

POETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMAGE OF UKRAINE IN O. DOVZHENKO'S FILM STORY "UKRAINE ON FIRE"

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Summary

The appearance of the central image of Ukraine in the film story "Ukraine on fire" as the dominant character of insubordination and the tragedy of the suffering of the Ukrainian people. The image of Ukraine in O. Dovzhenko's film story "Ukraine on Fire" is an undisguised, tragic truth about the fate of the Ukrainian people during the Great Patriotic War.

The years 1941–1942 remained in history as the most difficult hours of the great grief of the war for Ukraine. This is the time when all of Ukraine was occupied by fascists. Oleksandr Dovzhenko watched all these bloody events, it was the war that served as a prerequisite for writing a film story. In these dire and terrible times for Ukrainians, the author admitted that he created it "with fiery pain in his heart and burning suffering for Ukraine, which was in German hands, with painful regret and fear for its fate" (*Dovzhenko, 1956: 102*). Such methods as hermenevitic interpretation, descriptional, structural are used. The purpose is to discover deep meanings, carved in this film story, due to which stylistic devices author emphasizes the horror of the war.

Key words: death, war, Motherland, fascists, interpretation.

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1. Introduction

The years 1941–1942 remained in history truly as the most difficult hours of the great grief of the war for Ukraine. This is the time when all of Ukraine was occupied by fascists. Houses and entire villages, young and old, cities and villages – everything was on fire, completely destroyed: "The horizons were covered with smoke. Fiery ramparts with thunder and roar rolled more than once from east to west. Dead tanks blackened the fields with their menacing carcasses, as if they were dead tanks in the desert. And where not to go, where not to go – everywhere carried the spirit of an unburied human corpse. Mined unmown fields were full of ominous secrets" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 86*).

Oleksandr Dovzhenko watched all these bloody events, it was the war that served as a prerequisite for writing a film story. In these dire and terrible times for Ukrainians, the author admitted that he created it "with fiery pain in his heart and burning suffering for Ukraine, which was in German hands, with painful regret and fear for its fate" (*Dovzhenko, 1956: 102*).

But despite the most stressful days of the war, the artist did not doubt for a moment about the victory of his compatriots over the Nazis, but because of the unspeakable grief, which is like a bottomless sea, flooded his native Ukraine, Dovzhenko did not feel the sense of extravagance and joy at the arrival of victory: “The Germans will not conquer us. We cannot be conquered. No one was able to conquer us even before the revolution... It will be difficult for me to rejoice in the victory (...) The image of my unhappy Ukraine, on the fields, on bones and on tears, and whose blood was won, overshadowed everything in my soul” – he notes 6 April 1942 in his diary, (*Dovzhenko, 1956: 182*).

Oleksandr Dovzhenko's Ukraine is always associated with a woman. In the film story, the writer constantly emphasizes the need for a steadfast struggle against the Nazi invaders who occupied his native Ukraine. In order to rally his compatriots to the “sacred and liberating” war against the fierce enemy, he searches for examples of military exploits in the glorious past.

Dovzhenko's appeals to her land during the war period are conveyed by the following epithets: “bloodied”, “burnt”, “broken”, “ruined”, “destitute in the ravages of fires”, “talentless martyr”. which reproduce the entire palette of sorrowful feelings, leaves behind sad memories. The war took the lives of thousands of people, the nation was divided into traitors and patriots, everything was burned, any traces of the existence of human life on this earth is a consequence of the catastrophic nature of the situation.

But as a person who constantly chose beauty between truth and beauty, Dovzhenko was still able to find the strength to see the beautiful even in the conditions of war. In the work, quite often, you can notice a huge number of landscapes, which, above all, add a touch of joy to the film story. “In a garden near a clean hut, among flowers, bees, children and domestic birds, on a quiet summer day, the family of collective farm worker Lavrin Zaporozhets sat at the table, as if in a picture, and quietly sang “Oh, I'll go to my family for a walk”” (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 1*).

Dovzhenko's love for Ukraine is a real, genuine attachment of a devoted son to his mother. She has care, duty, and selflessness. Addressing the writer's “Diary”, he noted: “I want to live in Ukraine. Not to be with me. Let them even shorten my already short summers, I want to live in Ukraine (...) I am a son of Ukraine, of Ukraine” (*Dovzhenko, 1956: 692*). These lines convey the artist's heartache, indescribable debauchery and great love for Ukraine, the image of which is masterfully depicted in the film story.

2. The tragic image of Ukraine in the film story

It is impossible not to note that the image of Ukraine in the film story is through-and-through, that is, it develops and acquires dynamism throughout the entire work. But Ukraine, which during the long time of its glorious past was a ruin many times, is most vividly reflected in the author's lyrical digressions and appeals, of which there are a huge number in the work: “O Ukrainian land, how you hid yourself! Rivers are filled with blood, lakes with tears and pity. Bairaks and crossings with a corpse caught fire, with pus and deathly vomit. The steppes were trampled with anger, and with curses, and with longing and pity” (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 36*).

Ukraine is, above all, Ukrainians. In the film story, they are depicted as hard-working, brave, valiant, with a primordial attraction to beauty. But at the same time, eternal slavery, which taught them not only humility, but also social ignorance and indifference. They did not create their own history, which future generations would be proud of, so none of “the glorious great-grandfathers, great warriors” were needed.

The so-called “Achilles heel” was on public display, which is skillfully used and known by everyone. Including the Germans. The author directs the results of such an analysis to the mouth of

the German general von Krause. "These people are completely devoid of the ability to forgive each other's disagreements, even in the name of common, high interests. They have no state instinct... They have been living for twenty-five years with negative slogans of rejecting God, property, family, and friendship! They have only an adjective left from the word "nation". They have no eternal truths. That is why there are so many traitors among them..." (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 28*).

The song is compositionally symbolic, because, as you know, Ukraine cannot exist without it. The song both begins and ends the film story, creating the effect of "framing" the work. Only one song "Oh, I'm going to go for a walk", which the Zaporozhian family loved to sing when they had a free day, allows the reader to hope for the best, gives optimism, despite the tragedy of the work itself. It is also a symbol of the family at the beginning of the work, and at the end – as a sign of the happy future life of Olesya Zaporozhets and Vasyl Kravchyna. Then they hugged. He kissed her hands and face. And she is. Father Lavrin, brother Roman came, Ivan Zaporozhets came, who also turned out to be a brother. And although they were all wounded, and their mother, grandfather Demyd, Savka, Grigoriy were no longer there, and the house was burned, they gathered around the oven and sang in honor of their mother:

Oh, I'm going to go for a walk
But my whole family is rich" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 102*).

The image of Ukraine is also supplemented and concretized by the female images of Olesya and Christi, who personify the horrors of war and overcoming them by girls "in the terrible hour of the life of their people.«

Probably, the most fatal image is the image of Christa Khutornaya, the wife of the captain of the Italian punishment squad Antonio Palma. She was publicly condemned in the partisan unit for sincerity and truth, for having a good opinion of her husband. She did not commit any crime, but she, a decent woman, was called obscene words – "whore", "insole", "officer's whore". She did not deserve such an attitude towards herself. "When she was taken for questioning, she could barely walk. Her whole young body lost its strength and seemed to melt away. It was as if she was falling from a great height to the ground in the terrible consciousness that the parachute behind her had not dissolved and now she could neither stop, nor shout, nor call... The earth inexorably pulled her to itself, the earth" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 74*).

Khrystyna's honesty during the interrogation finally confused prosecutor Lymanchuk. When he asked: "Where is your national pride, where is your human dignity, where is your maiden honor?", – Hrystyia says with dignity: "I know that I will not get out of here alive. Something is telling me, – she put her hand on her heart, – it says that my death has come, that I have done something forbidden, evil and illegal, that I have neither the national pride, nor honor, nor dignity that you said. So tell me at least once before I die, why I don't have this? And where is it little people? Our family is honest.

I did not recognize you as my judge. Only you can destroy me as the hideous, unwanted phenomenon that I really am. Why in our area before the war did you measure our girlish virtues mainly by a day's work and by hundredweights of beets... Am I a nationalist? Which one is there?! I remember you. You slipped through our village. I poured water into your radiator. It was flowing heavily in you and you cursed so loudly and disgustingly. I cried then and, while crying, I asked you if there would be fascists in our village: maybe I ran away? Do you remember what you told me? You called my question provocative. So I remained under the German, a whore and a bitch... Now you despise me, threatening me with death. And I want to die, I want! ... What can you punish me with?" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 76*).

The image of Olesya, Christ's friend, is no less sorrowful and mournful. Dovzhenko himself portrays her sympathetically. It is obvious that Olesya exemplifies a model of Ukrainian

young women: beautiful and elegant, diligent in her work, modest and singing. As a great patriot, Olesya is most worried about the common grief of the people – the occupation: “Oh my God! That it will be with us” (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 21*).

Olesya is an extremely strong girl, because even her last name Zaporozhets indicates this and personifies the indomitability and fighting spirit of her heroic ancestors. When Lavrin, Olesya's father, was making a list of young people who would later be sent to work in Germany, he recorded his own daughter in it. Soon, Olesya and Khrystya are going on a German train to become slaves. The girls try to escape, but in vain. Khrystia was seized with debauchery, but Olesya did not lose heart. Olesya is the girl who makes great efforts to be able to find a way out of the most desperate situation. She always believes in her own strength, because she is full of love for the Motherland and love for tanker Vasyl Kravchyna, her boyfriend. “Christ, we are the mothers of our people. Everything must be moved, children must be born so that the people do not move. Look what is being done. Many millions are dying. (...) I believe! And you believe, Christ. They strangle you, but you believe...” (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 56*).

3. The image of females and males in the story

Olesya, unlike Christy, did not manage to escape, so she is no longer an individual, but a real commodity in the slave trade. But Olesya could not come to terms with the situation in which she is a slave. An unquenchable flame of freedom, great love for her dear land was kindled in the girl's heart. Germans and Germans approached Olesya, touched her with their hands, turned her away. Olesya, it seemed, did not notice anyone, as if she was not here, at this disgusting slave market. She was in Ukraine. She poured over her to her father, to her mother, to her brothers, to Vasyl, who somewhere far, far away are shedding their blood for their native land. She felt that this terrible reality could not last long, because then the world would have to go out, and that reality laid its shameful hand on her” (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 64*).

But Olesya was undeterred and tried to run away again. Finally, her attempt was successful. When she got to Ukraine, she accidentally saw her beloved Vasyl. But it was not the same Olesya, how much grief she endured, she became gray. But despite everything, Olesya's soul was as indomitable as her will. Vasyl Kravchyna emphasized this, saying that Olesya has become even better. The girl steadfastly endured all the troubles that happened on her life's path, remained morally pure and spiritually rich. These features of Olesya's character specify the image of Ukraine, which, after many wanderings and human suffering, still persevered and defeated the enemies – the Germans.

The images of Olesya and Christy are a kind of display of the national character of the Ukrainian people. In particular, I. Lysiak-Rudnytskyi notes: “I believe in the existence of something that can be called a national character. National character is identical with a peculiar way of life, a complex of artistic values, rules of conduct and a system of institutions that are inherent to a given people. National character is formed historically and it is possible to determine the factors that lead to its rise. National character is not only a product of socio-historical development, but also a carrier of national culture, an expression of the national spirit” (*Lysiak-Rudnytskyi, 1993: 71*).

I would like to note that the tragic image of Ukraine is also complemented by male images – village headman and head of the Zaporizhzhya family Lavrin and tank driver Vasyl Kravchyna, who embody the wisdom, strength, and spiritual stability of the Ukrainian people. The image of Lavrin Zaporozhets is almost the leitmotif of depicting and personifying real Cossack traits: endurance, courage and courage. It is not for nothing that Dovzhenko bestows

Lavrín with the appropriate temperament, because in the film story he constantly fulfills the role of a leader: in the family, in the village, as a headman, in the collective farm. He also managed to pass these traits on to his five sons. Exposed by the police, captured and tyrannized by the Nazis, Lavrín does not lose that energy for life, courage, without a grain of untruth behind him, he speaks with honor and dignity to the executioner, in particular, the German general von Krause.

Lavrín's spiritual power manifests itself in his anger towards the occupiers. Like a brave Achilles, Lavrín fights on barbed wire with the chief of police and, as a result, the powerless one defeats the powerful one. Loyalty to one's people defeated betrayal, because "an inhuman lust for life seized the Zaporozhian. From the wide Ukrainian steppes, from the ravines and dark barracks, the pitch of history, skulls, smoke and bloody steam blew on him. The passion for struggle and revenge, all the will, all the mind flared up in him with such a terrible force that in one moment it seemed to rise to some extraordinary level, close to an explosion" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 52*).

Lavrín was a true Cossack: not only did he win the fight for his life, but he also kindled the hearts of others in the concentration camp with the fire of his desire for freedom and life: "Hey! Arise, who are strong and mighty! Hey, whoever wants to live, get out of the graves! Get up, hey!" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 53*) When you read these pages, you get the feeling that Lavrín is not Lavrín, but a powerful combination of great Cossack figures of the past: Baida, Sirk, Bohun.

The Zaporozhian was most clearly expressed in the psychological and physical confrontation with the German general von Krause. When Lavrín was brought to von Krause, he was insanely furious, because he had no idea that he had good relations with the occupation authorities and at the same time was conducting subversive work against them. For such duplicity, von Krause explained to the Zaporozhian that he was on his land, his house was burned, his sons and wife were killed, and his daughter Olesya was taken to Germany. Krause emphasized that he would insult Lavrín by inhumane methods: first, he would gouge out his eyes, chop off his hands, and cut out his tongue. But Zaporozhets only calmly and frankly said: "Go to such a mother, let the devil take your soul" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 48*).

Lavrín often thought about the grief of the people and the grief of his own family, which had overtaken him. But it was meager compared to the public one: "What is my death and the death of my children? – thought Zaporozhets. – And what is my little torment, when thousands of our people disappear into nothingness. Families are dying, families are dying without number and borders" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 49*).

Equally important is the image of Vasyl Kravchyna, Olesya's future lover. At first, he is depicted as timid, does not reveal himself to be a hero, and twice sounds a negative representation of himself with the following words: "I am not a hero" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 20*). The night that happened between Olesya and Vasyl fundamentally changed the worldview of the latter. Currently, he has a goal: to find and win back Olesya at any cost, to carry her image through difficult battles and swears that she, Olesya, will forever remain in his heart: "No, I will not forget you, Olesya. I will not forget you, nor your house, nor the well under the willow... Whatever you are, I will return to you. May you be black, and sick, and mutilated by the enemy, may you turn gray from grief and tears and whiten your braid, may you dig chances against me, and weave barbed German wires against me, and sow bread for the enemy under the nagai, you will remain for me beautiful, just as you are beautiful now" (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 23*).

Over time, Kravchyna evolves in the war, appears before us as a military commander, captain, acquires traits of courage and desperate bravery. O. Dovzhenko characterizes Vasyl's ability to tell the truth, to understand the true essence of the war, in the film story as perfect

heroism. Talking to her subordinate Siroshtan, who sees war only as a way to earn glory for himself and does not understand its meaning, Kravchyna proclaims: “Did you, having shed your blood, not understand anything about who and what we are? That we are not ordinary people, not witnesses of history, but heroes of a great and terrible time? That we will not gain capital, nor conquer foreign lands, nor conquer people, that we will come home to fires and ruins, so that some will have nowhere to lay their heads. And no father, no mother, no brother. And let's say they won. And this will be our great proud truth for many centuries” (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 87*).

Still, after the war, Vasyl returned home, found Olesya and felt overjoyed. Finally, nothing will be able to separate him from Olesya. Only the bitter and tragic war was an obstacle to the love of young people: “Then they embraced. He kissed her hands and face. And she is. Then everything happened, as in a fairy tale” (*Dovzhenko, 1990: 102*).

4. Conclusions

Having analyzed all of the above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The tragic image of Ukraine, which is through and through, is dominant not only in the film story “Ukraine on fire”, but also in all of O. Dovzhenko's work. Its appearance was due to the observation of the war by Oleksandr Petrovych himself, who passionately wanted to go to the front and see this tragedy with his own eyes.

In particular, the film story “Ukraine in fire” is a model of his image, a masterful embodiment of such an image by the writer. In the work, he realizes himself through the following symbols, characters, visual and expressive means, which personify the horror of the war and the trials and suffering it brought to Ukraine:

- epithets: “destitute”, “mutilated”, “raped”, “eternal widow”;
- lyrical digressions of the author himself: “O Ukrainian land, how you have covered yourself!...”;
- a satirical depiction of Ukrainians who do not have their own philosophy and were in eternal slavery, unable to create a heroic story;
- the song as a symbol of the continuity of the existence of the Ukrainian people and its glorious history;
- female images of Olesya Zaporizhia and Khrysta Khutornaya, who are the personification of indomitability and wisdom of the mothers of the Ukrainian people;
- male images of Lavrin Zaporozhets and Vasyl Kravchyna, as an image of the resilience of Ukrainians, a manifestation of extraordinary courage and heroism.

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