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Narrative and Polemic Aspects of Epistolary Communication in Ukraine of the Late 16th - Early 17th Century

Abstract: The article analyses epistles as a form of communication in the framework of Ukrainian publicism in the late 16th - early 17th century, which is characterized by the interaction of various polemical forms of expression and their influence on the recipient. It is noted that epistolary texts were among the most popular forms at that time, and

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their role was strengthened with the proclamation of the Union of Brest (1596). Being able to promptly convey information, along with the development of methods for active polemicization, they came to be established as a means of communication, so epistolary works provided the opportunity to express ideas and, through various forms, convey information about important social and political problems to the addressees (listeners, recipients). Due to this feature, they increased the author's influence on the readers. Private correspondence, which had the status of political documents at that time, is distinguished as a special category as it mainly expressed the viewpoints of representatives of different religious denominations. The exchange of letters between the persons involved in the Brest Union intensified considerably. It is emphasized that because of certain genre features epistolary works of that time could be viewed as open letters/epistles. Such a genre form was also popular in Western European Protestant publicism of the 17th century. The article considers the narrative and polemical aspects of epistolary texts, using examples from correspondence by Ipatii Potii, Kliryk Ostrozkyi and Ivan Vyshenskyi.

Keywords: narrative, publicism, communication, epistles, reception, correspondence, rhetoric, ancient oratory.

Problem statement. Epistolary communication is a special kind of written communication between the participants of this process. Its goal is to implement multi-aspect person-to-person interaction with the addressee and the addresser exchanging their roles. A unit of epistolary communication is a "letter," the simplest unit of communication. When taking a closer look at the texts of Ukrainian polemical and publicistic prose of the late 16th – early 17th century, one can observe certain communicative specificity. By stating the problem in this particular way, one can broaden the aesthetic function of old texts, thus adding more aspects in speculations about primary sources and origins of Ukrainian publicism. Common features of the then polemical publicism can be described more widely through addressing their poetics as a comprehensive system of analysing and assessing text through the prism of communication

theory. The authors believe that such an approach to polemical publicism of the late 16th – early 17th century will make it possible for the new sides of this genre to be more distinct, describe their explicitly presented dialogue-based nature, and at the same time, go beyond the closed boundaries of literary review by projecting it into the context of sociocultural communication issues.

Against the background of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation conflict taking place in the 16th-century Western Europe, Ukrainian polemical publicism of the late 16th – early 17th century (which, according to the authors, includes epistolary communication as well) raised the issues of establishing a national church, creating an ideal model of Christian community, and strived to politicise them. The authors' intents never went beyond the limits of a certain rhetoric and communicative model, and this resulted in persistent modelling of genre forms, narrative structure and rhetoric figures of speech with observation of certain canons and stereotypes typical for contemporary thinking, rather than in a free search of an original style.

On the other hand, artistic practice of polemist in the late 16th – early 17th century did not claim to change the fundamental model, while fitting perfectly into the framework of humanistic and Renaissance tendencies. As indicated by almost all scholars, Renaissance achievements affected the Ukrainian space of culture in the late 16th century only partially, with a wave of all-European baroque style, which appeared as a creative synthesis of antique art and specific features of local medieval culture. To a certain extent, an important condition for Western European cultural achievements to infiltrate to Ukrainian lands was activation of a system of cultural specimens from the Western European context, this system being the result of the Ukrainian-Polish interaction in the field of art and education. It was stimulated by the need to reach the same level of covering interreligious problems as had already been achieved by Jesuits and Protestants. As a consequence of this process, old traditions of polemical publicism remained relevant, forming a corresponding type of publicistic text which, in its turn, required implementation of effective ways to update the medieval tradition through reviewing foundations of the author's world outlook and overcoming of medieval asceticism.

Guided by the experience of Protestant-Catholic polemics of the Reformation period, polemist also considered the heritage of local literatures represented by their opponents, primarily Polish theologians and secular authors.

Ukrainian polemical publicism of the late 16th – early 17th century was also characterized by interaction of diverse forms of expression and influence on the recipients, and corresponding modifications, while it remained to be affected by religious preferences of the authors.

A special emphasis in polemical publicism was laid on specific historical conditions, along with transformation of universal categories in church dogmas. In those days, a polemist was a generator of ideas and creator of aesthetic values. That is why publicism of that time combined informative, directive, communicative, expressive and aesthetic functions. The directive function was related directly to the topic of the text, which was modelled as an immediate reaction to the problems raised in the requesting text. It outlined the range of urgency of a problem and shaped public opinion. The informative function suggested the ability of publicism to draw public attention to relevant issues and determine the criteria for their evaluation. In every polemical text, one can identify a complex of ideas within the framework of which the author interpreted his understanding of, and solutions to certain interreligious problems, and, simultaneously set the rhetoric means that would help to solve them, in his opinion. In order to attract the addressee, polemist very often resorted to manipulations: they would interpret and comment one fact while ignoring another. The selection and processing of the interpreted material were usually determined by its urgency for the contemporary society (i.e. by the issues that were raised). The selection and interpretation of events were largely dictated by the interest of readers, who expected certain issues to be covered and stimulate them to activity. This approach determined heavy-handed treatment of the material. Being aware of how effective their works were in shaping public opinion, the authors added a lot of information on social and political life, which made *denomination-related* accents more distinct.

There are several factors that acted as preconditions of formation and self-determination of polemical and publicistic prose of the late 16th – early 17th century as an independent and full-fledged genre, promoted its separation into a particular way of communication and recognition of its publicistic nature. Achieving this status certainly required mass distribution and replication, and such an opportunity emerged with the invention of book printing. All polemical texts were published, either in Ukrainian or Polish, in the late 16th – early 17th centuries by printing houses of Ostrog, Lviv, Vilno and Kyiv. An effective

factor was filling the texts with relevant political issues and focusing on mass audience, with consideration of the contemporary historical context.

Literature review. Up to date, a considerable amount of communicative analysis in various fields has been acquired. Each scholarly model is aimed to actualize a certain communicative element: the addressee (M. Bakhtin¹) or the code (R. Bart², Yu. Lotman³).

In the recent years, other approaches to studying problems of text have been practiced. It has become an object of attention for such sciences as linguistics, psychology and psycholinguistics. The theoretic importance of such approaches is that they help to form a deeper, more convincing and integral idea of text. These approaches make it possible to study new aspects in thorough analysis of the text material, and to go deeper in understanding its essence and contents. This process is accompanied by the review of previously formed and stable provisions on the organization and semantics of the text, and encourages scholars to engage in new research on its typology and structure.

The notion of “text structure” is now the focus of attention not only for conventional textual critics. Effectiveness of multidirectional research on this topic will determine the success in solving many problems of text as a means of communication as well as problems of its understanding and interpretation. This notion includes primarily the connected type of organizing semantic content at the level of integrity.

All research paradigms of text should be based on awareness of its communicative strategy as one of the aspects of its existence. According to Anastasiia Mamalyga, a communicative system is the basis for linguistic essence of text, while other types of systematicity are subordinate to the communicative system (semantic, stylistic, syntactic, informative and other systems). It performs the function of uniting the potential of all these systems in order to organize, embody and preserve the efficiency of communication (Mamalyga⁴).

¹ M. M. Baxty`n, *Estety`ka slovesnogo tvorchestva*, M.: Y`skusstvo, 1979.

² R. Bart, *Vvedeny`e v struktrnij analiz povestvovatel`nyx tekstov*, [in:] *Francuzskaya semy`oty`ka: ot strukturaly`zma k poststrukturaly`zmu*. Per. s fr. y` vstup. st. G.K.Kosy`kova. M.: Y`zdatel`skaya gruppa «Progress», 2000, pp. 196–238.

³ Yu.V. Lotman, *Vnutry`myslyashhy`x my`rov*, *Chelovek – Tekst – Semy`osfera – Y`story`ya*, M. „Yazyky` russkoj kul`tury” 1996, XIV, p. 448, By`bly`ogr. pp. 427–443.

⁴ A. Mamalyg`a, *Lingvokomunikaty`vna problematy`ka tekstu i rozvy`tok suchasnoyi zhurnalisty`ky`*, <http://juoumlibuniv.ua/index.php?act=article@article+1045> [online 02.04.2021].

The communicative strategy of text consists in such development of its main idea, when its meaning is revealed to the fullest extent, and it can be used to influence the communicative situation. This goal affects the choice of a composition plan, the approaches used to introduce and interpret facts, and the style of presentation. The strategy is developed inseparably from the general addressing and targeting a certain audience.

The problem of theoretical and historical-literary consideration of genre forms is of particular relevance today, and solving this problem will not only enrich our idea about the literary process of that day and specificity of existence of various genres, but it will also broaden the prospects for studying hereditary connections in old Ukrainian writings, and dispel doubts as to commonality in polemical-publicist texts and modern journalism, which are the starting point in self-determination of publicistic genres themselves.

Characterizing them, one should bear in mind that despite a number of historical and philological research works available at the moment, the polemical-publicistic prose of the late 16th – early 17th century is still interpreted ambiguously. The authors believe that it should be considered in the historical context as it influenced the correlation of the domestic oratory-predicatory model of preachment with the model of European interreligious disputes, and production of corresponding genre forms to meet the requirements of the day, with these forms changing and improving while retaining the publicistic style formed at a certain stage of their development.

In the light of various approaches to defining the phenomenon of epistolary communication in the context of interreligious publicism of the late 16th – early 17th century, letters can be considered both as a specific text of business epistolary genre, within the framework of a special epistolary style, and as an example of epistolary genre.

Presentation of the core material. At that time, epistolary texts were among the most popular forms of writings, and due to inherent mobility their role intensified after the Union of Brest was proclaimed in 1596. They promptly conveyed information, and with the development of methods for active polemization, they were established as a means of communication. Epistolary works provided the opportunity to express ideas and, through various forms, convey information ways about important social and political problems to the addressees (listeners, recipients). Consequently, they increased the author's in-

fluence on the readers. The impact of the author on the potential recipient was intensified due to the new function epistolary texts obtained. At that time, even private correspondence had the status of political documents, as these writings mainly promulgated positions of the representatives of different religious denominations. The exchange of letters between the persons involved in the Brest Union was especially intensified. The authors would like to bring into focus the fact that epistolary texts of that period could be considered as open letters-epistles due to their genre-related peculiarities. This genre was also popular in Western European Protestant publicistic writing of the 16th century.

The development of epistolary forms of writing resulted from the increasing communicative openness of society in the early 17th century, and was a kind of response to religious views of opponents. Their structure indicates that such letters were mostly created to present the facts that the addressee was most interested in. It made the letters mostly subjective, as they were presented with the clearly stated ideological position of the author.

Epistolary genres were prominent forms of Byzantine publicism (letters by Theodore Studites, Nicholas I Mystikos, Patriarch Photius). In medieval Europe, correspondence between monasteries was a form of public doctrinal dispute – a tradition continued in Martin Luther's writings. The correspondence between the Russian Tsar Ivan IV and Prince Andrei Kurbsky is an example of epistolary publicism in Eastern Slavic lands.

Letters of polemic prose were perceived as a separate genre with its own peculiar rules. In spite of containing relatively less specific historical material when compared with other genres, they provided unique information that gave the idea of the author's world outlook, religious and aesthetic values. The representatives of this genre are believed to be Ipatii Potii, Kliryk Ostrozhkyi and Ivan Vyshenskyi. Some polemicists used the form of open letters as a structural unit of polemical writings with broader content, adding into the context of the letter an appeal to individuals ("do chitel'nika," to the reader) or to the people in general. An example of this technique can be found in the polemic work "Kliuchi tsarstva nebesnoho" (Keys to the kingdom of heaven) by Herasym Smotrytskyi, who added an epistle "Do narodov ruskykh korotkaia, a pylkaia predmovka" (A short yet passionate foreword to Rus people) to his work. There is a similar emotional element in the epistle written by Khrystofor Filalet to senators and szlachta (Polish nobility) in the final part of his

“Apokryśyś” (Antithesis). However, open letters as an independent genre of polemical publicism can also be found in the works of the above-mentioned polemicists.

Usually, the main topics of such letters were religious problems, requests for the addressee’s favour and support in certain issues, and often they contained caustic remarks and ironical descriptions (e.g. Ipatii Potii addressing a “run-of-the-mill” Kliryk Ostrozkyi). However, if epistles were addressed to statesmen and officials, the authors tried to keep a certain distance, and their reproaches were often disguised as panegyrics (e.g. Ipatii Potii writing to vice chancellor Lev Sapega). Very often, polemicists expanded the scope to their epistolary works to express their political and religious views or solve important issues. As the author’s medieval consciousness did not differentiate clearly between didactic, ideological and pastoral activities, any contemporary text (a scientific or theological treatise, official document or letter) was supposed to satisfy aesthetic tastes of the day, in addition to its primary functional purpose. Therefore, authors attached special importance to style, originality of comparisons, effective influence on the addressee, and it spoke for their level of education and literary skill. At the level of content, it was expressed in the use of clichéd forms of address: “Osveconomu knyazhati a yasne velmozhnomu panu Kostjantynu (Kostjantinovichu), bozhoyu milostyu knyazhati Ostrozskomu, voevode kievskomu, marshalkovi zemli volynskoe, staroste volodimerskomu, panu svoemu milostivomu, mnogogreshnyi sluga cerkvi bozhoe i bogomolets ego korolevskoe milosti i vashoe knyazhickoe milosti Ipatij, episkop volodimirs’kyi i berestijskyi, dushevnago i telesnago zdraviya verne zychyt’, na chasy nezameronye, s fortunym na nova idem” (To venerable Prince and most illustrious ruler Kostiantyn (son of Kostiantyn), by the grace of God the prince of Ostrog, the voivode of Kyiv, marshal of Volhynia, the starosta of Volodymyr, our merciful master, this letter is written by the sinful and humble servant of the God’s church, the devotee of his royal grace and your princely grace Ipatii, the bishop of Volodymyr and Berestia, wishing health of body and mind for numerous years, and good luck).⁵

⁵ P. Ipatii, *Lyst do kniazia Kostiantyna Ostrozkocho vid 3 chervnia 1598 r.*, “Ukrainski humanisty epokhy Vidrodzhennia”. Antolohiia: u 2 chastynakh, Naukova dumka, Kyiv 1995, Ch. 2, pp. 131–147.

The epistolary form of presenting information was cultivated in communication of Prince Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi with his followers and opponents, where some of his epistles were written with his own hand, and some were created by scribes on his behalf. These letters had a heterogeneous nature: some of the epistles are of little interest in terms of literature, while others have a touch of style and deliberate aesthetic quality. Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi showed great erudition and tolerance in his letters to Lviv brotherhood members and Ipatii Potii. His epistolary works cannot be considered outside of their social and political context, since the letters expressed his religious and national views. K. Ostrozkyi could influence the policy of the state and force others to take into account his opinion and fancies. All the above-mentioned features were manifested in his correspondence, which pictures an addresser who compares his own ideas with those of the addressee, and regrets having done little for the well-being of the nation on the one hand, but states categorically the correctness of the Orthodox faith, on the other hand.

In terms of genre and drawing on the experience of his predecessors, the correspondence of Ipatii Potii is interesting enough, exemplified by his letters to Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi, Kliryk Ostrozkyi, Mykhaylo Rohoza, Lev Sapega, Meletiy Smotrytskyi and local clergy. By the psychology of the epistolary narrator, his letters can be divided into two groups. In the first group, the narrator plays a role depending on the circumstances; he is prudent and does not urge his correspondents to accept the union, but substantiated his ideas by giving reasons. The context of the epistles shows a hidden conspiratorial tone of the narrator. In the second group of the letters, the addresser reveals himself entirely, defending his point of view openly and engaging in literary and psychological play.

The present-day scientific understanding of Ipatii Potii's works shows that he was one of the most evocative polemicists of his day, eagerly using such literary devices as humour, irony, sarcasm, and often went further in his writings than proprieties of language would allow.⁶ It can be traced in his works "Antyryzys" and "Otpys' na lyst' nyiakoho Kliryk Ostrozkyi bez'ymennoho"

⁶ N. Poplavska, *Polemisty. Rytoryka. Perekonuvannia (Ukrainska polemichno-publitsystychna proza kintsia XVI – poch. XVII st.)*, Ternopil 2007; R. Tkachuk, *Tvorchist mytropolyta Ipatiiia Potiia ta polemichna literatura na mezhi KhVI – pochatku KhVII st. Dzherela. Rytoryka. Dialoh*, Vydavnychy dim Dmytra Buraho, Kyiv 2011.

(A reply to the letter of a nameless Kliryk Ostrozkyi), where he used biting irony to jeer at his opponent for disgraceful conduct of their polemic. In his “Lyst do knyazhia Kostjantyna Ostrozkogo” (Letter to Prince Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi), the author appeals to the prince to join the Union, and not for the first time. With his letters, Ipatii Potii wanted to convince Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi because Potii was eager to see him among his followers after the Brest convocation. Furthermore, Ipatii Potii wanted to deprive Orthodox Christians of the support of Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi as a wealthy and influential statesman.⁷ This was the reason for the letter dated 3 June 1598 to be written. The epistle has a predatory intonation, which determines the nature of narrative code. In the letter, Potii appears as a Catholic apologist and defender of faith, who tried to bring the correctness of his own doctrine home to his Orthodox addressee. Therefore, the letter went beyond the formal boundaries of the epistolary genre and turned into the hermeneutical interpretation of the Holy Bible.

Probably, the author used all the above-mentioned cultural and political aspects only as a background for the development of theological and homiletic ideas. After all, the main difficulty of this situation for Potii was to use the exegetical method to prove that the Union was Divine Providence, while there was no reference to the Union in the Bible. Thus, the author of the epistle could only convince his addressee, who was a Christian like himself, by interpreting the Holy Bible in his favour. As a true master of homiletics, Potii used the contemporary background only as a preliminary stage to his theological model. For this reason, the informative tone would suddenly change to inspiring and ecstatic. From poetic elements, the author switched to quotations from the Old and New Testament as well as to allusions from Holy Tradition, using the name of Volodymyr Khrestytel (the Baptist) to reproach Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi for his support of the Orthodox Christians; meanwhile, the author reminds that he had become a bishop at Ostrozkyi’s discretion. Potii denies all the accusations that he might be going Rome without approval of the church synod, and he also descends to mentioning that he has many letters written by the Prince that prove his innocence and could be published. These were vibrant exam-

⁷ P. Ipatii. *Lyst do kniazia Kostiantyna Ostrozkoho vid 3 chervnia 1598 r.* “Ukrainski humanisty epokhy Vidrozhennia. Antolohiia”: u 2 chastynakh, Naukova dumka, Kyiv 1995, Ch. 2., pp. 131–147.

ples of Renaissance etiquette in literature. The final part of the letter contains numerous practical suggestions on establishing peace between churches, the analysis of political life in the Ukrainian lands of those days, and the criticism of his opponents' ignorance, although the keynote of this part is the reference to "Christ as Prince of Peace," merciful Lord, the Old Testament prophets, and quotations from apostolic Epistles.

On that occasion, Prince Ostrozkyi did not answer the letter himself but entrusted the task to one of the most active members of Ostrog group, Kliryk Ostrozkyi. Ipatii Potii reacted to the change of the addressee immediately. His resentment against the Prince for neglecting to give Potii a personal answer and ironical attitude to the author of the Prince's response were represented in the title of the next epistle: "Otpys na lyst niaakoho Klyryka Ostrozkoho bezymennoho, kotorij pysal do vladiky Volodimerskoho i Beresteiskoho" (A reply to the letter of a nameless Kliryk Ostrozkyi who wrote to the bishop of Volodymyr and Berestia). Mentioning "Antyryzys" in "Otpys" proves that the document can be dated to the late 1599. In the epistle, Ipatii Potii still hopes that he could convince Ostrozkyi to accept the Union. However, he seems mostly carried away in answering the accusations expressed by Kliryk Ostrozkyi. Potii jeers at Kliryk Ostrozkyi's failure to understand his letter to the Prince, reads him a lesson on a better selection of examples for reasoning, reproaches him for the probable use of Protestant sources, analyses the theological sources that Kliryk Ostrozkyi used, and never misses a chance to humiliate him for his ignorance and even for extensive use of quotations in interpreting matters of common knowledge. For example, "Potii is surprised at the multitude of quotations that Kliryk Ostrozkyi collected to prove the origins of Jesus Christ, and the fact that he built a church in Zion. Interpreting the New Testament history in his own fashion, Ipatii Potii leads his addressee to understanding that Peter the Apostle was the only apostle to receive permanent power and become the patron of the Roman Church. The polemic writer hassles Kliryk Ostrozkyi with coarse words but tries to refrain his temper when he mentions the Kyiv voivode, who seemed unwilling to communicate with Potii. There are reasons to suggest that Potii sent one more letter to Ostrozkyi, where he kindly requested the Prince to understand the matter and argued that the bishops had not infringed the unity of the Orthodox church, but they had only recognized the supremacy of the Pope that

Nataliya Poplavska, Inna Poplavska, Nataliia Lisniak, *Narrative and Polemic Aspects of Epistolary...*

would lead to bringing more order to the church affairs. Unfortunately, the second letter was not preserved.

Kliryk Ostrozkyi was a ground breaker in the search of genre for open polemic letters. Scholars believe that Kliryk Ostrozkyi was a pseudonym used by one of Ostrog Academy graduates. The most suitable candidates for this role include young Meletiy Smotrytskyi, Yov Boretskyi, Havrylo Dorofeiovych, or even archpriest Ihnatii of Ostrog. The list of Kliryk Ostrozkyi's polemic works is rather short, but it is full of oratorical pathetic elements "able to spark a massive political and public outcry in those days."⁸ Kliryk wrote two polemic letters to Ipatii Potii, probably following an order of Prince Ostrozkyi. They are "Otpys na lyst ... vebnoho Ottsa Ipatii" (A reply to the letter of... venerable Father Ipatii, 1598) and "Na druhyi lyst vebnoho Ottsia Ipatii" (A reply to the second letter of venerable Father Ipatii).

The first "Otpys na lyst ... vebnoho Ottsa Ipatii" consists of three parts: "Do chytelnyka" (To the reader), "Peredmovna lystu do ottsa yepyskopa" (An introduction for the letter to the Bishop), and "Lyst" (Letter). There is also an addition to the three parts, entitled "Ystoryia o lystrykyiskom sobore" (A story the Council of Florentine). In the foreword, the author, as well as his predecessors, offers excuses for starting the work that ought to be written by older and more experienced people. In this part, the author uses self-belittling forms that had been conventional for Ukrainian hagiography and oratorical writings since the times of Kyiv Rus. Of course, such element of obeisance was introduced into the text to rouse the curiosity of the reader by the fact that the author was ready to engage into a dialogue with a great Catholic polemist, Ipatii Potii. Kliryk Ostrozkyi explains his youthful and passionate approach by the use of allegorical comparisons, elaborated collection of biblical aphorisms, effective contrasting of facts from biblical history and contemporary realities. Hence, he concluded it was impossible to achieve an agreement between Greek and Latin clergy. Following the tradition of polemical prose, the author resorts to biblical parallels to recreate the opponent's image: he mentions Adam who yielded to temptation and lost access to paradise, and Judas Iscariot notorious for his betrayal. A kind of a psychological trick used in the letter is reminding the readers about the most negative episodes from the opponent's life, altho-

⁸ S.O. Yefremov, *Istoriia ukrainskoho pysmenstva*, Kyiv 1995, p. 124.

ugh the author does not abuse the satirical ridicule of the addressee. The writer mostly engaged himself in lyrical digressions in a form of monologue about the personified image of church, and philosophic reflections on eternal themes. He employs numerous quotations from the Bible to contradict his opponent's position: Kliryk Ostrozkyi asks why Potii is "throwing dust in people's eyes" so bravely and safely, while trying to "sweeten" the Union for the world.⁹

Kliryk Ostrozkyi did not always care to observe the canons of epistolary genre but wrote relying on his own taste instead. "Otpys" is dominated by judgmental tone, and some scholars saw elements of a pamphlet in this text. For example, L. Makhnovets noted: "Kliryk's 'Otpys' to Potii is a most restrained work among all letters that emerged from under passionate pens in the stormy years of the late 16th century... In this text, we can encounter an unconventional literary phenomenon of that time, the author's deliberate desire to achieve the beauty of poetic imagery, and the art of declamation... From time to time, the author indulges in the pathos typical for biblical prophets in order to express his grief and resentment..."¹⁰ P. Yaremenko defines the genre of "Otpys" as a pamphlet.¹¹

In the second "Otpys" Kliryk Ostrozkyi also showed himself as a true aesthete of words. However, he tried to use more retrospections, analyse events, and these techniques reveal the versatility of his style. The composition of the work adheres to the boundaries of the polemic canon. It consists of the address to "chytelnyka laskovoho" (kind reader) and six parts, which mostly interpret the issues raised in the first "Otpys". However, the reader can feel restraint, balance, absence of irony in the text, while it is dominated by reproaches. The author imitates a prophet, beginning the text with different sentences trying to persuade the opponent to believe in the importance of constancy in faith. Kliryk Ostrozkyi reasoned his thoughts with references to clerical authors with numerous quotations from their works, which makes the text more difficult to comprehend. At the end of "Otpys" the author introduced the image of mother with great inspiration and polemical skill. Her monologue-lamentation goes

⁹ O. Kliryk, *Otpys na lyst v boze velebnoho ottsa Ypatiia*, „Ukrainska literatura XIV–XVI st.”, Kyiv 1988, p. 254–264.

¹⁰ L. Makhnovets, *Satyra i humor ukrainskoi prozy XVI–XVII st.*, Kyiv 1964, pp. 290–291.

¹¹ P.K. Yaremenko, *Ukrainskyi pysmennyk–polemist Khrystofor Filalet i yoho "Apokrysys"*, Lviv 1964, p. 20.

beyond the scope of prose and symbolizes catharsis with tears of repentance. In the process, the epistolary form is ruined and the work becomes a poetic epistle written in a prose form. The interrogative-exclamatory sentences, multifaceted metaphors, and personifications create an extraordinary emotional impression from this text.

The letters whose general tone depended on the social status of the addressee also acquired an epistolary form in the second half of the 16th century. Due to the need for active influence on the reader, their publicistic features were reinforced, and they were becoming focused on specific topics. Skilful homilists used all available techniques to control emotions of their audience, and their letters then became an active genre of polemic and publicistic prose meant to interpret complicated social and historic processes in Ukrainian reality.

Such written appeals addressed to large groups of people were widely used back in the ancient times, and Epistles adapted with canonical texts of the Holy Scriptures added a special sacral tone. The form was used in the Pope's appeals to his subordinates with instructions on important political and church issues. Such letters have officially been known as apostolic decrees, and then bulls, since the 16th century.

Another interesting source is open letters-epistles written by Ivan Vyshenskyi, mostly dating back to the early 17th century. Despite the fact that the heritage of this author is the most explored in comparison with other polemicists, regrettably, such an important aspect in his creative activity still remains undiscovered. The epistolary form is used in almost all of the 16 known works by Ivan Vyshenskyi, where he appears as a tribune, an intermediary between God and people, an apostle and the Messenger. He approached any problem from the viewpoint of spirituality, appealing mostly to religious and patriotic feelings of Orthodox Christians. The author did not restrict himself to merely emotional arguments; he tried to convince his readers with logical judgment as well. Vyshenskyi acted as a passionate advocate of the truth, which he treated as the guiding divine grace in human beings, their spirit and mind rather than animal, fleshly instincts; the author sought for this truth in the Holy Bible.

“Poslannia do starytsi Domnykyi” (An epistle to nun Domnykia), “Poslannia Ivivskomu bratstvu” (An epistle to Lviv Brotherhood), “Poslannia Yovu Kniahynytskomu” (An epistle to Yov Kniahynytskyi) are actual examples of epistolary texts. They are addressed to specific individuals and they possess

epistolary features and attributes. In the epistle to nun Domnykia of Lviv, which was a reply to the letter of Yurii Rohatynets, the head of Lviv Brotherhood, Ivan Vyshenskyi cited important autobiographic facts of his stay in Lviv, tried to analyse the cause of the conflict with Lviv Brotherhood members, who (in the author's opinion) implemented wrong principle of teaching in their schools. Therefore, Vyshenskyi denied the ideas of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, qualifying him as a pagan. It should be added, though, that works of Areopagite played an important role in the introduction of classic literature to the 16th–17th century readers; his works brought a number of the so-called Plato's phrases to the cultural and clerical strata of society. Patristic literature of this kind was well-known among polemical writers. In this manner, Ivan Vyshenskyi set forth his ideas on education. In some parts of the letter, the text takes the form of a calm conversation with a person the author knows well.

The appeal to Yov Kniahynytskyi, a close friend, illustrates the true and natural image of the author no longer disguised as a prophet or spiritual guide. The writer expresses his humanely deep longing for home and his hopes to visit the homeland again.¹²

Conclusions. Thus, the post-Union blossom of polemic writing vitalized the advancement of epistolary genres, which due to their laconic brevity were probably best suited to serve as a field for disputes between religious denominations. The late 16th – early 17th century can be characterized by a massive emergence of epistolary genres and their active development. The above-mentioned texts create a unique ensemble united by common wordplay, polemic talent as well as the use of each other's polemic range, which is manifested at the level of denying the opponent's arguments. With extracts from previous texts, polemicists resorted to emotional dramatic elements in order to influence their recipients. Despite being not too rich in specific historical data, their texts contained unique information about worldviews, denominational and aesthetic preferences of their authors. Their narrative codes declared a system of rules and prohibitions that enables the existence of any narrative text. The art of composing a logically clear text with deep ideas is not only inherent to fine literature. From this point of view, homiletics – the art of preaching sermons – was an excellent school for future Ukrainian polemicists. The rules of compo-

¹² I. Vyshenskyi, *Tvory*, Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhnoi literatury, Kyiv 1959.

sing the “speech” dating back from the ancient times taught preachers how to unravel the plot in a logical and emotional way, using symbolic and exegetic interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, relate the present day and history etc. Consequently, the narrative aspect of polemical and publicist prose of the late 16th – early 17th century is the object that requires particular attention in the context of communicative poetics even if it did not strive to create a kind of an “artistic world.” It was the era characterized by the crisis of medieval literary traditions and formation of new canons, when they engaged in active communication with each other.

The corpus of polemical publicism is comprised of works written by authors of different literary skill that were united by similar narrative structure distinguished by skilful composition of material. This peculiarity enabled polemists to consider issues which are conventional for this genre. Every author adhered to this framework regardless of their individual religious views and their use of well-established standards. All polemists, whatever school of thought they might belong to, would conduct disputes about the same things. The authors tried to influence the potential addressees in a prompt manner, and this resulted in reinforcing the publicistic nature of presenting information. Regretfully, the historical period of High Baroque style only assigned them with the role of implementing traditional interpersonal communication.

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