary demonstrations in 1846 or 1848.

Vasyl Shchurat suggests in his research that Zygmunt Serakowski could have had the greatest influence on Taras Shevchenko in exile – both were united by common memories from St. Petersburg, as well as the same views on Ukraine, on the Ukrainian language, which the Polish activist included in his memorial to the tsar, where he "sought recognition of national rights for Ukrainians, admission of the Ukrainian language to public life and to all schools, not excluding the Kiev University" (Shchurat 1963 (2): 331). However, the fact of T. Shevchenko's meeting with Z. Serakovsky in exile was refuted after a detailed study of archival materials by Leonid Bolshakov, who proved that, after all, they did not meet (Bolshakov 1969: 100 - 119). Due to the fact that part of their correspondence has been preserved, we can talk about their warm and friendly relationship. In addition, in letters to Bronislaw Zaleski, T. Shevchenko often asked about Z. Serakovsky and asked to convey greetings to him. In a letter to B. Zaleski dated September 25, 1855, he enthusiastically wrote that Zygmunt was a "real poet!" (Shevchenko 1964: 120).

In fact, Taras Shevchenko's closest Polish friend was Bronislaw Zaleski, with whom the Ukrainian poet maintained very close relations, through whom

he also maintained contacts and met other Poles. They met in Orenburg in 1849, and during an expedition to Kara-Tau in the summer of 1851 they became even closer. Their acquaintance is the easiest to trace and confirm, as their correspondence is almost completely preserved. The first letter that came down to us is dated 1853. It follows from the letter that T. Shevchenko was really very close to B. Zaleski, addressed him with various requests. It is in this letter dated between September and November 1853 that T. Shevchenko presented his own understanding of a friend and friendship: "I have become a real beggar, in each of my letters I ask you for something, I am just unscrupulous! but to be ashamed of a friend in such cases means not to have a friend: this is my notion of friendship"(Shevchenko 1964: 89).

Bronislaw Zaleski played an important role in acquainting Taras Shevchenko with Polish romantic literature, especially with the works of Adam Mickiewicz, Zygmunt Krasinski, and Bohdan Zaleski. The Polish friend of the Ukrainian poet also helped him sell his works. In their letters, they used ciphers, for example, T. Shevchenko's works of art were called woollen fabric: "Two pieces of woollen fabric meant two watercolours. I used to sell them, of course, in Orenburg, but sometimes they went all the way to Ukraine, where they were valued solely out of love for the painter-poet" (Franko 1976: 64). When Taras Shevchenko received information that Bronislaw Zaleski was returning home from exile, he wrote in a letter dated September 15, 1856: "... without you, after all, I'm a complete orphan in the Orenburg deserted land" (Shevchenko 1964: 136). Their relationship was not limited to B. Zaleski helping T. Shevchenko - it is also known that T. Shevchenko taught his Polish friend the technique of etching (Sveshnikov 1969: 120 - 123).

The third important person with whom T. Shevchenko maintained close relations in exile was the Polish poet and confessor of revolutionary-democratic ideas Edward Zheligovsky (pseudonym Antoni Sowa). They corresponded intensively and often communicated through Bronislaw Zaleski, who introduced them. As an ideologue of the Polish national liberation movement, E. Zheligovsky proclaims "the ideal of the renewal of humanity through the implementation of the evangelical covenant of love of neighbour" (Shchurat 1963 (2): 308) in his drama *Jordan*. In this "dramatic fantasy" E. Zheligovsky advocates the abolition of privileges, calls on all to glorify universal virtues, and raises the issue of marital relations.

According to Vasyl Shchurat, A. Zheligovsky included the main views and positions derived from the ideas proclaimed by "Young Poland" into the introduction to the issue of the drama:

Our age is a religious age! The development of national personalities in this canvas, the simplification of the symbols of the Christian idea, its deep understanding in spirit and its implementation, in all conditions of social and domestic life - will be the word that God had, and which will become flesh and settle among us. The flag of the spirit is raised! All conventional respect for beliefs in verba magistri of any civilization falls; the highest respect is God and his spirit, embodied in humanity. New nations rise, a new song begins; the fibres of the inner life begin to develop in all their elements; the word of Christ's brotherhood begins to be embodied in nations, not in castes (Shchurat 1963 (2): 314).

At the same time, V. Shchurat points out that these ideas were close to T. Shevchenko, and also suggests that similar ideas were adopted by P. Hulak at the University of Dorpat, and which he tried to convey to T. Shevchenko during their joint activities in the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood.

The researcher quite aptly quotes from the correspondence of A. Zheligovsky and T. Shevchenko, where they cordially greet each other, express their admiration for each other's work and personality. He concludes that T. Shevchenko could have read *Jordan* even before the exile, i.e. its first edition from 1845, at the same time assuming that it was P. Hulak who could have acquaint the Ukrainian poet with A. Zheligovsky's drama. The researcher confirms his assumptions by a letter to B. Zaleski of September 29, 1855, in which T. Shevchenko wrote that he would gladly read *Jordan* again (Shchurat 1963 (2): 311 – 312). In addition, from a letter to Br. Zaleski from June 6, 1854, quoted by the researcher, we learn that T. Shevchenko admired A. Zheligovsky's works *Two Words* and *Impromptu* (Shevchenko 1964: 101).

T. Shevchenko first met Z. Serakovsky and A. Zheligovsky in St. Petersburg at Vasyl Bilozersky's, after returning from his exile in 1858. Later, A. Zheligovsky devoted his poem *To the People's Poet* to T. Shevchenko with the dedication *To Brother Taras Shevchenko*. Vasyl Shchurat considered this poetry to be a reworking of a poem from Bulgarian. The following year, in 1859, T. Shevchenko dedicated his poetry *Imitation of Eduard Sova* to A. Zheligovsky, which Vasyl Shchurat also considers a reworking of a song by Jan Chechot (Mickiewicz's friend), which was artistically more perfect than the original work. The researcher considers this question in a separate investigation *Shevchenko – Zheligovsky – Chechot*⁴.

These were main biographical aspects discussed by V. Shchurat. As it has been shown, not all of them were accurate or correct that resulted from the lack

⁴ V. Shchurat, as mentioned earlier, proves his opinion in the work *Shevchenko – Zheligovsky – Chechot* that the *Imitation of Eduard Sova* is a rehash of Chechot (Shchurat 1963 (1): 235 –241).

of the data we have today. Yet, Shchurat's work shows the researchers key interest in this subject. Many scholars in the interwar period of the twentieth century were interested in studying Taras Shevchenko's personal relations with the Poles and their influence on his work. In particular, in the 1930s the following researches appear: Alexander Konysky's *Taras Shevchenko-Hrushivsky. Chronicle of His Life* (Konysky 1991), Pavel Zaitsev's *Shevchenko and the Poles* (Zajcew 1934: 2–21), Volodymyr Hnatiuk's *Shevchenko in Relations with the Poles* (Konysky 1991: 148 – 161) and Alexander Bagriy *T.G. Shevchenko. Vol.1. Environment. Motives of Creativity. The Styl* (Bagriy 1930) which made it possible to open the unknown pages of the biography of the Ukrainian poet, in particular, the documented acquaintances, meetings and relations of Shevchenko with the Poles in different periods of his life and work. Ivan Franko's studies and research, as well as the publication of correspondence between Taras Shevchenko and Br. Zaleski were an undeniable contribution to the study of the topic "Shevchenko and the Poles"; however, Volodymyr Hnatyuk once remarked in his work *Scientific Reasons for the History of Polish Society in Ukraine in the 19th Century* that I. Franko attributed to T. Shevchenko "hostile attitude to the Poles" (Hnatyuk 1930: 148 – 161). This aspect, of course, affected the further Shevchenko studies of Ukrainian researchers.

Research on the life and works of Taras Shevchenko in the post-war period focuses on critical analysis of existing facts and further discovery of new information about the Ukrainian poet's relations with the Poles, Polish culture and literature, the perception of the figure and work of Ukrainian Kobzar in the Polish environment. Among them, a prominent place is occupied by the works of Hryhoriy Verves and Volodymyr Dyakov (Dyakov 1964: 13).

In the last decades of the twentieth century, a new edition of *Memoirs about Taras Shevchenko* was published (Borodin, Pavlyuk: 1982.), which collected memoirs and reminiscences of friends and acquaintances of the poet. The materials collected in this book allow to get acquainted in more detail, first hand, with T. Shevchenko's environment, with the possible influence of this environment on the formation of the Ukrainian poet.

At the end of the twentieth century, there was also a process of rethinking the figure and works of Taras Shevchenko in Ukrainian literature and culture in general, which led to a new analysis of the relationship of the Ukrainian poet with the Poles. It is no coincidence that Hryhoriy Hrabovych's article *Shevchenko That We Do not Know* (Grabovych 1992: 100 – 112; Grabovych 1991) was published at the turn of the century, who in particular points to the need for a new reading not only of the works, but also of the figure of Taras Shevchenko. Such new interpretations of the great Kobzar include the research of Hryhoriy Klochek (Klochek

1998), Leonid Plyushch (Plyushch 2001), Ivan Dziuba and Mykola Zhulynsky (Dziuba, Zhulynsky 2001: 9 – 66), Yevhen Nakhlik (Nakhlik 2003), Oksana Zabuzhko (Zabuzhko 1997), and Yuriy Andrukhovych (Andrukhovych 2007: 141 – 158). In such a broad context of research, Vasyl Shchurat's Shevchenko explorations also occupy an important place. Obviously, modern researchers quite rightly disagree with some positions of the Galician scholar, but indisputable in this situation is the fact that the study of V. Schurat is not only of historical value, but clearly demonstrates how close the Polish topic was to the scholar himself.

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