

Immanuel Kant in Philosophical Culture of Ukraine

The main cultural event of a global scale, which marks the year 2024, is Immanuel Kant's 300th Anniversary. Despite the Russian-Ukrainian war and the everyday difficulties and restrictions associated with it, Ukraine did not remain aloof from this event. Given the number of scientific events and publications dedicated to Kant's Anniversary, 2024 has become a real Kant's Year of Ukrainian humanities.

Of course, the centers of philosophical science and education – the Hryhorii Skovoroda Institute of Philosophy of the NAS of Ukraine, the philosophy departments of National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, the Kant Society in Ukraine, etc., – showed particular activity. This is not surprising – after all, we are talking about the 300th Anniversary of one of the key figures in world philosophy and at the same time one of those German thinkers whose work became a powerful stimulus for the development of academic philosophy in Ukraine.

The first Ukrainians to become acquainted with Kant's ideas were students of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, who continued their education at the University of Königsberg, where they had the opportunity to listen to Kant's lectures on philosophy, logic, physics, mathematics, geography, anthropology, history, etc. It is known, for example, that a former student of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ivan Khmelnytskyi (1742–1794), one of the descendants of the famous Ukrainian hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, not only studied from Kant, but also in April 1767 defended in his presence the *Dissertatio philosophica, de servitute minus toleranda ob rationes et ex jure naturae gentium allatas*.

During Kant's lifetime, it was Ukrainians who became the first translators of his works in Eastern Europe: in 1803 in the city of Mykolaiv, a graduate of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Yakiv Ruban (1760–1806) published a Russian translation of Kant's work *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* [*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*],¹ and the following year 1804, the son of a Ukrainian Cossack, a native of the city of Kharkov, future academician Roman Tsebrikov (1763–1817) published in St. Petersburg a treatise translated into Russian, *Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen* [*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*].²

1 [Immanuel Kant], *Kantovo osnovanie dlja metafiziki nravov*, trans. Yakov Ruban (Mykolaiv: Tipografija Chernomorskogo shturmanskogo uchilishha, 1803).

2 [Immanuel Kant], “*Nabljudeniija nad chuvstvom prekrasnogo i vozvyshennogo*” *v rassuzhdenii prirody i zhivyh voobshhe harakterov; sluzhashhie k objasneniju nekotoryh mest Viliomovoj prakticheskoi logiki*, trans. Roman Tsebrikov (St. Petersburg: Teatralnaja tipografija, 1804).

As discovered over the past few decades, in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Kant's figure and ideas was the subject of systematic exposition and critical analysis in the professional philosophical environment of Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, and Lviv. Through the efforts of Pamphil Yurkevich (1826–1874), Sylvestr Hohotskyi (1813–1889), Petro Linytskyi (1839–1906), Markellin Olesnytskyi (1848–1905), Dmytro Bohdashevskyi (1861–1933), Georgy Chelpanov (1862–1936), Gustav Shpet (1879–1937) and many of their colleagues and students, year after year, persistent work was carried out in lands of modern Ukraine to master Kant's texts and Kant-related literature (necessarily in the original language), to conduct a substantive professional "survey" of the entire spectrum of philosophical issues raised within the framework of the "Copernican revolution" he carried out. Only the first steps have been taken in studying the results of this professional everyday work of professional philosophers, embodied in texts of various genres (journal and encyclopedic articles, reviews, book reviews, monographs, textbooks, dissertations, etc.). But it is already obvious that in the 19th and early 20th centuries a rather powerful tradition of Kant studies, corresponding to European academic standards, developed in Ukrainian lands. Its revival in the 1990s in independent Ukraine led to systematic translation work and the creation of a corpus of Kant texts in Ukrainian, to the formation and institutionalization of a corresponding research community within the framework of the Kant Society in Ukraine (active since 1998), to the intensification of Kant studies and their separation into a rather powerful direction of philosophical and historical-philosophical research in modern Ukraine.

In my opinion, the active development of Ukrainian Kant studies is an important stage in the self-constitution of Ukrainian philosophy, instilling healthy rationality and trust in contemplation and pure thinking, which it so lacked for self-reflection and overcoming the clichés of "emotionalism," "cordocentrism" and other characteristics unnatural for the philosophical way of thinking that have been attached to it. As the articles and reviews included in the next volume of *Kyiv-Mohyla Humanities Journal* show, the need for such inoculation is inherent not only in philosophy, but also in the humanities itself, which is especially sensitive to the anthropometric reflections and guidelines of Kantian philosophy. This is not surprising, because

Kant has the answer to the question of how man should live in order to enjoy a humane life ... on the verge of self-destruction. ... He speaks to us from the end of the eighteenth century. We learn about his world, but we also feel how strongly his thought still influences us today. He is the originator of the critical attitude which prevents us

from becoming dogmatic and intolerant. His thinking frees us from dogmatism and slavery to ideas³.

Therefore, by offering the readers the 11th volume of the *Kyiv-Mohyla Humanities Journal*, the editorial board expresses the hope that the articles and reviews contained in it will express not only the relevance and diversity of the ideas of the outstanding German thinker, but also the content and impartiality of modern Ukrainian humanities studies, which try to maintain their commitment to Kantian guidelines under any conditions.

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3 Frederick P. Van De Pitte, "Preface," in *Immanuel Kant, Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), IX.