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## PERCEPTION OF JOSÉ ORTEGA Y GASSET'S WORKS IN ESSAYS OF OKSANA ZABUZHKO

### Abstract

The article analyzes the peculiarities of the reception of Jose Ortega y Gasset's works in the essays of Oksana Zabuzhko. Emphasis is placed on the commonality of creative origins and ideas of both authors. The intellectual and poetic connections of iconic works are analyzed, particularly "The Revolt of the Masses" and "Notre Dame d'Ukraine. Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies". The uniqueness of the ideas of the Spanish thinker in the construction of the concept of Ukrainian identity by Oksana Zabuzhko is emphasized. It is concluded that the works of Jose Ortega y Gasset are analyzed and intertwined with the work of Oksana Zabuzhko regarding socio-political and poetic aspects. The format of the mega-essay, common for both authors, chosen for the presentation of their reflections, is objectively analyzed. This format is a harmonious, highly artistic formation in which the content and form are balanced: here, all sections (parts) are logically and consistently connected, placed in a cause-and-effect relationship. Both artists chose the method of "philosophizing in the space of literature", aestheticized intellectualism, and enriched rational analysis of art and history, which allowed readers to get closer to the essence of Spanish / Ukrainian civilizations.

*Keywords:* reception, essay, mega-essay, philosophy, literature, subjectivity, identity.

### Introduction

The study of essayistic practices in modern literary criticism remains a relevant area of modern humanities because creativity, rooted in the study of authorial subjectivity, was and will remain relevant in times of cultural change and creative transformation. Intensified understanding of the essay as a productive discursive prac-

tice, which is experiencing a new period of revival at the beginning of the XXI century, allows scholars in many fields to remain in demand, combine philosophical, literary, and cultural research, eliminate interdisciplinary boundaries, avoid categorical and unanimous conclusions.

Given this, the questions of the origins and influences of Montaigne's works on modern narratives remain relevant. Comparative philosophical

and essayistic studies and echoes of essayistic thought of the past in the works of the present also remain effective and important. Indicative in this sense, in our opinion, is the creative dialogue between the famous Spanish philosopher, author of ideas on the structure of mass society, Jose Ortega y Gasset and Oksana Zabuzhko, a famous Ukrainian contemporary writer, philosopher, and essayist. Oksana Zabuzhko, an author of culturalological studies and those dedicated to the search for Ukrainian identity, is particularly attracted by the Spanish philosopher's views on the nation as a "contact area open to various cultural influences" (Pronkevych, 2006, p. 42), as well as the possibility of national identity opening before the Ukrainian nation in times of crisis. It is obvious how Oksana Zabuzhko constantly draws parallels between the Ukrainian nation, which was established during the borderlands of the late XIX – early XX centuries ("Notre Dame d'Ukraine. Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies"), the transitional 90's of the XX ("Chronicles of Fortinbras") and Jose Ortega y Gasset's ideas about transforming "invertebrate" Spain into a European country not only geographically but above all spiritually. The purpose of this article is to analyze the peculiarities of the reception of ideas and means of essay imagery of Jose Ortega y Gasset in the works of Oksana Zabuzhko to find patterns of their understanding and manifestation, as well as the specifics of their artistic embodiment.

### Research Methods

In order to solve the questions, we used a complex methodology: first of all, the historical-literary method, which allowed us to look at mega-essays as a kind of essay in the context of Spanish origins of this special format and development in the Ukrainian cultural space. We also used comparative and receptive methods: a comparative analysis of essayistic techniques and practices in the works of Jose Ortega y Gasset and Oksana Zabuzhko allowed us to identify certain patterns of manifestation of these techniques

as indicative in the format of a mega-essay; receptive approach focused on the study of communicative features of the artistic essay as a literary work. We also used the hermeneutic method aimed at interpreting the essay in the context of ensemble associations within the entire multifaceted work of both artists.

### Discussion

Oksana Zabuzhko and Jose Ortega y Gasset are united not only with ideas, and concepts, solved in the same stream and in terms of close or related approaches, but also the most essayistic techniques for solving ideological problems, the very methods and practices of presenting views expressed in specific works.

Let's start with the fact that both philosophers have similar education. Jose Ortega y Gasset received a bachelor's degree in philosophy and language from the University of Madrid in 1902 and later defended his doctoral dissertation on the chiliastic sentiments of the early Middle Ages in France. Oksana Zabuzhko graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in 1982 and then finished her postgraduate studies in aesthetics in 1985 from the Taras Shevchenko University of Kyiv. Her PhD thesis was devoted to the aesthetic nature of poetry as an art form. Thus, the humanitarian background of both philosophers developed in the direction of combining history, philosophy, literature, art criticism and culture. This is a certain form of "philosophizing in the literature space" (Teitelbaum, 2017, pp. 53-54), a kind of aestheticized intellectualism, rational artistic analysis of art and history, which allowed both thinkers to get closer to the essence of Spanish / Ukrainian civilization with the energy of the artistic word. Obviously, the family traditions of upbringing played not the last role in the presentation of their own artistic reflection chosen by both authors: Jose Ortega y Gasset is the son of the writer Jose Ortega Munilla, author of the novels "Modern Relationships" and "The Lonely Don Juan". In turn, Oksana Zabuzhko's father was a critic, translator, teacher, and her mother

was a philologist. Continuous self-education and self-development in the field of philosophy and literature: this is what also unites both thinkers: Jose Ortega y Gasset, after defending his doctoral dissertation, did internships in Leipzig, Berlin and Marburg. Oksana Zabuzhko did internships at the University of Pittsburgh and Harvard, held lectures in Stockholm, Columbia, Yale Universities and more.

Despite philosophical education as a fundamental one, both authors immersed themselves in writing: Oksana Zabuzhko today is a well-known author of lyrical collections, short stories, novels, and essays. Although Jose Ortega y Gasset was not initially a writer but rather a copywriter for literary texts, he remained in history as the author of important essays, clearly marked by artistic intentions, figurative techniques, and verbal design. The individual style of both authors is marked by efforts to find their own way of expressing their vision and understanding of the world through the prism of considerable baggage of culture, fiction, philosophy and art. In this sense, Zabuzhko's repeatedly borrowed manner in Jose Ortega y Gasset's way of forming one's own thoughts on the basis of reinterpretation of the meaning and functions of a hero of a literary work, which gives impetus to respectable essayistic considerations, is striking. Examples of this situation include Cervantes' "Don Quixote", which prompted Jose Ortega y Gasset to present his own interpretation of Spanish life and culture in "Meditations on Quixote" (Ortega y Gasset, 2012), and Fortinbras from Shakespeare's "Hamlet", the interpretation of which opens the book "Chronicles of Fortinbras" by Oksana Zabuzhko (2009). Shakespeare's character becomes a kind of mirror, the prism of observation, which allows the author to reflect on cultural changes in the 90s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in real life while being immersed in them directly from within. Fortinbras becomes an observer of living history and living science of culture during the transition period: "Fortinbras enters. He is no one but a chronicler himself – he takes out the bodies of the slain and registers everything that hap-

pened here. If it weren't for him, we wouldn't have heard of Hamlet. It is he, Fortinbras, who endows Hamlet – in vain posthumously – with all the authority of earthly existence" (Zabuzhko, 2009, p. 28).

Both authors are united by active journalistic activity, which preceded essay writing. This journalistic practice, in fact, made their further philosophical and literary work more difficult and became its foundation for many years in a row. For example, Jose Ortega y Gasset actively tested his ideas in the *Revista de Occidente* (Western Magazine), which he founded. This periodical actively served the cause of the "equalization of the Pyrenees" – the idea of Europeanization of Spain, which, unfortunately, was then isolated from the latest cultural process due to the difficult political situation caused by repeated military and political defeats. The activity of this media allowed Jose Ortega y Gasset not only to pose the actual problems around the Europeanization of Spain but also to look for ways to solve them effectively. This was surprisingly important at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when Spain faced many of the most difficult issues that needed to be resolved as soon as possible in the context of post-war disorientation. Ortega's understanding of the ways to overcome this was based, in particular, on the works of the artists from "the generation of 1898", i.e., Azorin, Miguel de Unamuno, Antonio Machado, and others. It was about the fate of the whole state, about its future. The magazine "Revista de Occidente" became a forum for raising problems, a place of a collective search for ways to overcome them. The issues of the revival of the Spanish nation in the pages of this magazine were seen as part of the spiritual renewal of Spanish society as a whole. At the same time, Spain was positioned as part of the European and, more broadly, the world community as a non-articulated organism, and in this integrity of Spain was given not the least role. A. Taranenko (2004) names the following features of Jose Ortega y Gasset's idiosyncrasy as a journalist-publicist: reproduction of a holistic panorama of the present as a moment of transition

from the past to the future; meaningful subjective-personal character; setting for a “different” opinion; holistic consideration of the phenomena of reality; syncretism; a variety of genre forms (pp. 9-10).

Oksana Zabuzhko also has considerable experience in journalism: in the late 90s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - in the early 2000s, she was the author of columns in the newspapers “Nasha Ukraina” (*Our Ukraine*), “Stolichnye Novosti” (*Capital City's News*) and the magazine “Panorama” (*Panorama*). The articles written for “Stolichnye Novosti” later became the foundation of the essay book “Report from 2000” (2000), which is an eclectic integration of articles that appear as a continuous colourful canvas of the transition of the transitional period of the new Ukrainian state, which has just set out on self-determination and political independence. By writing about the first years of Ukrainian statehood and understanding the vicissitudes of the young Ukrainian nation, the author improved her own essay style and later fully realized this potential in reputable publications of books, e.g., “Philosophy of the Ukrainian idea and European context. Frankivsk period, 2020”, “Shevchenko's Myth of Ukraine: An Attempt at Philosophical Analysis” (2015) or “Two Cultures” (1990). The experience of Oksana Zabuzhko as a columnist did what L. Burych (2021) described as: “The image of a columnist not only shapes the image of the publication but also significantly affects the image of the environment in which the author lives and writes about in his column. The public authority of the columnist, his visibility in the media is an important means of attracting the attention of the audience and influence it” (p. 58).

It is necessary to pay attention to the fact that Jose Ortega y Gasset is one of the most-cited authors in the post-Soviet space, in Ukrainian essays in particular. Oksana Zabuzhko's work is clear evidence of that. The philosopher's interest in the ideas of Ortega y Gasset can be traced back to early works. The first mention of Jose Ortega y Gasset or his thoughts and ideas we find in the book “Two Cultures” (1990). Direct

allusions to Ortega y Gasset about the dependence/independence of the individual in a totalitarian society and the revolt of the independent individual appear later in the author's prose, in particular, in the novel “Field Studies on Ukrainian Sex” (2015), marked as quite bold prose in the 1990s about Ukrainian female identity. Jose Ortega y Gasset is present in later prose and essays of O. Zabuzhko in the 1990s – beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, though not as clearly and densely as the works by V. Lypynsky, F. Nietzsche, E. Fromm, Y. Sherekh (Shevelyov) or O. Spengler. However, his influence on the spiritual and literary pursuits of the Ukrainian author is quite significant, especially if tracked over time. Gradually, Jose Ortega y Gasset is defined as a classic author whose contradictions become the key to understanding the essence and Ukrainian identity. For example, in the book “Notre Dame d'Ukraine. Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies” (2018), there is a clear tendency that O. Zabuzhko addresses the legacy of the Spanish thinker when trying to comprehend the most important issues of the Ukrainian nation. In the same work, the author not only relies on the historiosophical ideas of Jose Ortega y Gasset but also contrasts them with D. Dontsov, seeks feedback from J. Sherekh and not only: she takes into account the deep ideological similarity of all three authors. A meticulous analysis of this book shows that the dialogue between the Ukrainian writer and the Spanish thinker has now acquired a more purposeful and, at the same time, intimate character, so the publication “Notre Dame d'Ukraine: Ukrainian in the conflict of mythologies”, in which Jose Ortega y Gasset quoted more than twenty-five times, is the result of many years of reflection on the author's own destiny, the fate of the Ukrainian people, the fate of the artist-philologist, capable of rebellion, in the context of an entire generation, an entire nation.

In general, it should be noted that the ideas of Jose Ortega y Gasset, revealed in the books “Meditations on Quixote” (2012), “Mission of the University” (2005), “Around Galileo” (1997)

and mainly in the “The Revolt of the Masses” (2020), gain a new meaning for Oksana Zabuzhko during a qualitatively new historical stage of nation-building and national rebirth. These new meanings are urgently needed to resolve other kinds of “eternal issues” of the people’s revival, and, above all, they are needed by the representatives of the advanced intelligentsia. Jose Ortega y Gasset becomes Zabuzhko’s foundation and support, which allows him to build his own concept of the existence of national identity.

We find the first sprouts of such support in the work of Oksana Zabuzhko, “Chronicles of Fortinbras”, which had four reprints, where the author focuses on the culture of Ukrainian society in post-totalitarian, post-communist, post-colonial change and, according to the thinker, “post-tragic” change, during which one loses the ability to experience reality as a tragedy, so one experiences it as a given life. Thus, in the chapter of this book “Psychological America and the Asian Renaissance”, the author actively quotes Jose Ortega y Gasset, in particular, his book “The Revolt of the Masses”. Ideas about a mass society in which each individual is static, prefer to go with the flow, and will not bear any responsibility for this society are close to the author. Writing about Ukraine’s unwillingness to pursue intercultural dialogue as its own deep dislike for itself, the author reproaches the Ukrainian community for passivity, slow acceptance of inevitable changes, excessive sensitivity to their own progress, that “the history of Ukraine, like any colonial province, over the last six and a half centuries is a number of separate, more or less effective acts of resistance to the will of others. Therefore, Ukrainian culture does not know a single, integral flow of time (this explains the absence of continuity – a sort of “discreteness” of traditions)” (Zabuzhko, 2018, pp. 221-222). The author finds support for her position among many outstanding thinkers of the past and present, but the ideas of Jose Ortega y Gasset play a paramount role here. When highlighting the unique “philological” nature of Ukrainian culture (the determination of artists to get to the core of

what is going on; for this reason, there is this extraordinary role of the Ukrainian writer to master reality in a reflexive way), Oksana Zabuzhko recalls the ideas of Jose Ortega y Gasset. The philologist is often blind to the future because she also looks back and seeks precedent everywhere, and that “a philologist really needs to become a philologist. On the contrary, before having a common past, we must create this community, and before we create it, it must be imagined, wanted, conceived” (Ortega y Gasset, 2020, p. 199). The author also has close views with the Spanish philosopher on the importance of modern assessment of processes, which takes place without endless looking back on philological consciousness. She calls these ideas of Jose Ortega y Gasset “the product of philological temporality” (Zabuzhko, 2018, p. 226), occasionally commenting on his opinion of the European man from the “Revolt of the Masses” that “it’s just an incomplete sense of time, paralyzed about the future and hypertrophied relative to the past. We, modern Europeans, on the other hand, are future-oriented, and the most basic dimension of time begins for us “then” and not “before” (Ortega y Gasset, 2020, p. 127).

Oksana Zabuzhko’s extremely pious attitude towards Y. Sherekh (Shevelyov), who considered Jose Ortega y Gasset to be one of his mentors, can be partially explained by the special trust in Jose Ortega y Gasset’s authoritative opinion. N. Zahoruiko (2020) drew attention to this aspect and wrote the following: “Y. Shevelyov, describing the formation of the new Soviet system, which he called the entry into the mass society, refers to the teachings of J. Ortega y Gasset about the masses, whom he considered one of his teachers. Sherekh speaks of the “depopulation of man”, the deprivation of his individual traits because the individual must obey the “commands and desires of the masses”, and they have no understanding of human dignity” (p. 18). In addition, “Chronicles of Fortinbras” echoes to some extent Jose Ortega y Gasset’s idea that the national idea is not what people think of themselves in time but what God thinks of the same people



in eternity.

It is worth noting that while Jose Ortega y Gasset is quoted four times in "Chronicles of Fortinbras", while in "Notre Dame d'Ukraine. Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies", a fundamental work of recent years, Jose Ortega y Gasset is the most cited foreign author of all: the reception of his ideas, expressed in quoting and interpretations of his ideas, occurs more than twenty-five times in different contexts, and certain sections of the book are named entirely in the style of the Spanish thinker. For example, the third subsection of the eighth chapter is called "The Revolt of the Masses" in Ukrainian, "Mountain" against "Gironde", etc.

Both authors – Jose Ortega y Gasset and Oksana Zabuzhko – are united by the form of a mega-essay used by both of them as an artistic platform for the presentation of their own creative thinking. We consider mega-essays to be "an exceptional format of reflective literature. These are works of considerable volume in which the author thoroughly comprehends the same topic comprehensively. Such a book may have sections, subsections, and paragraphs, which, by the will of the author, are arranged in the aggregate in a certain order. At the same time, the whole book retains the traditional features of the essay as a reflective work" (Shevchenko, 2021, p. 114). In our opinion, most of Jose Ortega y Gasset's philosophical books should be included in the mega-essay because they have one global theme, such as the purpose of university education in a globalized world ("Mission of the University") or the idea of a person who does not represent a universe. The theme is explored exclusively in the environment of people, without whom the existence of this very person would be impossible ("The Revolt of the Masses"). Such books should be called the mega-essays, i.e. more or less holistic, rather than the eclectic format of figurative and artistic presentation of certain philosophical ideas and concepts. In the history of philosophy and literature, the format of a collection of essays is much more common, in which works often written at different times and

under different circumstances are combined unsystematically, eclectically, arbitrarily and devoted to different problems, often multi-vector. The mega-essay is structurally distinguished by the integrity and coherence of all components. Indeed, the books "Meditations on Quixote" or "Mission of the University" outwardly resemble a monograph as a scholarly work of clear, well-thought-out structure and composition, in which each chapter is devoted to a particular subject, subtopic, and in general, they are comprehensive and systematic consideration the question relevant to the author. The sequence of sections (subsections) and their cause-and-effect relations are fundamental here: the author presents a coherent concept of a certain phenomenon, strictly adhering to his own logic of its development and current state. It is obvious that, for example, in the book "Meditations on Quixote", permutation of chapters, other parts, and elements of content (epigraphs, dedications, prefaces, afterwords, introductory words, comments, etc.) is impossible because the book is a comprehensive organization with balanced and authorial reasonable composition, all components of which are internally arranged. In all of Jose Ortega y Gasset's books, logical-compositional markers are evident. According to Epstein (1987), in all of Jose Ortega y Gasset's books, logical and compositional markers are evident in architectural design, imagery, emotionality, active use of linguistic and stylistic means of artistic expression that generate images of thought, essays (Epstein, 1987) prevail in the presentation of the main material. Here these features and, in some cases also, journalistic pathos remain effective means, as in the usual essay. The essay compilation, being an integrated text format, assumes the functions of chapters and paragraphs and overall retains the traditional features of the essay as free work, such that it "lies at the intersection of different literary spheres and functional styles" (Maslakov, 2010, p. 180). It "exposes the principles of its construction" (Maslakov, 2010, p. 180). In other words, the mega-essay as a favourite format of Jose Ortega y Gasset is a harmonious, highly

artistic formation in which content and form are balanced: here, the importance of content, framed in search of Spanish identity, corresponds to its corresponding perfect form – sections, sub-sections, afterwords, etc.

We observe a similar format for the design of various kinds of reflections in the work of Oksana Zabuzhko. Her books “Chronicles of Fortinbras”, “Two Cultures”, “Shevchenko’s Myth of Ukraine: An Attempt at Philosophical Analysis”, and “Philosophy of the Ukrainian idea and European context. Frankivsk period” should be considered mega-essays. This is especially evident in the book “Notre Dame d’Ukraine. Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies”, which both formally and meaningfully imitates the book “The Revolt of the Masses” by Jose Ortega y Gasset. The format similarity of the books of both authors is obvious. Both works are characterized by the closeness of construction according to the rules of structural and compositional coherence, taking into account the genre and stylistic features of the sections,

Thus, “The Revolt of the Masses” as a mega-essay consists of two uneven parts. The first contains thirteen chapters that develop the idea of the essence of the masses, the crowd, the “masses of the people”, personality, and individuality in connection with the above-mentioned aggregate concepts. All names are concise and capacious. For example, “The Phenomenon of Herd”, “Historical Rise”, “Introduction to the Anatomy of the Mass”, “Wildness and Technology”, and “Wildness and History” outline the subject of further conversation in the main text. All the names correspond to the essence of the content presented in them, from chapter to chapter, and develop the idea that the mass man is characterized by the continuous growth of life demands, relentless expansion of his own nature and innate ingratitude to everything that made his life easier. Each section ends with brief conclusions, from which individual ideas then begin the next part. For example, the first chapter of “The Phenomenon of Herd” ends with the following words: “The mass crushes the unlike, the remarkable

and the best. Who is not like everyone, who thinks differently than everyone else, risks becoming an outcast. And it is clear that “everything” is absolutely not everything. The world has usually been a heterogeneous unity of the masses and independent minorities. Today the whole world has become a mass. This is the harsh reality of our day. And this is how I see it, without closing my eyes to cruelty” (Ortega y Gasset, 2020, p. 12). The next section of “The Revolt of the Masses” begins with the words, “Such is the cruel reality of our day, and this is how I see it without turning a blind eye to cruelty” (Ortega y Gasset, 2020, p. 12). The causal connection between the parts here is obvious. The other chapters of the book also logically develop each other’s ideas. Some sections of the book are quite significant in volume, claiming a certain identity. Thus, the first chapter of the second part of “Who rules the world” consists of an introductory part and nine sections devoted to the idea of mass revolt about the unprecedented disintegration of society as such. In this fragment of the mega-essay, Jose Ortega y Gasset defends the idea that man is a purely social being, and, in fact, “I” is “I plus my environment”, i.e. man is not an isolated being, but one that is realized while being surrounded by people without whom its existence would be impossible. All this is summarized in view of the Spanish identity as a kind of exclusivity. It should also be added that the afterword of this mega-essay as an organic component of the whole publication logically sublimates what was written before about the European community, in particular, figuratively that the balance of power is a reality based on multiplicity and pluralism. If it disappears, this dynamic unity will dissipate. Europe is really a swarm – many bees in one flight” (Ortega y Gasset, 2020, p. 232).

It is worth noting that Oksana Zabuzhko’s book “Notre Dame d’Ukraine”, which uses an interdisciplinary approach in the spirit of Jose Ortega y Gasset, allows us to understand the generation of Lesia Ukrainka as a “phenomenon of the day”. The publication is also structured ac-

cording to the rules of a mega-essay, a format initiated by Jose Ortega y Gasset in Europe, and many other ideas about the “mass riot” creatively borrowed by the author, who reflects on the Ukrainian personality and the Ukrainian masses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These are the times when the outstanding Ukrainian poetess Lesya Ukrainka lived. Zabuzhko extrapolates what has been said to the present times. Oleg Kotsarev (2007) said the following about the genre of “Notre Dame d’Ukraine”: “it is “a novel with a text”, i.e., in fact, an essay that has grown to the volume of a novel. A genre that presupposes only scientific similarity, which is based on the author’s imagination, artistic and journalistic thinking, and not strict methodology”.

The composition itself of “Notre Dame d’Ukraine. Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies”, in which the main “heroine” Lesya Ukrainka appears as an aristocrat whom all her life adhered to the noble code of honour and truth and developed the “knightly myth” of the fin de siècle era, subject to Ukrainian national reflection. The work consists of a preface to the publication, prologue, road map (specific content of parts with step-by-step thesis presentation of the essence of what was said later), eight chapters with numerous sections, a concluding paragraph and more. For example, the section “Road map: section by section” is special: the whole short synopsis of the mega-essay is presented here in a unique way, apparently to outline the system of the work in the context of the grand idea of the uniqueness of Lesia Ukrainka and her generation for the formation of Ukrainian identity. For example, the contents of the chapter “The Intelligentsia of Tradition” and “The Intelligence of the Separation”: General Principles” contains the following sections: “Europe and Russia: Gentry and Nobility. Historical anamnesis”, “Why “intelligentsia” is a Russian concept. “Milestones” – and V. Lypynsky’s diagnosis: “Rupture of Tradition!””, “The root of the problem is the transition of the Ukrainian intelligentsia from the European to the Russian model of reproduc-

tion (hypothesis)”, “Attempts to Return to Europe: Hvylyovyi and the writers of the 60s” (Zabuzhko, 2018, p. 36) fully correspond with the intentionally reflexive mood of the chapter. Here the author, based on external European and Russian contexts, in particular, comprehends the “internal drama” of why Ukrainian culture, given its state in the middle of the twentieth century, was rejected almost a hundred years ago due to the Russian factor, in pre-modern times; what was the role of the intelligentsia in those days, which formed the centuries-old indigenous tradition of the nation. In this context, B. Shuba (2008), in particular, said the following about the organization of the book: “Each individual element of the opposition is not self-sufficient and self-evident: it necessarily presupposes a reference to one’s other, due to which it acquires semantic significance. That is, each “pole” necessarily implies an antithesis to itself, which could “shade” it. At the same time, this is not about the “struggle” of theses and antitheses, just as their interaction does not presuppose any higher synthesis in the Hegelian sense, and therefore, they appear to be fundamentally equivalent. Both poles are structural components, and although they oppose each other, it is thanks to them that the integrity of the structure is enabled. These are the conditions of its endurance and balance” (Shuba, 2008, p. 324). It is also worth noting that each section of the “Notre Dame d’Ukraine. A Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies” begins with the fixation and further development of the ideas conceived in the previous part, prolongs them and outlines new ones, which will only be the subject of observation in the following paragraphs. For example, the section “The Revolt of the Masses in Ukrainian”: “Mountain” against “Gironde”, which is included in the eighth part of the book “Our glorious Gironde: a religious alternative in the secular era. Introduction to the History of Hamocracy”, comprehends the essence of the same hamocracy as the crisis of elites under the onslaught of the masses. By understanding this phenomenon, the author emphasizes that Lesya Ukrainka, as a representative



of the generation of rapid maturation of individuals under the influence of modern “experiencing the world”, “found a ready-made, but still incomplete Ukrainian culture, and could perceive it according to the logic of the nobility’s inheritance – as an ortegian “conquest that must be won every minute”, but according to the logic of the “spoiled child” as a given, used as its “field”, where one can produce something based on their own interests and preferences” (Zabuzhko, 2018, p. 587).

And so, all parts of this fundamental work, endowed with a high level of coherence, are constructed: all elements of a mega-essay in which the author uses an “assessment of our entire colonial period under the review of our historical subjectivity” (Zabuzhko, 2018, p. 13), interdependent and interconnected, fully correlated with the communicative guidelines stated in the introduction and preface of the book-essay. According to our observations, the connection between the parts is both causal and associative. Integrity is also formed by stylistic cohesion, closely connected with the individual style of the author-philosopher herself, diversified by numerous literary and philosophical practices.

### Conclusion

The analysis of Oksana Zabuzhko’s essay books, primarily “Notre Dame d’Ukraine. A Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies”, testifies the author’s persistent interest in the work of Jose Ortega y Gasset from an ideological and artistic point of view. The influence of the ideas of the Spanish philosopher on the work of the Ukrainian writer-philosopher is felt for many reasons. It can be clearly seen already in her first essayistic texts, starting from the image-motive level to the actual literary embodiment with its traditions and innovations. Oksana Zabuzhko addresses the legacy of Jose Ortega y Gasset primarily with the aim of understanding the phenomenon of Ukrainian identity, the phenomenon of individuality against the background of the masses, and the essence of different gener-

ations in history, which bears special responsibility for the fate of the people, in the context of the search for Ukrainian historical subjectivity. The works of Jose Ortega y Gasset are analyzed and creatively woven into the works of Oksana Zabuzhko from the point of view of socio-political and poetic aspects. Both authors chose the mega-essay format for the presentation of their own reflections as the most optimal and appropriate option for philosophizing in literature.

A special place in the reception of Oksana Zabuzhko is given to the book “Revolt of the Masses” by Jose Ortega y Gasset, which the Ukrainian author not only actively quotes but also uses as a support in building her own concept of the activity of the generation of the intelligentsia of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the book “Notre Dame d’Ukraine. A Ukrainian woman in the conflict of mythologies”. The concept of José Ortega y Gasset can be considered as a fixation on the reading reaction of Oksana Zabuzhko and her readers. This reaction can be easily isolated from the works of the Spanish thinker, taking into account his ideas of the search for the historical subjectivity of the nation in the transition period. It is also concluded that the reception by Oksana Zabuzhko of Jose Ortega y Gasset’s work is characterized by multifacetedness, multi-vector nature and practicality due to the deep knowledge of his work and erudition of the author herself. The thoughts of the Spanish classic are creatively spread and interpreted by the Ukrainian author in her own works, perceived as the foundation of her own generalizations. The study of Zabuzhko’s reception of the works by Jose Ortega y Gasset is definitely an interesting and promising direction of research because it opened a new perspective on fiction writing as such, the usage of national features in the artistic world, and the interconnectedness between the works of the Spanish philosopher and the Ukrainian essayist.

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