UNPUBLISHED POETIC HERITAGE OF HALYNA HORDASEVYCH AS THE PERSONALITY SELF-PROTECTION IN TOTALITARIAN EPOCH

R. Dubrovsky
Kremenets Pedagogical College of T.G. Shevchenko of the Kremenets Regional Humanitarian Pedagogical Institute, Ukraine
dracroma2008@ukr.net

Abstract: The author focuses attention on the contextual and stylistic features of unpublished poems of Halyna Hordasevych written within the period of 1960-1970 years of the 20th century. These poems are compared with the poems published by the poetess within the same period in Kyiv and Moscow. On the basis of the analysis of the biographic material the interrelation of the poetess’s destiny and the specificity of totalitarian system reflection in her verses have been analyzed. The author shows the peculiarities of relations of the authors and authorities, describes current behavioral models of the creative intellectuals in the totalitarian epoch allowing artists and poets to physically survive being persecuted by the official authorities. The phenomenon of “hidden” creativity as the tool of spiritual preservation of creative personality has been analyzed. The analysis of the specificity of folklore elements inclusion to the poetic texts of the poetess has been performed.

Keywords: foreign language, Halyna Hordasevych, literature, Ukrainian literature, poem, totalitarian epoch.

Introduction
Democratization and liberalization phenomena which penetrated into all spheres of cultural life of the Soviet Union after Mykyta Khruschov had come to power were ambiguous and contradictory that time and may be exemplified by persecutions of so-called “abstractionists” and “formalists”. New political regime inherited the “whip and cake” methodology from the previous one. The “whip” was applied to those who didn’t want to act according to the ruling party’s ideology. The “dark side” of the regime resulted in new wave of accusations and repressions of creative intellectuals growing into new cultural generation. It was that period when poetic talent of Halyna Hordasevych was developed. The purpose of the article is to determine the specificity of influence the political system made on the poetess. The methodology of the research includes analysis of the unpublished poems Halyna Hordasevych written within 1965-1972 years and their comparison with the poems issued during the same period. The research is methodologically based on the works of M.Zhulyns’ky, R.Gromiaka, L.Masenko. D.Drozdovs’ky, M.Jacubovs’ka, V.Kharkhun and others. The poems Halyna Hordasevych wrote during the investigated period were also considered by Y.Moskvych and I.Yaroshevych.

Results
Soviet political regime from the moment it was established in the country and till it was completely destroyed forced the aware writers to look for the ways to protect themselves and their opinion. These two notions were on the opposite sides. Those who didn’t spare themselves and considered search for the Truth and Fairness to be the priority were imprisoned, repatriated or liquidated. Those who were ready to compromise with their conscience were awarded and promoted to higher positions. The other options were to emigrate, to keep creative silence, to write in “Aesopian language” implicitly covering deep meaning and to write “into the drawer” hoping for the possibility to overcome the regime and to come out of the shadow with the works written “hot” sometime ago. Such diversity of the writers behavior is also emphasized by Maria Yakubovs’ka: “The System fought the writers with the help of both whip and cake. Some were tampered with material benefits, the others were passed by in silence, the thirds were deprived of the ways to living. Some were looking for the compromise with system (Ivan Drach, Vitaliy Korotyck), the others were keeping silence for long (Lina Kostenko), the thirds accepted authorities’ persecution with dignity (Yakubovs’ka, 2005, p. 34)”.

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Halyna Hordevych chose her own way. She never spoke positively either about party itself, or its achievements on its way to built communism. She was often reproached for using the word “Ukraine” and never the word “Ukrainian Soviet Socialistic Republic” or “UkSSR” She tended to fill her poems with native folk motives, approaching them to folklore forms, covering with pallet of symbols and metaphors often interpreted as “nationalism” and not otherwise. Having being imprisoned for over two and a half years “for creation of the nationalistic poems and anti-Soviet agitation of students” she was hardly to like Soviet authorities and totalitarian system. At the same time this changed neither her inclination for the poetry, nor uncompromising desire to write only truth and not its “Soviet version for the general labor public” and taught her to be careful in her unequal struggle with the System. Thus, it is naturally the Donets’k period of poetess oeuvre is represented by two parallel creative flows. The first one comprises “drawer” poems that simply must have been written by the woman with acute feeling of fairness at the time when the notions of fairness and justice were changed into the notion of “ideological correctness” serving to unclear internationalism ideals. They were not and objectively couldn’t be published under political conditions of that time. The second flow consists of the poems having similar implicit ideological ground but being formally stylized according to the standards samples written in accordance with all standards of social-realistic discourse. Dmytro Drozdov’s’ky in his book “The Code of the Future” emphasizes that: “Similar formula could appear not only in totalitarian state but in multinational totalitarian state that put the thought and creative energy in irons. At the same time it taught experienced and exquisite mind to palter, to play according to the absurd rules of the game, to simulate social-realistic content and national form with good-hearted naivety (Drozdov’s’ky, 2006, p. 121)”.

In 1956 Bogdan and Mykhailo Goryn were arrested. At that time the first issue by Halyna Hordasevych titled “Majeure Gamma” was prohibited to publish because the critics saw implicit nationalistic content in it. The other writers were also persecuted. 1973 was the year when the writers were especially badgered. Thus, according to the confidential information of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine signed by V. Scherbyts’ky on 23rd of April 1973 it was clearly emphasized that “In the course of Dobosh’s case investigation and for performing anti-soviet activity there were arrested Svetlichny, Dzuba, Sverstiuk, Antoniuk, Selezenko, Shumuk, Sergienko, Plakhotniuk, Stus, Svetlichnaya N., Plusch, Kholedny, Chornovol. Osadchyi, Gel’, Kalynets I., and Shabatura S. About thousand nationalistic and other hostile documents were confiscated from the arrested persons including “The Program of Ukrainian National Communist Party” proving the necessity to create illegal party to unite anti-Soviet powers for fighting for “independent” Ukraine (Masenko, 2005, p. 270-271)”. Thus, those prisoners were the people being shown example for Halyna Hordasevych both in her creative work and life.

It is difficult to research poetic oeuvre of Halyna Hordasevych due to the absence of the dates of her poems. However, the majority of unpublished poems are dated that makes it possible to correlate their content with some biographic facts influencing it.

The poem “The days of ups and downs all have gone…” is undated without even indication of the year. But it belongs to the poems written between 1963 and 1973. The presence of significant number of verbs in imperative mood makes it possible to suppose that the poem was written at the beginning of the 70-ies because such specificity of the poetess’ idiolect is observed in this period. The specific feature of the analyzed poem is statement of the thought about misery of everything in the world except for the gifts given only by God. This is personification of the supreme power influencing only those who live righteous life not disavowing high spiritual ideals. God in this poem is purely mental symbol of power and fairness. There are no epithets for God. Instead, the dynamic picture of His activity oriented towards the human being is formed with the help of the verbs: “Be grateful for each day that God presents to you”, “Just open window in the night and God will put the best star into your hand (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 1)”.

Thus, God gives the day and brings the star to the hands. In this case Halyna Hordasevych leaves traditional cosmism and relates astronomic phenomena to the transcendent power activity. Compare that quite different tendency is observed in verlibrum “Dress rehearsal” published in the issue “The Print of the Morning Star”. While the author shows grotesque picture of how everything in the world occurs in opposite chronological order, the time and space are modeled according to the logical, physical and biological phenomena. The attention in the poem is focused not on the transcendent cause of the phenomena but on the phenomena themselves. And their supernatural cause is unclear at the beginning being verbalized by indefinite pronoun “somebody” written, of course, from the small letter: “Everything occurred as usual/ and
suddenly / abruptly/ quite unexpectedly/ somebody launched the Universe to move in opposite direction (Hordasevych, 1986, p. 27)”. The poetess further shows options for somebody or something that may be the power, control the time flow and decodes the notion of “somebody”: “And somebody, being Bible god / or world mind of the philosophers / or simply sound mind / said : Attention! / Everything that had been before / was only the rehearsal (Hordasevych, 1986, p. 27)”. God (this word in the text is written from the small letter due to the understood reasons) is conferred to the same status as the best world minds and even to the mind of ordinary human being. The epithet “bible” limits the meaning emphasizing that the attributed belongs not to the whole mankind but to the Bible book and those adepts of the religious doctrine. This association is directed to the book because the attribute “Christian” wasn’t used. The action itself performed by him is not supernatural. This means that this is not about some anthropomorphism in God’s description as His image is revealed to the reader not through the action but through the personified action being the communication with the help of human language tools. Thus, God in “drawer” poems differs from God in the poems published during the Soviet period. Should in the first case God be supersensory, universal and omnipotent, in other case God is anthropomorphic and personified, sensual and ordinary.

In the poem “The days of ups and downs all have gone…” also revealing invectiveness sounds being related to the dissatisfaction with the power. Moreover the essence of power is described as the general notion and images of certain people. Thus, the parallel constructions “What’s power?” and “What’s glory?” are used. However, if the glory is considered primarily as the notion (“What’s glory? It’s envy hidden under smile! (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 2)”, the notion of power is explained through the personified images with explicitly negative connotation “What’s power? It’s the crowds of dumb good-for-nothings (Hordasevych, Unpublished poems)”. In this case Halyna Hordasevych diverges from her standard method of involving the reader into the artistic reality and clearly answers the question herself immediately with rhetoric pathos. Due to the political reality of the totalitarian regime the reader may even be afraid to think deeply and answer similar questions.

The poem “If you want you may believe” was written on the 8th of July 1963 during short visit to Moscow. The lyric character is the woman of strong nature who holds chosen position notwithstanding whole system being against her. Here one of the leading formal features of the author’s poetry appears being presentation of the active human being through the direct speech: “They said: – Why are you / Cold like a fish? / Just put your shoes on / and dance gopak/ Come on and don’t mince! / What an arrogant girl! (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 3)”. Grotesque picture is created due to the directed usage of the hyperbola: “They took my skin away / and dressed it / and sewed the shoes / heeled shoes (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 3). The expressive effect is increased with epanaphora facilitating the gradation. In such way the description of the tortures the lyric heroine suffered from is gradually extended along with simultaneous increase in emotional stress. The image of Ukrainian national dance gopak was not used randomly because it emphasizes the reasons for the lyric heroine to be hated including her ethnic origin and dedication to the traditions of her motherland. The images of the torturers are faceless and plural emphasized with the predicate verbs (“took away”, “dressed”, “sewed”, “said”). This emphasizes depersonalization of those serving the System and their number. God again appears in the analyzed poem being supreme over any human organization. That is why the lyric heroine hopes to win.

Three temporal dimensions being past, present and future are observed in the poem. The first one is everything the lyric heroine tells about. The second dimension is the moment of her tale where the direct link to the recipient is established (appeal “If you want you may believe” (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 3). The third one is the conclusion of the poem being formally marked with three dots before the line. (This method is often used by the poetess in her later works). Here the description is turned into the declaration of actions, some moral imperative of the lyric heroine: “… So. OK. I will dance. / If it’s God’s will it won’t be the last dance (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 3)”. Thus, in these short poetic lines of the poem whole life of the authoress is concentrated including her sufferings in the prisons, current state when the possibility to freely speak arose for the first time and the desire not to resign to the totalitarian system in future under no circumstances.

Artistic continuation of this theme is the poem “For me “the cult” is not abstract notion…”. The poem was written in 1964 i.e. in 3 years after XXII assembly of the Communist Party of Soviet Union where the cult of Stalin’s personality was finally destroyed and his body was taken from the mausoleum and buried near the Kremlin wall. It is poetic confession about the life spent in prisons, in particular for writing poems considered nationalistic by the investigators. Thinking over meaning of “cult” the lyric heroine uses specific
life examples: “It’s youth I spent behind the grates. / It’s not a nothing-to-do small talk, / That’s not late sorrows and sighs, / That’s my poems before the investigator’s eyes / About the first spring and the first love (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 4)”. The poem is full of autobiographic facts consonant with the facts provided by the poetess in her autobiographic narrative (being novel according to the author’s definition) “Solo for the girl’s voice” and essay “From the family album”. The major method of poetic syntax facilitating the most complete uncover of the theme is antithesis. In fact, the life in prison is opposed to the free life. Such antithesis may be found in the lines provided above (abstract notion, old legend, meaningless talks, late sorrows and sighs on one hand and youth spent imprisoned, poems about the first spring and first love on the other hand). Let us give another example of antithesis: “This is possibly unimportant / and it will not influence history / but when the girls fell in love for the first time / and when the boys started smiling to them / I was working with concrete in prison / I unloaded ships full of cement / I was late to acquaint with kapron stockings / and even later I studied make-up (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 4)”. These phrases relate to fact from the biography of Halyna Hordasevych when in 1954 she was imprisoned in Kuibyshev (currently Samara) where she unloaded barges full of cement that came there downstream Volga. Thus, lyric heroine is in her way grateful to the destiny for allowing her to gain an insight into all totalitarian horrors and consequently opened her eyes and revealed the truth that couldn’t have occurred under other circumstances.

The idea of the poem is expressed in one aphoristic line: “The most horrible betray is to betray yourself (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 4)”. At the level of content some lines of the poem are consonant with the poem “Destiny” written by Lina Kostenko. Compare: “If only fairy came to me / being able to make dreams come true / I wouldn’t ask her / to take my full of worries life/ I wouldn’t choose another life/ another days or another waves/ I left all my days in the past / but my heart is all covered with the scars (Hordasevych, Unpublished poems)”. “And I accepted it as the law / and the miracle happened / the night passed and the dream was gone / The Destiny only remained. / I chose my Destiny myself / whatever happens to me – / There is nothing for me to complain / against my chosen Destiny (Kostenko, 1990, p. 35)”.

The poem “The bird was said: it’s enough for you to fly!...” written on the 23rd of January 1965 is also autobiographic. Here Halyna Hordasevych uses fairy-tale plot with the bird in the center. This is light allusion under which the events from the authoress life are easily seen. For example, “The bird was said: it is enough for you to fly! Ten years it’s been imprisoned away from the sky” (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 5)”. The poetess often used bestiary images but they are almost never associionims aimed at correlation with the authoress. Thus, approximately at the same time such poems as “The Tale of the Bird” and “Another Tale about the Fire-Bird” included into the issue “Rainbows on the Pavements” were written. These three poems are united with their plots developed partly due to the situation shown from aside being made alive through the direct speech of its participants.

But nevertheless first two images are practically self-identical and the symbolic image of the bird in the cage from the unpublished poem is similar to the authoress and her destiny.

Political regime is called the “weather” “The years passed. The weather changed. / The birds in cages are not fashion (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 5)”. The poetess also ironically mentions that pathos of releasing unreasonably imprisoned people during the period known as “Khrushov’s thaw” hinting that sharp changes in rhetoric is only a mirage: “Sing the songs, and make nests of rue / Just coordinate with us your routes (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 5)”. In spite of the “drawer” poems described above, the poem “The bird was said: it is enough for you to fly!” has no optimistic ending related to the hopes for the future. It is probably because the poem was written in 1965 when political regime again became strict and antidemocratic. The poem ends with such words: “Oh, my destiny why you are late to open the door / I can’t fly just because my wings have shrunk at all” (Hordasevych, Unpublished poems)”. However, these are not the words of despair or spiritual weakness, they just show the understanding of the fact that the best young years were spent in prison and they are impossible to return.

Blaming rhetoric addressed to the Soviet power and “old communists” reaches its apogee in the poem “We are said to be offended...” written in 1966. The poem may be structurally divided into three parts. The first one contains thesis of blaming lyrical heroine and her comrades, the second one is refutation of this thesis with counterarguments and the third one is the conclusion. At the very beginning of the poem the “we — they” opposition is visible: “We are said to be offended / We are said to be disillusioned (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 6)”. But “their” image is still distant and uncertain, felt only by the verbal anaphora indicating 3rd person’s “they”. In the second part this image becomes clearer and more personified and expressed: “So,
let it be! Let’s square our accounts / Our iron-made communists” (Hordasevych, Unpublished poems)”. In the third part this image is completely destroyed visualizing irony of the epithet “iron-made”. The first and the third parts are written with maximal pathos that may be divided by poles into pathos and antipathos. Thus the words addressed to the lyrical heroine and her friends sound like accusations: “That forgotten red-Soviet words / Communism and world revolt! / Our hair isn’t burnt / By our poor and scanty thoughts” (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 6)”. The final part consists of only four lines opposed (after important arguments in the second part) to this pathos: “For this not to return again / For us not to stumble like you / We don’t take anyone’s words anymore / and we don’t believe in Moscow’s truth” (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 6)”.

First of all, those “iron-made communists” are accused who consider themselves authorized to blame the youths with not-Sloving Moscow. The poetess accuses them in committing bloody murder of their brothers “Those deadly bullets/ either from Ruhr or Ural / Neither Stalin, nor Beria / but you yourselves shot your brothers to death” (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 6)” The heretic communists shall also bear responsibility for Stalin’s coming to power, and Stalin’s image is hidden with allusion of “the god dressed in overcoat”: “They destroyed tsar’s crown / and threw the icons away / and themselves without churches and throne / created overcoat-dressed god to pray” (Hordasevych, c.2012, para. 6)”. Thus, the poem “We are said to be offended” is a good example of political satiric poem and the poetesses’ answer to critical accusations in not using approved terminology and Soviet axiomatic postulates in her works.

Discussion

The situation in the cultural life occurring after Stalin’s death and XX assembly of Communist Party of Soviet Union allowed different consideration of social situation. Halyna Hordasevych was one of those people who survived in prisons and labor camps but didn’t reject her values and spiritual imperatives. Despite the renunciation of the personality cult, the social situation remained far from the democratic reconstruction of total state hierarchy. Any healthy criticism was strictly persecuted. That period was especially difficult for the authors who didn’t want to compromise themselves and fairness. Thus, some of them stopped writing for long, the others becoming physically free from the totalitarian chains continued to do this in exile. Despite the risk, Halyna Hordasevych created not only lyrical poems that were published but also social lyrics passed through her heart and being characterized with the life truth carved in lyrics about cruel essence of totalitarian system. It is this part of her creative heritage that is one of the most valuable and requires further scientific research. This matter also becomes extremely important because unpublished poems of the authoress constitute just small part of her “drawer” poetic oeuvre. Significant part of her oeuvre has never been published and is preserved in family library of Bogdan Hordasevych, the son of the poetess in L’viv. Their analysis may be useful and stand in good stead for the research of relation of the author and totalitarian system.

References