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**O. O. Spirkina****MYKOLA NEHODA: THE PORTRAIT AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE EPOCH**

*The course of life and career of the well-known Ukrainian poet, novelist, playwright and public figure Mykola Negoda is considered. Especially the writer's patriotism, his love to the native land, the historical heritage of our nation, the Ukrainians' traditions and customs are underlined. The unbelievable zeal and talent of the representative of the Cherkasy creative intelligentsia are shown. The materials of the article may be useful for further study of the history of Ukraine and the history of Ukrainian culture.*

**Keywords:** *poet, novelist, playwright, writer, public figure, traditions and customs, creative intelligentsia.*

Nowadays, in the forefront of national revival, intellectuals in Ukraine are on the top of socio-political and cultural life, influencing its character and tendency of development. Especially literary intellectuals have taken clear civil position. Its role as a creator of new cultural values in conditions of national mental revival is continually growing. To take it into consideration, we consider it necessary to show life and creative way of a notable Ukrainian poet, dramatist and public figure – Mykola Todosiiiovych Nehoda.

Pages in a number of literary reference books [1–5], anthologies [6], manuals [7], books of regional ethnography [8] are dedicated to the life and creative work of the writer. His name is brought to «Ukrainian literary encyclopedia» [9]. But most articles about M. T. Nehoda are publicistic, written by his countrymen, writers from Cherkasy region and journalists V. T. Polishchyk [10], S. L. Nosan [11–13], P. P. Lynovytskyi [14] and others [15–20] for serial publications or interviews, which were given to journalists by his friends [21–22], memoirs [23] and the autobiographical story [24]. So, diversity and complexity of his figure have not been yet studied enough. Thus, in our view, it is necessary to research the history of life and creative work of the famous countryman – our contemporary M. T. Nehoda, first of all, in the culturological and historical aspects.

Mykola Todosiiiovych Nehoda was born on January, 9, 1928 in the village of Buzukiv (now as a part of the village of Stepanky) of Kyiv (now Cherkasy) region in the peasant family [25]. As a little boy he survived Holodomor of 1932–1933. He told about those difficult times in the poem «Frosty Sun» and in the autobiographical story «Confession to myself» [24]. He was rescued from starvation by his elder brother and sister, who took Mykola to Cherkasy. The half-conscious boy was found by a militiaman, who brought him to the children's home. Mykola lived there two years. After returning home, Mykola Nehoda could not go to school for some time, because he had not any shoes, but he studied at home on his own.

In the third form of Buzukiv primary school M. T. Nehoda started to write poems and correspond with the poet and academician P. H. Tychyna. On March, 3, 1939 he sent a letter with his first poem «The Best Name» (about Stalin) [26] to the famous Soviet poet. The poem was without rhyme and P. H. Tychyna pointed at that to the young poet. Soon, they began to correspond and became friends forever. It became known about their correspondence due to the article «Academician and Pupil», which was published in the Cherkasy newspaper «Commune's Flag» on January, 27, 1941 [8, 209].

It is necessary to underline, that M. T. Nehoda was truly pleased and honored P. H. Tychyna all his life and considered him for his friend and teacher. As a schoolboy he sent him letters and poems, as an adult he wrote articles about the poet [27], corresponded with him and his wife [28]. Corresponding with L. P. Tychyna after the death of the literary man, M. T. Nehoda wrote: «...I wanted to express gratitude to him for all his cares, especially in my childhood. I would not have been in school without his help. Pavlo Hryhorovych, having received the letter from me, a schoolboy of the third form, wrote to the Local Education Authority, the principal of school asking them to pay attention to and help me...» [29, 16].

During World War II M. T. Nehoda was only 13 years old, but he actively fought with the enemy from January 1942 to January 1944. He was a member of an underground organization, a signalman of a secretary of a resistance district committee S. N. Palokha, a reconnaissance man of a partisan detachment under the command of P. A. Dybovyi, which was based in Kholodnoiarskyi forest. Mykola was wounded. For the merit beyond the call of duty and gallantry the young man was awarded with two Orders of the Patriotic War of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, the Order «For Personal Courage» of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Class and medals [30, 5].

Soon, after liberating Cherkasy region from the Nazi's invasion, M. T. Nehoda began a journalist activity, he even did not have the certificate of secondary education: from November 1944 he worked in a newspaper office «Cherkasy News», from March 1947 he worked as an executive secretary of Smila's newspaper «Red Flag» [8, 210].

Only in 1949 M. T. Nehoda passed all exams without attending classes of secondary school and right away entered Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv on the department of journalism. Since the first year of study he worked as a regular employee in the newspaper office of «Kyiv's Truth», published articles in magazines «Homeland», «Dnipro», «Generation». But in 1952 M. T. Nehoda moved to Maxim Gorky Literature Institute (Moscow) under the Union of Writers of the USSR, from which he graduated in 1956. It is necessary to say, that his first collection of poems «Sons are Growing up» (1955) was published during his study in the university. In 1956 he was admitted to the members of the Union of Writers of the USSR.

After receiving diploma, M. T. Nehoda returned to Cherkasy, where he edited almanac «Dnipro's Stars», for a long time he worked as an executive editor of the region's literary association, from 1977 to 1988 he was on the head of Cherkasy association of the Union of Writers of the UkrSSR and was engaged in book-writing.

M. T. Nehoda is the author of many poems, songs, fictional and documentary prose, translations and publicistic writing. He has perfect dramas, novels, short novels and poems.

The themes of his works cover all spheres of cultural life of Ukrainian people. First of all, it is, of course, the theme of World War II, the immediate participant of which he was (the third part of the novel «Kholodnyi Yar», the poem «The Son of the Age», poems «Blood Brother's Oath», «Modern Ballad», «Let's Go to the Front Line» and others).

Nehoda's creative work did not miss the theme of Taras Shevchenko. The best poem on this topic was dramatic poem «Ballad about Kobzar». It was the main theme in the poem «Amanhul» and cycle of poems «By Taras's Paths». Besides, some his poems about T. H. Shevchenko have become songs («Taras's Mother», «Taras's Willow» and many others) [31]. Scientist V. T. Polishchuk notes, that songs about Kobzar, among which is a poem «Eyes of Shevchenko», can be carried to the best works of the poet on this theme [23].

A lot of songs were written on the base of Nehoda's poems [25], the most famous of them is «By Steppe, by Steppe...» (music by A. M. Pashchkevych, performance by People's Artist of Ukraine O. P. Pavlovska) [30], which became a unique requiem in the former USSR. Annually, in honor of the dead in cruel battles of World War II it was obligated to play this song.

In 1998 M. T. Nehoda, a lyric writer and the author of the song-requiem «By Steppe, by Steppe...» [32–33], was awarded with the memorable badge «For the Merit to the City» (Cherkasy) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class for the considerable fictional and publicistic work and for the poet's creative work on Shevchenko theme.

A lot of other famous songs were written on the base of M. T. Nehoda's poems. They are «White Gulls are Flying», «My Motherland, Motherland», «Above Son's Cradle», «Beyond Endless Field», «Endless Sea is Sinking», «Veterans' Youth», «Chyhyryn Ballad» and others. The destiny of the song «Green Oak Forest» is interesting and meaningful. As a rule, it is called a folk song, although M. T. Nehoda wrote the words.

One more poet's theme was B. Khmelnytskyi and the Khmelnytskyi Uprising. For instance, M. T. Nehoda wrote the dramatic poem «Hetman» (1995) for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of B. Khmelnytskyi's birth. It is necessary to underline, that this poem and a collection of poems «Black Pain» (1994) were awarded with the regional literary and publicistic reward «Bank of Hopes» named after V. A. Symonenko.

The history of the native region is the main theme of poet's creative work, which was interesting for him for all his life. For example, for almost half a century the theme of freedom-loving Kholodnyi Yar attracted M. T. Nehoda. And in 2005 he wrote the novel «Otaman Mamai» about one of the best knights of the struggle for Ukrainian freedom, an intellectual, teacher and scientist Ya. P. Shchyrytsia. He was the legendary «otaman Mamai» from the village of Borovytsia of Chyhyryn district. His another historical novel «God's Punishment» about the 1980–1990 s events in Cherkasy region and the crash of the imperial-soviet system was published in 2005.

The collection «Novolituimo» was devoted to the events of the Orange Revolution. The problems of the present time were described in it.

But, «Kholodnyi Yar» (1971) is his first historical novel, which evokes until now a mixed reaction from both historians and readers. It is necessary to underline, that in the 1970 s the novel was mercilessly criticized by press and in the party conferences, because of it M. T. Nehoda got his first heart attack [35]. However, we cannot say that the literary man was followed and repressed by KGB in that period. Moreover, at that time M. T. Nehoda as the head of the Cherkasy literary association was elected five times as a deputy of the Regional Soviet in Kaniv and then in Vasiutyntsi electoral areas.

M. T. Nehoda's works, dedicated to the famous Ukrainian artist D. H. Narbut – the poem «Narbutivka» and the documentary drama «Danylo Narbut» (1996) – are on the special place in his creative work, in author's view.

It is necessary to say, that the friendship between two famous Ukrainian talented people was very strong for all their lives.

In 1998 M. T. Nehoda got his second heart attack. As a result of a long illness the poet got the first group disability. During his hospital stay D. H. Narbut died, but M. T. Nehoda's relatives and friends hid information about his friend's death for several months [35].

M. T. Nehoda, Honored Artist of Ukraine and the owner of the memorable badge «For the Merit to the City» (Cherkasy) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, died on September, 11, 2008. He made a considerable contribution into the development of the Ukrainian literature. The literary man gave his diverse talent for serving to Ukrainian people, literature, culture and he gave all his life for serving national spiritual revival of independent Ukraine.

Thus, Mykola Todosiyovych Nehoda is the real son of his people, Ukrainian intellectual who loved Ukraine for all his life, who did everything to revive Ukrainian traditions, the Ukrainian language and the Ukrainian past. To our mind, it is very important to study lives of such extraordinary people as M. T. Nehoda in order to teach the young generation of Ukrainians through the examples of their lives and creative work to develop, grow up, nourish the love to the Motherland, native region and Ukrainian people. It is impossible to build a strong, highly-moral state without the generation of patriots, devoted sons and daughters of their people, mother-Ukraine.

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**О. О. Спиркіна**

**Микола Негода: портрет на тлі епохи**

Розглянуто життєвий та творчий шлях відомого українського поета, прозаїка, драматурга та громадського діяча Миколи Негоди. Особливо підкреслюється патріотизм письменника, його любов до рідного краю, історичної спадщини українського народу, традицій і звичаїв українців. Показано неймовірну працьовитість і талант представника черкаської творчої інтелігенції. Матеріали статті можуть бути корисними для подальшого вивчення історії України та історії української культури.

**Ключові слова:** поет, прозаїк, драматург, письменник, громадський діяч, традиції та звичаї, творча інтелігенція.

**О. А. Спиркина**

**Николай Негода: портрет на фоне эпохи**

Рассмотрен жизненный и творческий путь известного украинского поэта, прозаика, драматурга и общественного деятеля Николая Негоды. Особенно подчеркивается патриотизм писателя, его любовь к родному краю, историческому наследию украинского народа, традициям и обычаям украинцев. Показано невероятное трудолюбие и талант представителя черкасской творческой интеллигенции. Материалы статьи могут быть полезными для дальнейшего изучения истории Украины и истории украинской культуры.

**Ключевые слова:** поэт, прозаик, драматург, писатель, общественный деятель, традиции и обычаи, творческая интеллигенция.