

**Aspects of Contemporary Ukrainian Folklore Studies  
in the Content of Folklore Philologists at Classical Universities in Ukraine**

The article presents the analysis of main traditional and innovative aspects of modern Ukrainian folkloristic studies in the context of folkloristic training of folklore philologists at the leading universities in Ukraine. It identifies the most distinguished achievements at the investigation of folklore tradition at Ukrainian university and academic folklore centers in connection with modernization processes in education. It is highlighted that it is important to update the content of philological training at the majority of classical and pedagogical higher educational establishments according to global tendencies of folklore studies development.

**Keywords:** folklore studies, aspects of folklore studies, classical university, folklore philologist.

**I. Introduction.** Positive tendencies in higher education modernization, that occur during the last decades because of the eurointegration processes and the possibility of intensive exchange of scientific information at international level, are the update of training content at classical universities, the increase of intersubjective interaction, the focus of attention on the importance of acmeological, axiological, cultural approaches in university education, in particular, at classical higher educational establishments. These processes also describe the dynamics of training folklore philologists at the universities of Ukraine, including its folklore component. This aspect is connected primarily with the expansion of scientific horizons of folklore studies as scientific philological field and with the accumulation of cultural and scientific experience in analysis of folkloristic subject (folklore) in the context of different research areas (anthropology, linguistics, literary studies, philosophy, cultural studies,

psychology, etc.). Certainly this factor directly affects the content of folkloristic subjects, the process of innovative authorial special courses creation. Unfortunately, this tendency is peculiar to folklore philologists training system in very few classical universities like Kyiv and Lviv National Universities, Cherkasy National University named after Bohdan Khmelnytsky.

**II. Task setting.** The problem of the formation of folklore studies as scientific educational field in Ukraine was studied fragmentarily by practicing folklorists (S. Rosovetskyy, J. Rusnak, N. Shumada, M. Dmitrenko, J. Harasym, N. Danyluk et al.). However, with the modernization processes in scientific field it became necessary to summarize the problem in pedagogical context, especially to outline the range of folkloristic research aspects in the content of folklore philologists training. Taking into account the topicality of the problem this article aims at the description of the main traditional and innovative aspects of contemporary Ukrainian folklore in the context of folklore philologists training at classical universities in Ukraine.

**III. Results.** Contemporary Ukrainian folklorists (professors in particular) emphasize the problem of defining folklore studies subject, which still remains undefined. O. Kyrychenko, in particular, underlines the distinguishing of two traditions in “folklore” notion explanation. The first one – “universal” – states that “folklore is to be understood as including not only the phenomena of spiritual culture of the people (oral literature, music, dance, painting), but also the totality of material culture forms (folk architecture, weaving, pottery, needlework, crafts, etc.). In this case the subject of folklore studies is the sum of all the displays of folk every-day life, religious outlook, customs, behavior (the tradition appeared at the beginning of the nineteenth century). The proponents of the second tradition on the contrary radically narrow the understanding of the notion "folklore" only to the phenomena of spiritual culture, mainly oral poetic art [4, p. 18].

Professor of Kiev National University S. Rosovetskyy also believes that "folklorists actually split into two camps according to this point: the first ones accept wide (universal) understanding of folklore, others stick to the narrow

definition (the one of literary studies)" [8, p. 12]. It is also crucial that teacher scientist with a worldwide reputation S. Rosovetskyy substantiates the opinion that folklore clearly cannot be attributed to art, as some of its pieces do not perform distinct aesthetic function, characteristic of other types of art. He rightly believes that "it is impossible to narrow the understanding of folklore to only "oral literature" because of obvious synthetical character of the form of its real existence - in the sounds of speech and music, facial expressions and gestures of performers and participants of the ritual, their costumes, "props" and "scene decorations" (including natural landscape) that rouse different visual impressions of the participants of the work or ritual performance, and its more passive observers" [8, p. 14].

During the formation of folklore studies as scientific field the definitions of folklore developed, which is reflected in the views of prominent folklorists who collected oral poetic texts, were interested in their nature, poetry, themes, that resulting in a unique works, published collections that are source fund of traditional cultural heritage. Slavic folklore researchers used to denote folklore through the concept of "starozhynist" ("antiquity") (M. Tsertelev), "oral folk art" (F. Buslaev), "folk literature" (O. Veselovskii, O. Potebnya), "folk poetry" (I. Franko), "oral literature" (F. Kolessa), "an oral form of literature" (M. Hrushevskii). In the Soviet period the concept of "soviet folklore" was introduced, which meant deliberate creation of folk poetic samples depicting contemporary themes ("leaders", progress toward communism, etc.), as well as research of traditional culture samples through the prism of Marxist-Leninist ideology and pseudo-methodology.

The respected Slavic folklore scholar N. Shumada believes that "now folklore gains the importance of timeless values as the way to meet the aesthetic needs, as the source and special kind of knowledge of folk psychology, ethics and aesthetics, and hence self-cognition, aimed at deep roots of our and world art history" [13, p. 295].

Thus in spite of certain complexity in folklore definition formulation we are to state that this phenomenon of traditional culture, of spiritual expression of ethnicity, which reflects folk model of outlook, ethnic creative potential, ethnic mental characteristics, aesthetic stereotypes, speech culture and which due to its syncretic nature became the basis for different kinds of art development and formation of folklore studies as scientific and academic field.

Official definition of folklore was registered at the initiative of UNESCO (1989) in the “Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore”, adopted by XXV General Conference:

Folklore (or traditional and popular culture) is the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognized as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms are, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts [7]. It outlines key features, and moreover, stresses social communicational meaning that promotes the study of this phenomenon in integration aspect, through the prism of an interdisciplinary approach that expands the scientific horizons of folklore studies.

Folkloristic literature contains several more coherent definitions of folklore studies as:

- «the science of folk creativity», which has a wide range of objectives, such as "the definition of specific oral poetic folk art, the study of characteristics of its development at various stages of history and the reflection of historical reality in it, the ratio of personal and communal, ideological content and artistic identity, its relationship with fiction literature and other art forms, the peculiarities of different genres, etc." [1, p. 6];

- "the category of creative and cultural autonomy is the key notional concept that forms the basis of folklore scientific traditions. This tradition is represented by

folkloristics, philological science that studies the internal laws of oral poetic folk art existence" [4, p. 17];

- "the science that studies the regularities and peculiarities of development, character and nature, essence and themes of folklore, its specifics, commonality with other art forms. The main objectives of folklore studies is the investigation of folklore general theoretical issues of folklore, its history, development stages of the folklore science, regularities and dynamics of poetics development, genres and forms of artistic reproduction of reality, the genesis of creative thinking, idea and artistic structure of mythological thinking in traditional culture, ritual context of folk genre study, folklore of a certain stage of literary process or individual writers activity" [9, p. 12];

- "the science that studies the regularities and peculiarities of folklore development, essence, themes of poetic folk creativity, its specificity and common with other art types features, peculiarities of existence and functioning of oral literature texts at different stages of development; genre system and poetics" [5, p. 19].

Some above listed definitions describe folklore as verbal, oral poetic art that causes some controversies, which are analyzed above by respected folklorists and with whose opinion we agree. However, taking into consideration the range of objectives that folklore covers, we venture to formulate our own definition.

**Folklore studies** is a philological science which studies folklore as syncretic cultural phenomenon in its genre and types diversity, regional and non-indigenous dimension, stages and factors the folklore works emergence, defines the methodological tools of their analysis, examines the role of well- and little-known personalities in the study of folk tradition, is engaged in archiving folklore texts and creation of bibliographic specialized works.

Contemporary Slavonic folklore studies produced a number of theories, concepts, hypotheses, arising from centuries' experience of its formation and which allows exploring folklore in the context of many areas. Folklore tradition became the object of analysis through the prism of sociocultural, functional,

contextual aspects (which, in fact, is fixed in the official definitions of folklore of 1989): K. Chistov, S. Nekludov, B. Putilov (Russia), V. Krawczyk-Wasilewska (Poland) and others. These aspects have representatives in the Ukrainian academic and university folkloristic centers as well (S. Rosovetskii, O. Ivanovska, S. Gyitsa, O. Kychenko et al.).

Depending on specific tasks resolving within the structure of folklore studies and folkloristic training at classical universities there are singled out several aspects that are closely interrelated:

1. **Theory of folklore** studies the nature of folklore as a specific syncretic phenomenon of folk culture, art thinking of the people; typology of folk forms that allows identifying universal, national, local and regional features of folklore ways of existence, preservation and oral transmission of folklore texts in the timespace [9, c. 12-13].

2. **Theory folklore studies** defines methodological principles of research, analysis, interpretation of folklore texts in the context of the existing folkloristic schools (mythological, cultural historical, psychological, anthropological, sociological, structuralist etc.).

3. **History of folklore** is engaged in the creation of general history of oral folklore, the research of poetics of verbal, musical and plastic folklore; reconstruction of archaic layers of folklore (paleofolklore); the study of folklore as a system in its genre and kinds diversity; the development of certain branches of folklore studies as philology (demonology, paremiology etc.); the interpretation of modern folk forms; the research on the folklore relationship on genre, intergenre, imaginative, stylistic and other levels; the defining of folklore in the context of ethnic cultural landscape (in historical, ethnographic, cultural and natural geographical environment) [9, p. 13].

4. **History folklore studies** is the field aimed at the study of the process of establishment of folklore studies as a science, examination of the nature of different stages of formation of categorial system of the science, defining of

contribution of folklorists, ethnographers, ethnologists, anthropologists, linguists to the development of folkloristic area.

5. **Folklore text criticism** explores specific folklore texts (variants editions, versions, invariants, hypertexts, etc.), connection of verbal texts with music, dramatic play, voice tone, gestures, facial expression, develops special techniques and rules of textual examination and general scientific recording of folklore texts on the paper, audio and video media [9, p. 13].

6. **Source criticism (according to S. Rosovetskii) (another term is classification and systematization of folklore)** is the design of different classifications (for example, discrimination between ritual and non-ritual folklore, kinds, genres, types etc.) and systematization of plots and other elements of poetics; creation of genre, chronological, topical, regional and other folklore indicators; design of principles of formal folklore systematization with the use of computers [9, c. 13].

7. **Bibliography** of folklore and folklore studies informs the researchers of folklore, teaching staff, students, cultural and educational experts and others interested in folk verbiage about everything printed about it in various publications [10, p. 396].; creates the bibliography of folklore works, the register of scientific publications (monographs, articles, essays, theses) dedicated to folklore studies that focus on corresponding issues of its study. The most famous generalizing work of bibliographical type in folkloristic field is the index by M. Moroz (Bibliography of Ukrainian Ethnology: In 3 Volumes - Vol 1: Folkloristic. - Book 1, 2 / Coll. and comp. by M. Moroz. - Lviv, 1999 ). The first compiler of summary index of folklore studies is considered to be B. Hrinchenko (Ukrainian folklore Literature. 1777 – 1900. Experience of bibliographic index.– Chernigov, 1901.).

Today can there be traced a unique tendency – new research areas emerge at the border of folklore studies and other particular sciences, among them lingvofolkloristics that appeared due to the connection of folklore studies, stylistics and linguistics, folklore and musicology interacting produced ethnomusicology, at

the at the verge of folklore and psychology emerged folk therapy (through different kinds of art – music therapy, choreotherapy of folk dance, tale therapy).

**Lingvofolkloristics** is a philological science introduced in the middle of XX century. Its subject matter is folklore language as a source of creation and development of literary language. Theoretical methodological grounds of lingvofolkloristics were elaborated in the area of Slavonic studies (works of A. Yevgenieva, O. Khrolenko, S. Nikitina et. al.). The origin of this science should be searched for in the works of O. Potebnia, P. Zhytetskii, F. Buslaiev, O. Veselovskii and others. Wide range of lingvofolkloristic studies is represented in Russian studies, it is especially dictionaries, handbooks in phraseology of Russian folk song for students (O. Khrolenko, S. Nikitina), development of contemporary notion system (Ye. Artemenko, I. Klymas). Folklore language became the subject matter of different eastern-europeanslavists: Ye. Bartminskii and Ye. Sierotsiuk (Polish linguistics), O. Zilynskii (Czech), P. Brozovych (Serbian), Kh. Shchrobak (Bulgarian), L. Kuzmich, A. Maliuk (Belarus) etc. Scientists consider the formality of folklore texts, their expressive means, connection with dialects and literary language [2, p. 6]. Ukrainian lingvofolkloristic tradition, introduced by I. Sreznevskii, P. Zhytetskii, M. Kostomarov, O. Potebnia, M. Sumtsov et al. In the second half of the twentieth century it was represented by such names as L. Rak, O. Nazaruk, P. Myshurenko, R. Voloshchuk, K. Shulzhuk, S. Yermolenko, V. Chabanenko, T. Vorobiova, N. Zhuravliova, S. Sawitskii, G. Sahach and many others. However, no separate lingvofolkloristic school is formed, no data bank of folk texts is created, there is no systematic activity on compilation of dictionaries of oral literature, although Ukrainian scientists also have significant number of works in this area [2, p. 6].

**Ukrainian musical folkloristics (ethnomusicology)** is the aspect of the study, interpretation and performance of folk songs, which "due to the names of M. Lysenko, S. Lyudkevych, O. Rozdolskii, F. Kolessa, H. Khotkevych, K. Kvitky, S. Gritsa, V. Hoshovskii, I. Matsiievskii, A. Ivanitskii and many other prominent Ukrainian ethnomusicologists gained great prestige and recognition not



only in Ukraine, but also in Europe and the world in succession" [12, p. 213]. Today, despite existing range of problems in this area, there are progressive tendencies in the development of ethnic musicology studies, some positive changes in educational sphere. Thus in 2009 at the Institute of Art, Folklore and Ethnology Studies named after M. T. Rylskii of National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine there was organized a department of musicology (S. Gritsa, A. Ivanitskii, M. Khai, N. Filatova, L. Yefremova, O. Vovk, V. Atamanchuk et al.); during the last two decades there were opened specialized departments at the National Music Academy of Ukraine named after P. Tchaikovskii, Lviv Music Academy named after M. Lysenko, Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts, Rivne State Humanitarian University and others. Radical changes in ethnic musicology studies are indicated by the fact that for the first time during the existence of the International Council for Traditional Music (since 1947, London) in 2007 at the 39th World Conference of ethnomusicologists a group of Ukrainian of this field were introduced (including lecturers I. Dovgalyuk, I. Fedun (Lviv), Ju. Rybak (Rivne) and others) [6]. Respected scientist in the field M. Khai believes that Ukrainian ethnomusicology should be unified according to the following methodological areas: structural and typological research method for rhythmic, poetics and rhyming of song verse study (F. Kolessa, K. Kvitka et al.); paradigmatics and hermeneutics of musical folklore phenomena (S. Gritsa); ethnographic study of folk instrumental musicology (I. Matsiievskii); history of traditional musical culture and its study and the research of musical folkloristics (A. Ivanitskii); study of kobzars (S. Gritsa, V. Kushpet, K. Cheremskii et al.) [12, p. 213]

**Folklore therapy** is "the method of preventive therapy, which is expressed through creative reproduction of forms of cultural phylogenetic experience, that is, ways of personality problem solving fixed in folklore formulas" [3, p. 25]. Methodological basis of this scientific field is developed by Russian scholars. M. Zykova, in particular, arguing phenomenology of folklore, identifying specific features of folklore, which allow to define it as an effective method of

psychotherapy (setting contact between a client and a therapist, tension ease, cognitive training based on psychological information kept by client, change of behavior as a result of a positive emotional experience, gaining of new social skills, behavior norms consolidation etc.) notes that in the basis of this method lies the definition of folklore as "metaphor of life that most comprehensively reflects its (life's) connections, relationships, regularities" [3, p. 25].

In Ukrainian and Russian scientific space folklore therapy is developed in several aspects. Its theoretical approaches and effective mechanisms of influence a person are substantiated in the context of aesthetic therapy through art. Future teachers are to be ready to use leading means of aesthetic therapy (which currently have an independent status of psychotherapeutic sciences) in their professional activities, among which there are:

- *folk music therapy* is a psychotherapy means, which is based on stylistically poetic features of folk song, the ability to cause real aesthetic feelings, aesthetic pleasure, peculiarities of retroactivity to folk music, which lies in a kind of catharsis impact. Psychotherapeutic effect of ethnic music is noted by folklore reseachers (O. Potebnya, F. Kolessa, M. Lysenko, S. Gritsa et al.), and dominant aspects of its impact on the individual was studied (and is being studied!) native teachers, psychologists (M. Klepar, O. Otych et al.).

- *folk dance choreotherapy* is dance folklore therapy (V. Verhovinets, L. Nazarova), obviously, its origin is connected with ritual activities and simultaneous folk songs performance, instrumental accompaniment during certain family, calendar events, Cossack rituals, etc.;

- *tale therapy* is the oldest classic psychological pedagogical method of the influence, the effectiveness of which is caused by the fact that the tale, one of a few tools that allows you to unite an adult and a child, it is a means of socialization of a child, has a preventive function (healthy lifestyle cultivation), etc. [11, p. 319]. There is Institute of Tale Therapy in Russia (St. Petersburg, T. Zynkevych-Yevstihnieieva), in Ukraine this scientific field is covered mainly in the pages of a

few books and periodicals dedicated to the issues of preschool education (O. Breusenko-Kuznietsov, L. Fesiukova, O. Fedii et al.).

**IV. Conclusions.** Thus, at the leading classical universities, in higher education generally there is observed content update intensification of folklore philologists training, in connection with the development of the traditional areas of folklore studies (folklore history, history of folklore studies, theory folklore, theory of folklore studies) and intensification of innovational, interdisciplinary branches of folk tradition analysis in the last decades (lingvofolkloristics, textual criticism, source criticism, folklore therapy). As the result, there is formed professional scientific culture of prospective experts, their sustained methodological tool of folk tradition research through the prism of a wide range of scientific fields that are developing in European and world folklore environment as well. However, needs to be noted that this experience has local character within a few classical universities. Therefore, the problem of introduction of folklore research areas in philological training requires further analysis considering content update of the relevant courses and special courses folklore curriculum due to the need to strengthen of folklore training at pedagogical universities, the majority of classical universities.

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