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VERBAL REPRESENTATION OF HRYHORII SKOVORODA IN YURII MUSHKETYK'S NOVELLA "THE DEVIL NEVER SLEEPS"

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ABSTRACT: The research results reveal the linguistic features of the representation of Hryhorii Skovoroda's image and the unique interpretation of this image by Yuriy Mushketyk. The article examines the character's self-perception and the perspectives of other characters toward Skovoroda. For instance, a former classmate, Sydir Korinets, perceives him as an arrogant person concealing his pride, while other characters, such as the innkeeper, regard him with great respect. Mushketyk employs symbolic imagery in the text to illustrate Skovoroda's profound connection with nature while simultaneously emphasizing his solitude and itinerant lifestyle. The study specifically analyzes the key concepts of **NATURE**, **RIGHTEOUSNESS**, and **KNOWLEDGE**, which dominate the character's consciousness and define his philosophical stance. Overall, the research demonstrates the complex structure of the character's world, where external and internal characteristics are interrelated. It also highlights the multifaceted perception of the protagonist by other characters, making Skovoroda's image multidimensional and contradictory. The findings outline the primary parameters of the character's world, encompassing external features and internal traits represented through frames such as clothing and attributes, character, face, posture, age, and more. The dominant artistic-semantic meanings of each concept are also identified. It is established that the linguistic portrayal of Skovoroda in the novella is ambivalent, absorbing both positive and negative attributes, which is reflected in the use of various linguistic devices for modeling the artistic-semantic content.

KEYWORDS: artistic and semantic content, character's world, concept, frame, metaphor, simile

Introduction

Hryhorii Skovoroda is often hailed as the "Ukrainian Aesop" for pioneering the fable genre in Ukrainian literature. He is also celebrated as the "Ukrainian Horace" due to his exceptional poetic achievements and as the "Ukrainian Socrates" for being the first Ukrainian philosopher who profoundly influenced his contemporaries and left a lasting legacy. Furthermore, he is described as a "wandering academy" or a "man-university," acknowledging his status as the first Ukrainian scholar of European caliber.

Theoretical framework and Literature Review

Unfortunately, the official records about Hryhorii Skovoroda's life and legacy are limited. For a long time, the primary reliable source of biographical information was *The Life of Hryhorii Skovoroda*, an essay authored by his student and close friend, Mykola Kovalynskyi (Ковалинський/Kovalynskyi, 1986, c. 103). However, this work is relatively brief and fails to provide sufficient clarity on certain aspects of his life. Despite this, in Ukrainian cultural consciousness, Skovoroda is firmly associated with the image of a highly moral and virtuous wanderer, a man who was "caught by the world but never captured." This iconic figure is frequently depicted by writers in their literary works and analyzed by scholars. This study seeks to explore the linguistic and conceptual image of the Ukrainian philosopher as portrayed by Mushketyk in his novella *The Devil Never Sleeps*.

Reflecting on the various worlds of a literary text, Pavel notes that readers experience two contradictory emotions: on the one hand, they understand that the sun described in the text exists in the real world, but on the other hand, the character in the work inhabits their own reality, eliciting the reader's empathy or prompting them to reflect on the character's actions (Pavel, 1986, pp. 11-25).

Regarding the correlation between multiple worlds and reality, Ivanenko suggests distinguishing between the concepts of the possible world and the fictional world, with the latter being considered the textual possible world. The researcher identifies "the actual world (AW) – the central world of the primary modal system; the actual world of a specific literary text, i.e., the secondary modal system (TAW, textual actual world); and the textual referential world (TRW)" (Іваненко/Ivanenko, 2011, c. 6). In Ryan's work, the actual world is the world where the "I" resides, making "all possible worlds actual from the perspective of their inhabitants" (Ryan, 1992, p. 529). Thus, AW represents our reality or the actual world, TAW denotes the fictional world, and TRW refers to the worlds within the fictional world. Based on this classification, Ivanenko proposes the following axioms for analyzing multiple worlds: "There is only one AW; the sender (author) of the text always resides in the AW; each text projects or reflects a certain world. The center of the projected world is the TAW; the TAW precisely mirrors the TRW, whose existence is assumed to be independent of the TAW" (Іваненко/Ivanenko, 2011, c. 46).

Kahanovska distinguishes between the authorial world and the character's world. She writes that "in the spatio-temporal model of a literary text, alongside the explicit world of the narrator, there exists a multiplicity of implicit character worlds. As a result, at the semantic level, the narrator's world may be represented by entirely different information. Evidently, the same applies to the character's worlds, which, in turn, are shaped by a complex network of interrelationships" (Кагановська/Kahanovska, 2014, c. 52). Writing about the micro-worlds of characters, "that is, the worlds in which individual characters exist with their unique conceptual spheres, behaviors, and characteristics" (Обелець/Obelets, 2006, c. 6), Obelets explores the temporality of possible worlds in literary texts.

Considering the existing scholarly approaches to the analysis of multiple worlds, we regard the artistic world as a possible world consisting of a certain number of sub-worlds, including the authorial world, the character's world, the world of surrounding reality, the unreal world, and the recipient's world.

Since the goal of this study is to examine the linguistic representation of Hryhorii Skovoroda's image, we will focus on the main aspects of studying this character's world.

Methodology

The article proposes an analysis of the character's world within the framework of the theory of multiple worlds in literary texts. The study examines the linguistic representation of Skovoroda's image in Mushketyk's novella. The methodology for examining the character's world involves analyzing the author's attitude toward the protagonist, investigating the character's self-perception, exploring key concepts related to the character, and considering the perspectives of other characters. The study employs several methods, including the componential analysis method, which was used to identify elementary semantic meanings; the conceptual analysis method, aimed at determining the structure and content of concepts; and the frame modeling method, which allowed for a clear structuring of representations of Hryhorii Skovoroda's world in the novella. Using the descriptive method, linguistic units representing various concepts and frames were illustrated, while their contextual and interpretative analysis enabled the identification of multifaceted connections between linguistic expressions and the character's world.

Understanding the world of fictional characters requires a deep dive into their motivations and value systems. Analyzing a character's portrait is crucial, as descriptions of external traits often contain implicit information about how the author or other characters perceive the individual. Likewise, examining the inner world and speech patterns provides valuable insights. Conceptual analysis serves as a highly effective tool for investigating these parameters. Within this analytical framework, the concepts of EXTERNAL TRAITS and INTERNAL TRAITS are typically delineated, encompassing categories such as "Age," "Clothing," "Posture," "Facial Features," and "Linguistic Characteristics." Additionally, a character's self-perception, evaluations by other characters, and core conceptual constructs play a vital role in understanding their fictional world.

Self-assessment, in particular, involves constructing cognitive dimensions of identity, such as "I am happy" or "I am lonely." Concepts are formed through artistic-semantic layers – specific meanings embedded within the linguistic and cognitive worldview of a particular linguistic personality.

Thus, the methodology for examining the fictional world of a character involves a comprehensive analysis of the author's perspective, the character's self-assessment, and evaluations by other characters, and the key conceptual constructs that define the character's essence.

Results and discussion

Judging the physical appearance of the Ukrainian philosopher Hryhorii Savych Skovoroda is challenging due to the limited number of visual representations. There exists only one lifetime portrait of Skovoroda, created shortly before his death by the Kharkiv painter Lukianov. This portrait was later reproduced in numerous copies. The face depicted in the painting is noble, serious, and contemplative. Interestingly, the artist chose not to portray Skovoroda as a seventy-year-old man, which he was at the time, but rather as someone in the prime of life – approximately forty years old. Subsequent artists who attempted to depict the Ukrainian thinker adhered to this approximate age. This approach is also reflected in the work of Mushketyk, who constructs several frames that illuminate the external traits of Hryhorii Savych.

The “Age” Frame

In the novella, the Ukrainian philosopher is depicted as an elderly man. Linguistically, this intention is conveyed through the use of the lexeme *starchyk* [an old pilgrim], which semantically denotes “a man who has reached old age, senescence” (Білодід/Bilodid, 1978, c. 653). Notably, the dictionary includes a remark that this term may sometimes carry a connotation of respect (Білодід/Bilodid, 1978, c. 653). Thus, while the lexeme characterizes Skovoroda’s age, it also indicates the respect afforded to him. Mushketyk emphasizes this dual connotation, stating that the term embodies both reverence and esteem. This respect is further highlighted in the actions of children in the narrative, who respectfully stepped aside and removed their hats. The words *reverence and respect* underscore the recognition of Hryhorii Savych’s contributions: “***The starchyk is coming, the starchyk is coming!***’ the children shouted. Hryhorii took no offense at this characterization. Indeed, ***he was a starchyk both by age and by his modest means.*** This was how people referred to him everywhere (except in the manorial estates), but when it came to him, the word carried a sense of ***reverence and respect.*** Even these children, little scamps with switches on their shoulders, respectfully stepped aside and removed their wide-brimmed hats and caps” (Мушкетук/Mushketyk, 1992, c. 29)¹. The word *starchyk* [an old pilgrim] also holds additional meanings, such as “an elderly monk, a respected spiritual figure; a hermit, recluse” and “a beggar” (Білодід/Bilodid, 1978, c. 653). These diverse connotations collectively enrich the image of the protagonist.

Hryhorii Skovoroda himself poetically refers to his age using the metaphorical neologism *odtsvityny* [faded blossoms]: “*And then: ‘Odtsvityny,’ he*

¹ “*Старчик іде, старчик іде*’, загаласували. Григорій не ображався за таке означення його особи. Так, *він старчик і віком, і статками своїми*, так його називають скрізь (окрім панських домів), але вкладають, стосовно нього, в це слово *й повагу, й пошану*. І навіть ці діти, розбійники з лозинками на плечах, поштиво вступили йому дорогу й поскидали брили” (All translations from Ukrainian sources are by the author unless otherwise noted – Olena Ilina).

thought, referring to himself. Yet he considered this without fear or sorrow. On the contrary, perhaps **he hadn't felt so light and unburdened as he did now**" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 28)². This neologism arises from a botanical metaphor, transferring the ability of plants to experience different stages, such as the fading of blossoms in autumn – *odtswityny*. Implicitly, this establishes a metaphorical parallel between autumn and old age. The figurative meaning reflects a philosophical acceptance of aging as a natural and inevitable process. The phrase *without fear or sorrow* acts as an antithesis to the typical emotions associated with advanced age. Conversely, the adverbs *light* and *unburdened* convey a sense of tranquility and reconciliation with age, which for the protagonist is not a burden.

Further specificity regarding the philosopher's age is provided in a microcontext through the use of a numeral: "**Our age... Surely, I hope, it is already past sixty**" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 39)³.

This nuanced portrayal highlights not only Skovoroda's external traits but also his reflective and philosophical outlook on aging, which emphasizes harmony and acceptance rather than fear or regret.

The "Height" and "Posture" Frame

In the novella, Skovoroda is portrayed as tall and thin, with these attributes explicitly conveyed through descriptive adjectives: "**He hurried to reach the inn before the rain. Tall and thin, he resembled a wounded crane pursued by someone**" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 35)⁴. The comparison to a wounded crane is particularly striking. Traditionally, the crane symbolizes loyalty, fidelity, kindness, the renewal of spring, and joy. However, the epithet *wounded* introduces a layer of melancholy, evoking a sense of sadness and vulnerability. This imagery not only captures Skovoroda's physical appearance but also hints at his emotional and existential state, adding depth to the character.

The "Face" Frame

The "Face" frame is developed through detailed descriptions of Skovoroda's facial features, including the shape of his face, nose, eyebrows, and lips. Mushketyk provides the following characterization: "**A long, thin face with a straight, prominent nose, expressive eyebrows, and lips. His face was calm, serene, and ascetic**" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 30)⁵. This succinct yet vivid portrayal emphasizes key attributes of the philosopher's appearance, such as calmness and asceticism, conveyed through carefully chosen epithets. Adjectives

² "Іще: "Одцвітину", – це вже й про себе. Але подумав без страху й печалі. Либонь, навпаки, йому давно не малося так легко, так безмірно, як нині".

³ "Вік наш... Вже ж, надіюсь, за шістдесят".

⁴ "Він поспішав, аби добігти до корчми до дощу. **Високий, худий, скидався на підбитого журавля**, за яким хтось женеться".

⁵ "Довговиде, сухе, з довгим рівним носом, виразними бровами та вустами. Обличчя спокійне, умировлене, аскетичне".

like *long*, *straight*, and *calm* help shape a distinctive and recognizable linguistic image of Skovoroda for the reader.

Beyond a mere physical description, the portrayal of Skovoroda's face reflects his inner character – his restraint, detachment from worldly concerns, and spiritual focus. The use of epithets such as *ascetic* and *serene* underscores the impression of the philosopher's inner strength and his profound harmony with himself and the world. This duality – an outer appearance that mirrors inner virtues – contributes to a holistic and compelling depiction of the wandering thinker.

The “Clothing” Frame

Clothing and attributes form an essential part of the EXTERNAL TRAITS concept. In the novella, descriptions of Hryhorii S. Skovoroda's attire are minimal, yet meaningful. The author briefly highlights key elements of the philosopher's appearance: *a wide-brimmed hat*, *a staff*, and *a sack*. For example: “*Skovoroda hung his **wide-brimmed hat** on a nail, placed his **crane-like staff** in the corner, and set his **sack** on the bench*”⁶ (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 36), and “*Hryhorii was out of breath, clutching his chest with his left hand while swinging his **crane-like staff** with his right*” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 35)⁷.

The mention of the *sack* and *staff* subtly underscores Skovoroda's identity as a wanderer. These attributes are deeply tied to the Ukrainian cultural perception of Skovoroda, making him instantly recognizable as the philosopher who roams the world with nothing but a bag and a staff. The epithet *crane-like staff* serves a dual purpose: on the one hand, it draws a visual parallel to the crane's shape, and on the other, it evokes the symbolic meaning of the crane – a timeless emblem of loyalty to one's homeland, melancholy, and wistful longing (Коцур и др. /Kotsur et al., 2015, с. 266).

This minimalist depiction of clothing and attributes emphasizes Skovoroda's ascetic lifestyle and reinforces his image as a wandering philosopher who values simplicity over material wealth. These elements serve to make his character visually and culturally distinctive, while subtly supporting the themes of detachment and spiritual focus.

Thus, the EXTERNAL TRAITS concept presents Skovoroda as *a wanderer, a prominent writer, and a virtuous man*.

The “Character” Frame

The INTERNAL TRAITS concept is prominently featured in passages that explore the “character” frame, revealing Skovoroda's moral and spiritual depth. The following description captures the essence of his personality:

⁶ “Сковорода повісив на цвяшок *бриля*, поставив у куток *палицю-журавля*, поклав на лаву *торбу*”.

⁷ “Григорій захекався, лівою рукою тримався за груди, вимахував правою з *палицею-журавлем*”.

“There is the sky above his head, a simple coat on his shoulders, and a book in his bag... Always lighthearted, cheerful, agile, steadfast, virtuous, good-natured, talkative, respectful, generous, God-loving, never flattering, equal with everyone, content with everything, comforting the unfortunate, and sharing his last possession with the poor” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 31-32)⁸.

The abundance of epithets highlights the philosopher's numerous virtues and his profound moral integrity. The first part of the passage emphasizes material aspects (*sky, coat, book*), symbols of Skovoroda's minimalist approach to life. The second part, however, delves into his spiritual and moral qualities, which take precedence. This juxtaposition between material and spiritual elements underscores Skovoroda's worldview – material possessions are merely a background to his rich inner life.

Through this balanced portrayal, Skovoroda emerges as a figure who embodies traditional perceptions of him as virtuous and morally upright. The linguistic and narrative emphasis on his kindness, humility, and generosity constructs an artistic-semantic image of *Skovoroda as a virtuous man*. These elements not only reinforce his established cultural image but also deepen the audience's understanding of his priorities and philosophy.

This dual focus on external simplicity and internal richness makes Skovoroda a profoundly recognizable and relatable figure, bridging the historical and literary representation of his persona.

Mushketyk emphasizes Hryhorii Skovoroda's habit of rising early: *“Hryhorii woke up early. As always. Before sunrise. At this hour, all hardworking people rise”* (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 28)⁹. The phrase *like all hardworking people* reflects a sense of solidarity with the working class, underscoring Skovoroda's industrious nature and simplicity. This detail aligns the philosopher with the values of diligence and discipline, situating him as a figure connected to the rhythms of daily life.

In the passage *“The starchyk never stays long in one place. As soon as something doesn't sit right with him – he grabs his staff, puts on his hat or cap, and leaves”* (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 32)¹⁰, verb-based expressions reinforce the image of *Skovoroda as a wanderer*. This portrayal is central to his identity as a traveling philosopher, deeply ingrained in both literary and cultural representations of him. The act of leaving at will conveys his independence,

⁸ “Є небо над головою, є свита на плечах, є книга в торбині... Завжди легкий, веселий, рухливий, витриманий, цнотливий, благодущий, словоохочий, поштивий, подільчивий, боголюбний, не лестивий, з усіма рівний, всім вдоволений, втішає нещасних, ділиться останнім з бідними”.

⁹ “Григорій проснувся рано. Як і завжди. До схід сонця. О цій порі встають всі робітні люди”.

¹⁰ “Старчик ніколи не затримується довго на одному місці. Ледве йому щось не по душі – палицю в руки, бриля або шапку на голову”.

resistance to constraint, and a commitment to a life unbound by material or social ties.

The idea of *Skovoroda as a prominent writer* is vividly depicted in passages that highlight his intellectual pursuits:

“He converses with the ancients, composes fables, teachings, and philosophical treatises, writing them in fields, forests, on tree stumps (most often at a bee farm), writing with ease” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 32)¹¹. This portrayal reveals a man deeply engaged with intellectual traditions while grounded in the natural world. The description of his writing process – simple, unencumbered, and prolific – underscores his dedication to thought and creativity.

“...his writings do not disappear; they are copied, retold, and memorized” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 32)¹². These lines highlight the enduring legacy of his works, which, though unpublished during his lifetime, were cherished by those who encountered them.

After leaving his teaching position, Skovoroda fully embraced a life of wandering. His reputation grew, and many sought his wisdom and companionship. It was during this period that he began writing extensively. However, none of his works were published during his lifetime, as the church regarded them as controversial and offensive to monasticism and the clergy. His philosophy, which diverged from established dogmas, challenged traditional religious and societal norms, cementing his role as a thinker ahead of his time.

This layered portrayal of Skovoroda as an early riser, tireless wanderer, and groundbreaking writer captures his essence – a philosopher who defied convention and left an indelible mark on Ukrainian culture. The combination of his daily habits, itinerant lifestyle, and intellectual contributions underscores the harmony between his personal values and his philosophical legacy.

Self-Perception (The “I” Concept)

Self-perception plays a crucial role in understanding a character’s inner world, as it reflects ethical and axiological markers of self-awareness. In *The Devil Never Sleeps*, Skovoroda’s judgments about himself are imbued with evaluative elements, allowing us to examine the “I” concept in depth.

Skovoroda perceives himself as experienced, as conveyed through a metaphorical epithet in a simile:

*“In the dense guelder rose thicket, a **nightingale sang faintly, sleepily, and wearily**: ‘Tee-ohk, tee-ohk, tee-ohk, tee-urr, feet-feet-feet.’ Perhaps it was **an experienced***

¹¹ “Бесідує з древніми, складає байки, повчання, філософські трактати, пише їх у полі, в лісі, на пенькові (найчастіше деє на пасіці), пише легко”.

¹² “...написане не пропадає, його переписують, переповідають, заучують напам’ять”.

singer who had grown old courting. 'Just like me,' Hryhorii thought and silently without voice laughed to himself" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 29)¹³.

In this microcontext, the narrative voice merges with the philosopher's inner discourse, producing a moment of autothematic reflection. Through the metaphor of the *experienced nightingale*, Skovoroda projects his own state of lonely maturity and enduring vitality. The semantic triad – “experienced,” “old,” “lifelong bachelor” – forms a self-characterization that intertwines existential irony with philosophical serenity. The phrase *just like me* functions as an index of ironic self-recognition, suggesting both humor and acceptance of the passage of time. The tone is playfully introspective rather than mournful; the adverbial cluster *faintly, sleepily, and wearily* reinforces a semantic field of calm fatigue, symbolizing not decline but equilibrium. Skovoroda's laughter *without voice, silently* operates as a metonymy of inward reflection, illustrating his ability to contemplate aging without despair. Furthermore, the *guelder rose* carries profound cultural connotations in Ukrainian semiotics – representing purity, love, continuity, and national identity. Its inclusion situates Skovoroda's self-awareness within a broader ethnocultural framework, linking personal introspection to collective symbolism. Thus, the image fuses natural, emotional, and cultural registers, emphasizing Skovoroda's organic unity with his homeland, nature, and moral tradition.

The semantic construct *I am a teetotaler* is explicitly articulated in a passage where Skovoroda observes the consequences of excessive drinking on a former classmate: “*Liver,' Skovoroda thought. 'He drinks without measure,' and he felt glad that he himself was a teetotaler*” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 40)¹⁴.

This stark contrast between a person who drinks excessively and Skovoroda, who abstains from alcohol, creates a sharp moral and physical distinction. It underscores Skovoroda's purity and commitment to a healthy lifestyle, reflecting his philosophical principles of moderation and self-restraint.

The “I am a Vegetarian” Semantic Construct

The semantic construct *I am a vegetarian* is linguistically expressed in the following microcontext: “*Thank you,' said Skovoroda. 'I eat only once a day, in the evening. And I do not consume meat or fish'*” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 33)¹⁵.

¹³ “В калиновій гущавині млосно, сонно, стомлено дотьохкував соловейко: «Тіох; тіох; тіох; тіур; фіть-фіть-фіть». Либонь, це був досвідчений співак, який запарубкувався до старості. “Як і я”, – подумав Григорій і знову засміявся без голосу”.

¹⁴ “Печінка, – подумав Сковорода. – П’є без міри’, – й зрадів, що сам не питущий”.

¹⁵ “Дякую, – сказав Сковорода. – Я їм тільки один раз на день, увечері. І не вживаю ні м’яса, ні риби.”

This construct aligns with a historical fact about Skovoroda: according to accounts, the philosopher once had a dream in which he saw people devouring one another. From that moment, he decided to abstain from consuming meat. Furthermore, Skovoroda believed in a profound connection between the body and the spirit, asserting that those who consume excessive amounts of meat and wine are doomed to premature aging (Ушкалов/Ushkalov, 2019, с. 37, 45). This abstinence reflects his philosophical principles of moderation, purity, and self-control, reinforcing his image as a person who lives in harmony with his values.

Skovoroda's Core Concepts: Nature, Righteousness, and Knowledge

In Mushketyk's novella, the core concepts associated with Skovoroda – *Nature, Righteousness, and Knowledge* – remain consistent with traditional depictions of the philosopher. To reinforce these ideas, Mushketyk places direct quotes from Skovoroda's works into the character's dialogue, adding authenticity and depth:

"The root of everything is the heart" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 32)¹⁶, ***"It is not our flesh that makes us human, but our mind"*** (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 32)¹⁷, ***"Take your willow stick and be on your way down the beaten road"*** (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 32)¹⁸, ***"Our happiness lies in peace of mind. Know thyself"*** (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 32)¹⁹.

In discussing righteousness, Skovoroda employs hyperbole to emphasize the value of a virtuous life: ***"I would not trade my pure day for a thousand years of wickedness"*** (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 39)²⁰.

These quotations serve as a window into Skovoroda's philosophical worldview, highlighting his focus on inner purity, self-awareness, and moral integrity.

Nature as a Core Element of Skovoroda's Worldview

Mushketyk enriches the portrayal of Skovoroda with poetic, metaphorical descriptions of the natural world, emphasizing the philosopher's profound connection to nature:

"The sun had already risen above the elms on the far side of the road, showering Hryhorii in golden rays" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 29)²¹, ***"Once again, Hryhorii drew a sound from his flute that resembled the song of a cuckoo. And again, the cuckoo cried out. They exchanged calls several times, until at last, the cuckoo could not resist and flew across the river straight toward him"***

¹⁶ "Корінь всьому – серце".

¹⁷ "Не плоть наша – людина, а мысль".

¹⁸ "Бери свою палицю вербову й проикуй битим шляхом".

¹⁹ "Наше щастя – мир душевний. Пізнай себе".

²⁰ "Мій чистий день і за тисячу нечестивих літ не продам ...".

²¹ "Сонце вже підбилося над в'язами по той бік дороги, обсіпало Григорія золотавим промінням".

(Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 29)²², “*Skovoroda closed his eyes. He loved falling asleep to the sound of rain, when a dreamy calmness filled his soul, and pleasant dreams would come*” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 37)²³.

These vivid and lyrical descriptions underscore the significance of *Nature* as a core concept in Skovoroda’s worldview. The imagery of sunlight, the musical dialogue with the cuckoo, and the tranquility of rain highlight his attunement to the natural world and his belief in its harmony and restorative power.

Mushketyk’s portrayal of Skovoroda integrates both historical facts and philosophical ideas, reinforcing key semantic constructs such as *I am a vegetarian, I value nature, and I strive for righteousness and self-knowledge*. By embedding Skovoroda’s quotes and using poetic depictions of his interactions with nature, the author creates a vivid and authentic image of the philosopher. This approach not only emphasizes Skovoroda’s alignment with traditional values of simplicity, humility, and introspection but also reaffirms his enduring connection to nature and his moral philosophy. Through these elements, Mushketyk successfully captures the essence of Skovoroda as a thinker deeply rooted in his values and harmoniously integrated into the natural and spiritual worlds.

Skovoroda in the Perception of Other Characters

The evaluations of Hryhorii S. Skovoroda by other characters in *The Devil Never Sleeps* are notably contradictory.

Samuil Myslavskyi

Samuil Myslavskyi is a historical figure who studied at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and later became its rector. According to historical records, Myslavskyi supported the Russification of the church, a stance that affected the fate of Skovoroda, who had previously enjoyed the support of the former bishop, Porphyrii Kraiskii.

In the novella, Myslavskyi openly envies and despises Skovoroda. These feelings are vividly expressed through his internal monologue, where his negative emotions are implicitly conveyed via metaphorical imagery:

“From the very depths of his soul, a burning, bitter wave arose. Oh, how he hated the starchyk at this moment, and how fiercely he envied him. To live such a life... To reject everything... That must mean something... But to live like this... Rolling around **like tumbleweed**. It’s free too. But the **wind** tosses it, drags it, and spins it in a whirlwind... And yet, it keeps rolling!”

²² “Й знову Григорій видобув з флейти звук, подібний до зозулиного співу. Й знову залемментувала зозуля. Так перемовлялися кілька разів. Вреїті зозуля не витримала й полетіла через річку просто на нього”.

²³ “Сковорода склепив повіки. Він любив засинати під дощ, на душі тоді – мрійлива тиша й сни сняться хороші”.

¹ “The innkeeper placed a mug before Skovoroda more respectfully than before the metropolitan himself” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 34-35)²⁴.

In these lines, Skovoroda is compared to tumbleweed, a metaphor articulated through a simile (*like tumbleweed*). Tumbleweed, a steppe plant capable of rolling across vast distances, is traditionally a symbol of homelessness, rootlessness, and wandering. For Myslavskiy, however, this symbol acquires an additional meaning – freedom. Thus, for Myslavskiy, Skovoroda represents a truly free person.

The *wind* in this microcontext evokes associations with the hardships Skovoroda endured, yet these challenges failed to break him. This duality – both admiration for Skovoroda’s freedom and disdain for his unconventional life – reveals Myslavskiy’s inner conflict. He recognizes the profound value of freedom but cannot reconcile it with his own choices and adherence to societal norms.

Myslavskiy’s perception of Skovoroda is a blend of envy, resentment, and reluctant admiration. The bitterness he feels stems from his inability to embrace the freedom and detachment that Skovoroda embodies. At the same time, the imagery of tumbleweed and wind metaphorically captures Skovoroda’s resilience and independence. For Myslavskiy, Skovoroda is not just a wanderer; he is a symbol of a life unbound by materialism or institutional constraints, a life Myslavskiy simultaneously envies and despises.

This complex portrayal highlights the polarizing nature of Skovoroda’s philosophy and lifestyle, which provoke both admiration and animosity among those who encounter him. Through Myslavskiy’s internal monologue, Mushketyk not only deepens the reader’s understanding of Skovoroda’s character but also sheds light on the tension between societal expectations and individual freedom.

The Innkeeper’s Perception of Skovoroda

The attitude of outsiders, such as the innkeeper, toward Hryhorii Skovoroda reveals profound respect and admiration for the philosopher. This is expressed through lexemes carrying the semantic features of *honor* and *favor*:

“The innkeeper placed a mug before Skovoroda more **respectfully** than before the metropolitan himself”²⁵ (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 34); “The old innkeeper couldn’t hold back and coughed meaningfully. At that moment, he thought that even if someone stabbed the starchyk with a knife, he would forgive it. What a man! No wonder **he is respected and revered across the Sloboda region and beyond, perhaps throughout all of Ukraine**” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992,

²⁴ “З самісінького дна душі піднімалася пекуча, гірка хвиля. Ох, як він ненавидів у цю мить старчика і як люто заздрив йому. Прожити отако життя... Знехтувати всім... Це чогось та варто... Але ж жити отако... **Котитися, неначе перекотиполе. Воно теж вільне. Але його котить і котить, і шарпає вітер, і крутить вихор... Але воно таки котиться!**”

²⁵ “І ставив корчмар перед Сковородою кухля **поштивіше**, ніж перед ним, митрополитом”.

c. 35)²⁶; “Both innkeepers – the old and the young – listened intently to the dialogue, **their faces glowing with amazement and admiration**. ‘Their’ Skovoroda was outshining even the Kyiv metropolitan” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, c. 34).²⁷

From these passages emerges the semantic construct of Skovoroda as a person respected by others. The admiration the innkeepers hold for him is not merely for his intellectual prowess but also for his moral character and humility, which resonate deeply with the common people.

Skovoroda as the Embodiment of Virtues

In the innkeeper’s reflections, Skovoroda is contrasted with Myslavskyi, favoring the philosopher as the true *man of God*:

*“But he will take nothing except a crust of bread and a mug of uzvar. He takes nothing. He only gives. He shares **his soul like pure gold**. Bit by bit, **beam by beam**. Through his songs, advice, and teachings. His songs, his parables, his wisdom are passed from mouth to mouth. And his soul does not wither. It **shines** as it always has. Truly a man of God. He, not the metropolitan”* (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, c. 35)²⁸.

Here, Skovoroda is portrayed as someone who gives selflessly, embodying generosity and humility. The metaphorical comparison of his soul to *gold* conveys traditional imagery associated with a compassionate and virtuous person. This positive association is further enhanced by implicit comparisons to the sun, evident in terms like *beam* and *shine*. These metaphors position Skovoroda as a radiant, life-giving presence, emphasizing his spiritual richness and enduring impact on those around him.

The innkeeper’s perspective underscores Skovoroda’s moral superiority and his alignment with divine principles. His generosity, humility, and capacity to inspire through his words and actions elevate him above traditional hierarchies, symbolized by his contrast with the metropolitan. The imagery of *gold* and *light* reinforces the perception of Skovoroda as a luminous and selfless figure, whose life is devoted to enriching others rather than accumulating material possessions.

²⁶ “Старий корчмар не витримав і багатозначно кахикнув. У цю мить він подумав, що нехай би старчика штрикнули навіть ножем, той простив би й це. **Отакий чоловік! Недарма всі шанують і величаються ним по всьому слобідському краю, й ще далі, либонь, чи не всій Україні**”.

²⁷ “Обоє шинкарів – старий і молодий – напружено вслухалися в діалог, на їхніх обличчях ясніло зачудування й захоплення. “Їхній” Сковорода побиває самого київського митрополита”.

²⁸ “Але він не візьме нічого, окрім хліба окрайця та кухля узвару. Він не бере. Він тільки віддає. **Роздає свою душу, як щире золото. По промінчику, по дрібці. Піснями, порадами, повчаннями. Його пісні, його притчі, його мудрості передають з вуст в уста. І душа його не скудіє. Сяє, як і сяяла. Воістину Божий чоловік. Він, а не митрополит**”.

This depiction strengthens the broader semantic constructs associated with Skovoroda:

- *Skovoroda as a respected individual* – admired not only for his intellect but also for his humility and kindness.
- *Skovoroda as the embodiment of virtues* – a selfless figure who radiates wisdom and spiritual wealth.
- *Skovoroda as a man of God* – living a life of service and devotion, in stark contrast to materialistic or hierarchical aspirations.

Through the innkeeper's reflections, Mushketyk illustrates how deeply Skovoroda's character resonates with ordinary people, portraying him as a moral beacon and a symbol of true humanity.

Korinets' Perception of Skovoroda

Unlike Myslavskyi, the innkeepers, and other characters who view Hryhorii Skovoroda as a paragon of virtue, Sidor Korinets perceives the wandering philosopher as a flawed, ordinary man. As Slyvynskyi notes, Skovoroda's meeting with Korinets, his former classmate and now a wandering deacon, becomes a bitter and even humiliating episode for the philosopher (Сливинський/Slyvynskyi, 2006). Mushketyk, through this encounter, avoids idealizing Skovoroda, instead presenting him as a human being with doubts and vulnerabilities.

Description of Appearance

Korinets' perception of Skovoroda's appearance is both literal and symbolic:

"Korinets only blinked. He looked at his former classmate, lying on the bench, stretched out, long, covered with a white blanket, resembling a corpse" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, c. 41)²⁹.

Here, adjectives such as *long* and *stretched out* convey Skovoroda's height, while the comparison to a *corpse* introduces a negative connotation. This imagery reflects Korinets' perception of Skovoroda as lifeless and distant, possibly hinting at the philosopher's detachment from worldly concerns or his perceived moral failings.

Skovoroda as Arrogant

In Korinets' view, Skovoroda embodies arrogance, a trait he associates with the philosopher's past behavior at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy:

"They expelled you for your pride. For your ambition, capriciousness, impatience, and disregard for others' opinions. Only your thoughts are righteous,

²⁹ "Корінець тільки кліпнув очима. Дивився на свого колишнього однокласника, котрий лежав на лаві **випростаний, довгий, накритий білою рядниною, схожий на мерця**".

and everyone else's are from the devil. You hide your pride here, but a keen eye can still see it” (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 42)³⁰.

Through nouns such as *pride*, *ambition*, *capriciousness*, and *impatience*, Korinets characterizes Skovoroda as self-centered and egotistical. The repetition of *for your pride, for your ambition, for your capriciousness* builds the rhythm of the text, intensifying its emotional impact. The phrase *a keen eye* serves as a metonymy symbolizing the ability to discern hidden truths, emphasizing the inevitability of judgment and critique.

Korinets further critiques Skovoroda by referring to him as a *parsuna*: *“It will still serve truth and goodness. They will use it as an example... pointing it out to children with a finger: look at that **parsuna**, they'll say, like a **precious icon**”* (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 42)³¹.

The term *parsuna* traditionally denotes a portrait, particularly one resembling an icon, carrying connotations of sanctity. However, Korinets imbues the term with irony, reinforced by the use of the noun *precious icon*, which in this context suggests someone unworthy of respect. The diminutive construction *pointing it out to children with a finger* further diminishes Skovoroda's stature, portraying him as someone whose outward reputation is inflated beyond their actual worth.

Skovoroda as Cunning

Korinets also perceives Skovoroda as cunning, likening him to a fox: *“I walked and kept stumbling upon your ‘**holy**’ tracks. **Neat, precise, like a fox’s**”* (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 41)³².

Here, the adjective *holy*, placed in quotation marks, signals irony, questioning the authenticity of Skovoroda's moral righteousness. The diminutives *neat* and *precise* further intensify Korinets' disdain, suggesting an artificial or overly meticulous facade. These details imply that Skovoroda's outward image of virtue conceals cunning and insincerity.

The comparison to a fox, a cultural symbol of slyness and deceit, reinforces Korinets' belief that Skovoroda's actions are calculated rather than genuinely virtuous.

The interaction between Hryhorii Skovoroda and Sidor Korinets in *The Devil Never Sleeps* offers a unique perspective on the philosopher, revealing both criticism and reluctant admiration. Korinets, a former classmate of Skovoroda, perceives him through a mix of skepticism, irony, and lingering respect, exposing the philosopher's vulnerabilities and prompting introspection.

³⁰ “*За погорду твою вони тебе виперли. За славолюбство, за вередливість, нетерпіння і нехтування думок інших. Тільки твоє праведне, а всіх інших – од лукавого. Приховуєш ти тут свою гординю, а її все одно видно оку пильному*”.

³¹ “*Ще й послужить добру та істині. Ставитимуть у приклад іншим... Показиватимуть дітям пальчиком на твою парсуну: оно, мовляв, цяця*”.

³² “*Ходив і скрізь натикався на твої “святі” сліди. Акуратенькі, рівенькі, як у лиса*”.

Skovoroda as Hypocritical

The idiom *to blow smoke into someone's eyes* encapsulates Korinets' perception of Skovoroda as a hypocrite, someone attempting to appear better than he truly is: "*And you **blow smoke into people's eyes**, pretending your soul is so exceptional! But it's just like everyone else's – only **craftier, shriveled** up. And it won't stand up for anyone*"³³ (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 41).

The phrase *to blow smoke into people's eyes* underscores Korinets' belief that Skovoroda creates an illusion, deceiving others into thinking he is morally superior. This accusation is amplified by the ironic tone of *pretending your soul is so exceptional*, which mocks Skovoroda's perceived attempts to present himself as pure and unique. The metaphorical adjectives *crafty* and *shriveled* emphasize Korinets' view of Skovoroda's soul as not only ordinary but also cunning and detached, unworthy of the moral pedestal he appears to claim.

Through this critique, Korinets dismantles the image of Skovoroda as a moral paragon, suggesting that beneath the façade lies a flawed, human soul – no different from others, and perhaps even less virtuous.

Skovoroda as Chaste

Skovoroda's lifelong celibacy becomes a point of ridicule in Korinets' critique, as he uses the term *divych* [maiden, virgin] to describe the philosopher: "*That's probably a lie... You're **a maiden**. You don't know what it's like – **burning flesh***" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 39)³⁴.

The noun *divych* [maiden], with its gendered connotation, is intended to demean Skovoroda, framing his chastity as a weakness or lack of worldly experience. The phrase *burning flesh* introduces a contrast between corporeal passion and the philosopher's ascetic lifestyle, implicitly questioning whether Skovoroda's abstinence reflects strength of character or an inability to engage with life's more visceral aspects.

Skovoroda as an Isolated Sage, a Philosopher Devoid of Compassion

Korinets, while acknowledging Skovoroda's intellectual superiority, questions the **practical value** of the philosopher's wisdom – a tension clearly manifested in the communicative situation represented in the dialogue:

"*Everyone lies. You don't know people well.*"

'I have studied them all my life. I listen... I see...'

'Whom?'

'A human being.'

'Do you really see? What can you know about them if you have lived all your life in a cocoon?'

³³ "*І пускаєш дим у вічі, буцімто душа в тебе – он яка! А вона – як у всіх. Тільки хитріша. Присушена. Її не заступиться вона ні за кого....*"

³⁴ "*Мабуть брехня... Ти – дівич. І не знаєш, що то таке – гаряча плоть*".

'I have lived – and still live – among people.'

'In your own cocoon. Within your own soul, your own thoughts. "With people, for people." Have you ever done anyone real good? Ever felt pity for anyone? ... Except for the yellow-breasted bird. And I feel pity... for the glorious Sich, for the lost Hetmanate.'"
(Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 40)³⁵.

The passage constructs a dialogic tension that embodies the pragmatics of confrontation – a sequence of speech acts of challenge, contradiction, and provocation. Korinets resorts to rhetorical questioning, which further amplifies the polemical tone of the exchange.

In Skovoroda's speech, philosophical and generalizing lexis predominates, while the lexeme "human being" functions as a conceptual marker of inner cognition. Korinets's language, by contrast, is emotionally evaluative, expressive, and grounded in everyday vocabulary. Accordingly, the author constructs an antithesis between two linguistic worlds – the elevated, almost metaphysical, and the realistic.

At the same time, Skovoroda's linguistic defeat becomes apparent: the philosopher responds in abstract terms, whereas Korinets appeals to concrete action, thus shifting the communicative advantage to the pragmatic level of lived experience.

Skovoroda as Intelligent

Despite his criticisms, Korinets acknowledges Skovoroda's intellectual prowess: *"Well, well, spin your little **academic gears**. You knew all the **Livys** and **Ciceros** by heart"* (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 38)³⁶.

Here, the terms *Livys* and *Ciceros* are used metaphorically to denote Skovoroda's erudition and scholarly achievements. However, the phrase is laden with irony, with Korinets belittling the practical value of Skovoroda's knowledge. The metaphor *academic gears* implies mechanical, overly academic thinking, suggesting that Skovoroda's intellect lacks connection to real-life experiences. This critique highlights a perceived gap between Skovoroda's theoretical wisdom and practical understanding, further diminishing his stature in Korinets' eyes.

Skovoroda as a Respected Figure

³⁵ "Брежуть усі. Погано знаєш людей"

'Увесь вік вивчаю. Слухаю її... Бачу...

'Кого?'

'Людину'.

'А бачиш? Що ти про неї можеш знати, коли сам прожив у коконі?'

'Прожив і живу серед людей'.

'У власному коконі. Власної душі, власних думок. 'З людьми, для людей'. Зробив кому-небудь справжнє добро? Пожальов кого-небудь?... Окрім пташки жовтобокої. А мені жаль... Січі славної, гетьманщини'".

³⁶ "Ну, ну, **покрути своїми спудейськими коліщатами. Ти ж всіх Лівіїв, Цицеронів знав напам'ять**".

Despite his critical tone, Korinets cannot deny Skovoroda's broad influence and the respect he commands across societal divides: "*How do you manage it... Peasants love you... Nobles love you*" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 39)³⁷.

This rhetorical question underscores Skovoroda's remarkable ability to connect with both the lower and upper classes, highlighting his universal appeal. The juxtaposition of *peasants* and *nobles* reflects the wide spectrum of people who admire him, demonstrating his charisma and capacity to resonate with individuals from all walks of life. Even in his critique, Korinets acknowledges the extraordinary nature of Skovoroda's influence.

Prompting Skovoroda's Introspection

The conversation with Korinets forces Skovoroda to reflect on his life and choices. Korinets' rhetorical question lingers in the philosopher's mind: "*And you... You lived as though you floated along in a trough on water. But did you ever think: what if you miscalculated*" (Мушкетик/Mushketyk, 1992, с. 42)³⁸.

This metaphor of floating passively in a trough suggests a life of detachment or avoidance, devoid of deeper engagement or accountability. The question *what if you miscalculated?* introduces doubt, compelling Skovoroda to consider whether his choices and philosophies were truly meaningful or simply an illusion of righteousness.

Korinets' perception of Skovoroda reveals a multidimensional critique, highlighting both the philosopher's strengths and weaknesses:

Hypocrisy and Superficiality

Through idioms, metaphors, and irony, Korinets portrays Skovoroda as someone who hides behind a façade of virtue and moral superiority, questioning the authenticity of his character.

- **Chastity and Detachment:** Skovoroda's asceticism is mocked as a sign of inexperience, reflecting Korinets' belief that the philosopher lacks a full understanding of human existence.

- **Intellectual Brilliance:** While acknowledging Skovoroda's scholarly achievements, Korinets criticizes their practical value, suggesting that they fail to address real-life complexities.

- **Universal Respect:** Despite his criticism, Korinets admires Skovoroda's ability to earn respect and admiration across societal boundaries, underscoring his unique charisma and influence.

- **Philosophical Reflection:** The encounter forces Skovoroda into self-reflection, introducing an element of doubt about the validity of his life's choices and philosophies.

³⁷ "І як то воно в тебе виходить... Мужики тебе люблять... Пани люблять ...".

³⁸ "А ось ти... Прожив, неначе у ночві по воді проплавав. А не думав: *раптом дав хука?*".

This nuanced portrayal adds depth to Skovoroda's character, presenting him not as an untouchable icon but as a human being subject to critique, introspection, and growth. Through Korinets' lens, Mushketyk emphasizes the complexities of Skovoroda's legacy, capturing both his vulnerabilities and his enduring significance.

The juxtaposition of Skovoroda's encounters with Myslavskyi and Korinets reveals two opposing interpretive vectors within Mushketyk's novella. Through Myslavskyi's perspective, the philosopher embodies absolute freedom and spiritual independence, provoking envy and admiration. Conversely, Korinets perceives him as proud, detached, and hypocritical – a man alienated from human warmth. The coexistence of these interpretations constructs a deliberate narrative ambivalence, reflecting the duality of Skovoroda's legacy in Ukrainian cultural consciousness. Thus, Mushketyk's linguistic portrait oscillates between sanctification and demythologization, emphasizing not a single "truth" about the philosopher but a polyphonic vision of his humanity.

Conclusions

Thus, when analyzing the character world of Mushketyk's novella *The Devil Never Sleeps*, particular attention should be given to the figure of Hryhorii Savych Skovoroda, the central character of the work. The author constructs a linguistic image of the philosopher, offering his own interpretation to the readers. He presents Skovoroda as perceived by his former classmates, Myslavskyi and Korinets, and also through the perspectives of tertiary characters, such as the innkeepers.

The contrasting portrayals of Skovoroda in the episodes with Myslavskyi and Korinets encapsulate the novella's central philosophical tension between idealization and humanization. By analyzing the linguistic realization of this duality, the present study clarifies how Mushketyk bridges canonical reverence with psychological realism, thereby contributing a new interpretive dimension to the literary image of the Ukrainian philosopher. The multidimensionality of Skovoroda's image is manifested through a spectrum of linguistic and narrative strategies that balance reverence with critique. While the novella retains elements of the traditional idealization of the philosopher as a virtuous wanderer, Mushketyk simultaneously introduces psychological depth and irony, preventing the image from becoming one-dimensional or purely hagiographic.

The dominant concepts in the portrayal of Skovoroda are **EXTERNAL TRAITS** and **INTERNAL TRAITS**, with frames such as age, height, clothing, and character being particularly prominent. Within each concept, specific semantic dimensions can be identified.

In the minds of other characters, Skovoroda is depicted as intelligent, chaste, a paragon of virtues, an outstanding writer, a wanderer, an ascetic, an elderly individual, a free person, as well as cunning and arrogant.

The semantic domain of *self-identification (I)* is represented through artistic-semantic constructs such as *I am lonely*, *I am experienced*, *I am elderly*, and *I am a teetotaler*.

Additionally, the key concepts associated with the character include **NATURE**, **KNOWLEDGE**, and **RIGHTEOUSNESS**. These concepts encapsulate the essence of Skovoroda as portrayed in the novella, offering a multidimensional view of his character that blends his virtues, flaws, and philosophical ideals.

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