

S.A. Brizhitskaya
Shevchenko National Reserve,
Kanev, Ukraine
E-mail: svkaniv@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-9683-5947

LESYA UKRAINKA AND HER RUSHNYKS IN «TARASOV GORNITSA»

Abstract. The article is devoted to the first and only visit to the grave of the Ukrainian writer and artist, academician of engraving of the St. Petersburg Imperial Academy of Arts Taras Shevchenko in Kanev in 1891, then still a young, and later outstanding Ukrainian poetess, writer Lesya Ukrainka. The story of the *rushnyk* – an embroidered towel typically made from linen and used for ceremonial purposes – made in 1889 by Lesya Ukrainkaya and Margarita Komarova, brought and presented by M. Komarova to the first Shevchenko Museum «Tarasov Gornitsa», which was built near the poet's grave in 1884, is revealed. The history of its exhibition in the museum, its disappearance and return in 2010 has been studied. Special attention is paid to the ornament of the towel, its color scheme, semiotics and semantics. The embroidered lines from Taras Shevchenko's poems are also indicated. The history of replenishment of the stock collection of the reserve with two copies of the above-mentioned towel by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova, which were embroidered by two Ukrainian masters – Galina Bondarenko (Kanev) in 1989 and Tamila Yaremenko (Zhytomyr region) in 2009, and which were exhibited until 2022 in «Tarasov Gornitsa».

Acknowledgments: The study was carried out based on the statutory objectives of the Shevchenko National Reserve and taking into account the priority areas of research work in the Reserve, in particular: research into the history of Tarasov Mountain and research into museum collections.

Keywords: Lesya Ukrainka, Taras Shevchenko, Tarasov gornitsa, rushnyk, ornament, Ilya Repin.

С.А. Брижицкая
Шевченковский национальный заповедник,
Канев, Украина
E-mail: svkaniv@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-9683-5947

Леся Українка і її рушники в «Тарасовій горниці»

Анотація. Стаття посвячена першому і єдиному відвідуванню могили українського письменника і художника, академіка гравюри Петербургської Імператорської Академії мистецтв Тараса Шевченка в Каневі в 1891 році, тоді ще юною, а внаслідок виданої української поетеси, письменниці Лесі Українки. Розкрито історія вишитого в 1889 році Лесею Українкою і Маргаритою Комаровою рушника, привезеного і подареного М. Комаровою в перший музей Шевченка «Тарасову горницю», який був побудований поруч могили поета в 1884 році. Досліджено історія його експонування в музеї, зникнення і повернення в 2010 році. Особливу увагу приділено орнаменту рушника, його кольоровій гаммі, семиотичній і семантичній. Вказано і на вишиті рядки з віршів Тараса Шевченка. Детально вивчено історія поповнення фондів колекції заповідника двома копіями вишитої рушника Лесі Українки і Маргарити Комарової, які були вишиті українськими майстринями Галіною Бондаренко (Канев) в 1989 році і Тамілою Яременко (Житомирщина) в 2009 році. Рушники експонувалися до 2022 року в «Тарасовій горниці». Виявлено порівняльно стійке

развитие одного из самых популярных видов рукоделия в Украине, через которое мастерицами продемонстрировано глубокое почитание личности Т. Шевченко, выдающегося поэта и прекрасного художника.

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Ключевые слова: Леся Украинка, Тарас Шевченко, Тарасова горница, рушник, орнамент, Илья Репин.

С.А. Брижицкая

Шевченко ұлттық қорығы,

Канев, Украина

E-mail: svkaniv@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-9683-5947

Леся Украинка және оның «Тарас горницасындағы» кестеленген сүлгілері

Аңдатпа. Мақала украин жазушысы және суретшісі, Петербург Императорлық Өнер академиясының академигі Тарас Шевченконың Каневтегі қабіріне 1891 жылы барған жас қыз, кейіннен көрнекті украин ақыны, жазушы Леся Украинканың алғашқы әрі жалғыз сапарына арналған. 1889 жылы Леся Украинка мен Маргарита Комарова кестелеген сүлгілердің тарихы ашылды, оны Тарас Шевченко қабірінің жанына 1884 жылы салынған алғашқы мұражай «Тарас горницасына» М. Комарова әкеліп, сыйға тартқан болатын. Оның мұражайға қойылуының, жоғалуының және 2010 жылы қайта табылуының тарихы зерттелді. Кестеленген сүлгілердің өрнектеріне, оның түсі мен схемасына, семиотикасына және семантикасына ерекше назар аударылды. Тарас Шевченконың өлеңдерінен кестеленген сызықтар да көрсетіледі. Мұражайдың қорына қосылған 1989 жылы украиналық қолөнершілер Галина Бондаренко (Канев) және 2009 жылы Тамила Яременко (Житомирщина) кестелеген Леся Украинка мен Маргарита Комарованың жоғарыда аталған сүлгілерінің екі көшірмесімен толықтырылып, оның тарихы егжей-тегжейлі зерттелді. 2022 жылға дейін кестеленген сүлгілер «Тарас горницасының» көрмесіне қойылды. Украинадағы ең танымал қолөнер түрлерінің бірінің салыстырмалы түрде тұрақты дамуы анықталды, ол арқылы қолөнершілер көрнекті ақын және талантты суретші Т. Шевченконың жеке басын терең құрметтейтінін көрсетті.

Алғыс: Зерттеу Шевченко ұлттық қорығының жарғылық міндеттеріне сүйене отырып және қорықтағы ғылыми-зерттеу жұмысының басым бағыттарын ескере отырып орындалды, атап айтқанда: Тарас тауының тарихы мен мұражай қор коллекцияларын зерттеу.

Кілт сөздер: Леся Украинка, Тарас Шевченко, Тарас горницасы, кестеленген сүлгі, өрнек, Илья Репин.

1. Introduction

Ukrainian researcher Zinaida Tarahan-Bereza, in her book «The Shrine» (1998), spoke in detail about the first and only visit to Kanev, in June 1891, of the 20-year-old outstanding Ukrainian poetess, writer Lesya Ukrainka (real name – Larisa Petrovna Kosach), together with her mother Olga Petrovna Kosach (famous writer Elena Pchilka) and sister Olga (married Krivinyuk; literary pseudonym Olesya Zirka) (Tarakhan-Bereza, 1998: 180).

They sailed by steamship along the Dnieper from Kyiv to Yekaterinoslav (now the city of Dnieper) for treatment in Yevpatoria and stopped in Kanev to visit the grave of Taras Shevchenko. It was then that Lesya Ukrainka brought an embroidered towel herself, and she

herself decorated the portrait of Taras Shevchenko in the «Tarasov Gornitsa», which was located in one half of the house of the guardian of the grave of the poet Ivan Yadlovsky. Ivan Yadlovsky told folklorist Stepan Nekhoroshev about this event. Elena Pchilka and Olga Kosach-Krivinyuk also wrote about Lesya Ukrainka's visit to Shevchenko's grave in their memoirs.

Unfortunately, this particular towel by Lesya has not survived. But another towel has survived, which she embroidered earlier – in 1889, while undergoing treatment on the Khadzhibey Estuary in Odessa, together with Margarita Komarova, the daughter of the famous Ukrainian bibliographer Mikhail Komarov. This towel, also from 1889, was brought by Margarita Komarova to Tarasov Gornitsa in Kanev in July. A photograph from 1889 has been preserved, in which two friends are sitting with an unfinished towel. The idea was to decorate the portrait of Taras Shevchenko with an embroidered towel in the «Tarasov Gornitsa» museum, which was built near the poet's grave in 1884. The fact is that in 1888, by order of the Old Hromadovites from Kyiv, the famous artist Ilya Repin created perhaps the best portrait of Taras Shevchenko in oil for «Tarasov Gornitsa». The original portrait of Shevchenko was kept in the editorial office of the magazine «Kiyv Antiquity». At the same time, a copy of this portrait was ordered from the artist Khariton Platonov (1842-1907) and on July 16, 1889, Shevchenko's portrait was brought to Kanev by Vladimir Naumenko, a famous public figure, Pavel Zhitetsky, a philologist, Konstantin Mikhalchuk, a linguist, Grigory Machtet, a Russian writer. It was for this date that the Lesya and Margarita hurried to embroider a towel. This is evidenced by the lines of a letter from Lesya Ukrainka's mother dated July 6, 1889: «Margarita is quickly traveling (maybe tomorrow) to her Kanevshchyna» (Tarakhan-Bereza, 1998: 182).

2. Methods and materials

2.1. Methods

Art «develops most intensively during periods of strong social upheaval, change, revolutionary events, when the past (everyday life, the life of the people) is replaced by the new» (Ananyeva, 2023: 67). When studying the history of a valuable museum item - an embroidered towel by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova, as well as two copies of this towel, comparative historical methods, objective analytical, comparative methods were used to study the specifics of artistic creativity of masters of Ukrainian national embroidery of the late 19th century, the end of the 20th century and first decade of the 21st century. Thus, a relatively stable development of one of the most popular types of needlework in Ukraine has been revealed, through which the craftswomen showed deep reverence for the personality of Taras Shevchenko, an outstanding poet and wonderful artist.

2.2. Materials

In 1998, the book «The Shrine» by Z. Tarahan-Bereza was published in Ukraine. One of the sections of the book is dedicated to Lesya Ukrainka's visit to the grave of Taras Shevchenko and the embroidered towel donated by the writer to the museum «Tarasov Gornitsa». Also, Z. Tarahan Bereza mentions the embroidered first copy of the Lesya's towel by Galina Bondarenko (Kanev), which was one and a half times larger than the memorial towel. An absolutely accurate copy of a towel embroidered by Tamila Yaremenko (Zhytomyr region) is discussed in full in this study. Thus, a complete history of the existence of a historical relic associated with the burial place of Taras Shevchenko has been created.

3. Discussion

The towel embroidered by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova, placed on the portrait of Shevchenko in the «Tarasov Gornitsa», was sketched by the famous Ukrainian writer Mikhail Kotsyubinsky, who visited Tarasov Mountain in the summer of 1890. Unfortunately, this drawing entitled «Inside Shevchenko's House» has not survived. His photo was published in the magazine «Dzvinok» («Call») (1891, № 5).

For a long time, the towel was exhibited in the «Tarasov Gornitsa» both on icons and above the window, which led to a loss of brightness of the threads in the embroidery.

In 1937, the house of the watchman Ivan Yadlovsky was dismantled in connection with the construction (1934-1939) of a new building for the Taras Shevchenko Museum. Then many exhibits from the Taras Room disappeared, including this embroidered towel. Over time, the towel was discovered at the Academy of Sciences in Kyiv, and since 1949 it has been the property of the National Museum of Taras Shevchenko (Kyiv). On August 23, 2010, after the renovation and reconstruction of the Taras Shevchenko Museum in Kaniv, as well as the creation of a new exposition of the poet's museum, the towel was transferred, with the permission of Dmitry Stus, General Director of the National Taras Shevchenko Museum, at the request of the authoritative architect Larisa Pavlovna Skorik, for temporary exhibition in Shevchenko Museum on Tarasov Gora. It was on display until 2022. Dmitry Stus explained the decision to display the towel as follows: «It was the will of Lesya Ukrainka».

The towel ornament chosen by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova for embroidery deserves special attention. It has rich symbolism (Kobzar, 2012: 22-25). Obviously, the embroiderers were advised to use such an ornament by Elena Pchilka, a deep connoisseur of national embroidery, who collected Ukrainian patterns from the villages of Polesie and published several albums.

The semiotics and semantics of the Ukrainian towel ornament have been thoroughly studied by ethnographers, cultural scientists, and art historians (Zaichenko, 2010: 113-173; Zakharchuk-Chugai, 1988: 93-104; Signs, 1992; Kara-Vasilyeva, 2008: 247- 315; Kitova, 2003; Orel, 2003; Artistic embroidery, 1983: 40-47).

The towel is embroidered with red and black threads – traditional for Naddnepryansk Ukraine. The colors black and red symbolize, respectively, Life and Death, a combination of active and passive.

It is known that embroidery on a white background with red and black threads goes back to the ancient times of the Trypillian culture – the archaeological culture of the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age in the territory of Moldova, the forest-steppe and steppes of Ukraine from the Dnieper valley to the south-eastern Carpathian region. This is a harmony of strong colors of divine graphics – white and black combined with an equally strong, pulsating red, which affirms Life. Black color absorbs energy and contains information. Black color is the color of earth, wealth, triumph. White color, on the contrary, radiates energy.

The towel is filled with geometric patterns: crosses, squares, rhombuses.

The towel ornament is divided into three parts: the past (lower part), present (middle part) and future (upper part).

At the bottom of the towel ornament – the past – the roots of the past are depicted. The past is separated from the present by a wave pattern (symbol of water), which symbolizes the river of life.

In the middle part (the widest) of the towel ornament – the present – geometric figures are used, each of which has its own symbolic meaning in embroidery. Crosses are the most common signs in the world as «the seal of eternal life» (Zaichenko, 2010: 119). There are straight crosses, oblique crosses and double crosses, formed as a result of the superposition of the previous two. A straight equal cross is the personification of Harmony and the interaction of Spirit (vertical line) and Matter (horizontal line). The straight cross is a symbol of the Sun, Logos, Creator, masculinity, male strength and courage. The oblique cross is the personification of the feminine principle, the Moon. The overlap of these two crosses gives a double cross or an eight-pointed star (octagram, cross-arrow) – a symbol of the unification of two principles. In addition to geometric symbols, these crosses are known in embroidery as independent stitches - straight cross, oblique and double cross, or «Bolgarian», or perhaps «Bulgarian».

The towel features squares and diamonds – also one of the most common symbols in embroidery. These quadrangles symbolize Matter. A square is a stable figure that reflects static matter. A rhombus standing on one point has greater freedom to move and reflects matter in dynamics. Embroidered diamonds with a dot (ideogram of a seed) symbolize fertile soil. A variation of these quadrangles is the division of a cross into four parts – a cosmic symbol of fertility, an ideogram of a dotted field. Squares and rhombuses in most cults depict the earth, therefore they have long been considered symbols of well-being, material wealth, and prosperity (Zaichenko, 2010: 119). Ukrainians, as the heirs of an ancient agricultural civilization, are characterized by a variety of patterns with rhombuses and squares.

The ornament of the towel contains an intertwined spiral, embroidered with red and black threads – a caduceus, symbolizing evolution (progress) and involution (regression). The spiral is a symbol of the structure of the Universe (after all, all galaxies have a spiral structure). We find the spiral principle in various living organisms, natural phenomena and life cycles.

At the top of the towel ornament – the future – there are solar signs – symbols of the sun, stars, God. Stars are octahedrons or octagons, symbolizing the spiritual transformation of man, the path of the soul in earthly conditions. Under the octagonal stars there are heraldic knots – information about the clan and female symbols.

On both ends of the towel there are embroidered lines from the poems of Taras Shevchenko: on the left – «Dumi, moi, dumi moi, daring me with you» (Dumi moi, dumi moi, Oh, I'm in trouble with you!); on the right – «Love, my brothers, love Ukraine» («Love, my brothers, love Ukraine»).

Today, the reserve's funds contain two copies of the towel of Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova, embroidered by two craftswomen – Galina Bondarenko (Kanev) and Tamila Yaremenko (Zhytomyr region). Both copies were exhibited until 2022 in the Taras Room.

Let's analyze the history of the creation of these towels and their differences.

In 1989, embroiderer Galina Bondarenko (1923-2001) made a copy of the towel by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova from a photograph of 1909-1910. The embroidery was done on homespun fabric using floss threads using the cross stitch technique. The size of the towel is 207x36 cm, that is, the size of the towel (and, accordingly, the ornament) was increased by one and a half times.

The second copy of the towel – with exact observance of all dimensions (the towel itself, the ornament, the crocheted lace) – was embroidered in 2009 by Tamila Yaremenko. Tamila Yaremenko was born in Podolia in 1943 in the village. Bronnitsa Mogilev-Podolsk district, Vinnytsia region. She grew up in a post-war Ukrainian village surrounded by picturesque nature. As a child, she learned about hunger, poverty, and orphanhood (when she was 13 years old, her mother died). As long as Tamila Yaremenko can remember, she has been embroidering: when she was a schoolgirl, a student at the Vinnitsa Pedagogical Institute, when she worked at school as a mathematics teacher (40 years of teaching experience) in the urban village of Kornyn, Zhitomir region). At school, she taught children not only mathematics, but also organized artistic embroidery clubs, instilled a love for everything Ukrainian, and taught humanity and kindness. Tamila Yaremenko still embroiders today, as a pensioner.

Tamila Yaremenko mastered many embroidery techniques, had personal exhibitions of her works, and was awarded the title «Master of Ukrainian Folk Art in Artistic Embroidery». According to Tamila Yaremenko, technically anything can be embroidered, but embroidery is not a piece of canvas on which threads are laid, the main thing is that invisible energy that comes from the real work: you want to touch it with your hand, put it on your cheek or forehead, close your eyes and comprehend the essence of human existence. The craftswoman had such feelings when she held in her hands the towel embroidered by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova for «Tarasov Gornitsa».

Today Tamila Yaremenko lives in the Zhytomyr region, the homeland of Lesya Ukrainka. Together with my granddaughter Ivona Kostyna, while studying the biography of Lesya Ukrainka, I learned about the towel embroidered by the writer together with her friend Margarita Komarova for «Tarasov Gornitsa». The embroiderer was filled with desire to see this towel. Arrived in Kanev. I visited Tarasov Gora and the «Tarasov Gornitsa» museum, where a copy of the embroiderer Galina Bondarenko's towel was exhibited. After communicating with the Deputy General Director of the Shevchenko National Reserve for scientific work, Svetlana Brizhitskaya, on her recommendation, Tamila Yaremenko visited the National Museum of Taras Shevchenko in Kyiv, where the original towel was kept.

As a result, on March 9, 2011, at the gala Shevchenko evening «You will be a father, you will rule as long as people live!» held at the Kaniv City House of Culture, Tamila Yaremenko presented the Shevchenko National Reserve with a valuable gift – with her own hand, a perfectly embroidered copy of the towel by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova.

Found facts always require «detailed factual, biographical and historical-literary explanations» (Azadovsky, 2021: 237). To restore the authentic appearance of the towel, Tamila Yaremenko used the method of historical reconstruction: she carried out numerous and careful measurements, took detailed photographs (about 500 photographs in detail), restored the geometry of the pattern using mathematical analysis, and compiled a model of the towel. Based on this model, the master embroidered a color copy in a 1:1 scale measuring 215x45 cm, which is an exact copy of the towel by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova. A young embroiderer, a 5th year student at Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University, helped embroider the lace for the towel.

Moreover, the towel as an object of historical reconstruction also became the subject of a study of symbolism by Ivona Kostyna, then a student of the specialized school No. 112 named after Taras Shevchenko, Goloseevsky district of Kyiv, granddaughter of Tamila Yaremenko. The results of the research were presented by her in the work «Lesya's Rushnik» for the competition of the Kyiv territorial branch of the Minor Academy of Sciences of Ukraine «Researcher».

4. Results

A towel embroidered by Galina Bondarenko was exhibited in the museum «Tarasov Gornitsa» in the painting «Saint Tarasius» (a copy of the 1990 work of the artist Alexander Maksimenko), which depicts Taras Shevchenko in the form of a saint (with a halo above his head), in full height, with the book «Kobzar» in hand. The author of the original painting is the artist Ivan Fedorovich Eremeevsky, about whom it is known that he was a free student of the Imperial Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg since 1861; in 1866 he received two silver medals, and in the same year – the title of non-class artist.

From 2011 to 2018, a copy of the towel by Tamila Yaremenko adorned two icons in the «Tarasov Gornitsa»:

– an icon of the Image of Edessa, donated in 1888 by Kanev notary Zakhary Krakovetsky. The icon was lost in 1937, after the house of the watchman Ivan Yadlovsky was dismantled. Subsequently, the icon was found in the possession of a resident of Kanev. It was bought by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine and the valuable exhibit was presented to the Reserve on February 1, 1992 by the Minister of Culture of Ukraine Larisa Khorolets;

– an icon of St. Tarasius (mid-19th century, Kiyv region) similar to the icon that was in the «Tarasov Gornitsa». in the 19th century. (full-length figure of Saint Tarasius). The icon was presented on May 22, 2011, on the day of the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the return of Taras Shevchenko to Ukraine by the Prime Minister of Ukraine Mykola Azarov. After all, it was in honor of Saint Tarasius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, that the future outstanding poet Taras was named.

Also, a copy of the towel by Yaremenko was exhibited for some time on another icon of St. Tarasius, painted and consecrated in the Holy Dormition Kiyv-Pechersk Lavra, and donated to the Reserve by the priests of the monastery on March 9, 2005.

5. Conclusion

Thus, in the museums of the Shevchenko National Reserve there was an opportunity to see, in due time, until 2022, all three towels associated with the name of Lesya Ukrainka: in the Taras Shevchenko Museum a memorial towel embroidered in 1889 by Lesya Ukrainka and Margarita Komarova was exhibited; in the museum «Tarasov Gornitsa» there is a one and a half times larger copy of a towel by Galina Bondarenko (1989) and an identical copy of a towel by embroiderer Tamila Yaremenko (2009).

These and other embroidered towels, as a creative, artistic, historical value, function in the system of Ukrainian culture, represent spiritual and material value and provide a living connection between the past and the present day.

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