З ІСТОРІЇ СТАНОВЛЕННЯ СТИЛІСТИЧНИХ, ПЕРЕКЛАДОЗНАВЧИХ І МОВОЗНАВЧИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ

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WILLIAM RICHARD MORFILL AS THE FIRST UKRAINIAN STUDIES SCHOLAR IN THE ANGLOPHONE WORLD

The article covers the activities of Professor William Richard Morfill (1834–1909) from the University of Oxford. The general characteristics of Morfill is presented. The emphasis is laid upon the interest Morfill displayed towards Ukrainian history and literature, the Ukrainian writers, particularly Taras Shevhenko. The academic cooperation between Morfill and Slavonic world is discussed too. On the basis of Morfill's writings the conclusion has been made that the researcher was the first British Ukrainian Studies scholar. Taking into consideration rather scanty knowledge about Slavs in the United Kingdom in the Morfill epoch the researcher has greatly contributed to disseminating information on Ukrainian culture and Ukrainians as a separate nation in the Anglophone world.

***Keywords**: Research, Ukrainian, analysis.*

The University of Oxford, the oldest institution of higher learning in England, has been building up world fame ever since its foundation in 1133. As at the University of Cambridge the roster of distinguished Oxonians is long and includes many who have made significant contributions to British politics, sciences and humanities. For the Ukrainians the University is of particular interest, as it is closely associated with Great Britain's first scholar in Ukrainian studies – William Richard Morfill.

In the 1870s, when Morfill embarked on his academic career, the Ukrainian language, history and culture as a whole were rather a terra incognita for the Britons. Occasionally, Ukraine was mentioned in a few works published by the British authors. Scholars Richard Knolles and Paul Rycaut, and travellers John Bell, Joseph Marshall and Daniel Clarke should be mentioned. In 1816 Benjamin Beresford produced in London 'The Russian Troubadour, or a Collection of

Ukrainian and other National Melodies' [Troubadour 1816], the oldest published music and lyrics of Russian and Ukrainian songs outside the Slavonic world. The Ukrainian material is represented by two songs, one of them by the Cossack minstrel Semen Klymovskyi. In 1835 the writer and translator George Borrow published his versions of the Ukrainian folk ballads "O'er the field the snow is flying" and "From the wood a sound is gliding". In 1841 *the Foreign Quarterly Review* featured an elaborate review on the collection of Ukrainian songs and dumas published by Mykhailo Maxymovych in 1834 which was based upon the Polish review by M. Grabowski [Grabowski 1837]. In 1848 Henryk Krasinski, a Polish immigrant, published in London a collection entitled 'The Cossacks of the Ukraine' [Krasiński, 1848] and a book 'Gonta' [Krasiński 1848]. William Ralston Shedden – Ralston's monograph of 1872, 'The Songs of the Russian People as Illustrative of Slavonic Mythology and Russian Social Life' included quite a few Ukrainian Christmas and Epiphany carols as well as Ukrainian riddles. Ralston was a graduate of Cambridge University and a librarian at the Slavonic Department at the British Museum. His activities were highly appreciated by academician Mikhail Pavlovich Alekseyev [Алексеев 1944].

William Richard Morfill was born on November 17, 1834 into the family of a violinist in Maidstone, Kent, UK. He received his schooling first in his home town, and then in Tonbridge. In 1853 he entered the University of Oxford he graduated from in 1857.

From his childhood Morfill was distinguished for his amazing memory and exceptional gift for languages. He loved literature, especially poetry, from boyhood. Back at school in Tonbridge one of his teachers gave him a Russian Reader as a present. This was to change his life: he became fascinated by the literature, history and languages of the Slavs and their neighbouring nations which he studied as long as he lived.

Morfill stayed on at Oxford after graduation in the capacity of a tutor, and he was one of the most earnest and exemplary of tutors. At the same time he persistently studied Slavonic languages as well as Magyar, Romanian and Georgian. During his summer holidays he travelled throughout Europe, staying in Tbilisi in 1888 for a long time as a guest of Ilya Chavchavadze, an outstanding Georgian

writer. In 1891 he came to Kyiv, Moscow and St. Petersburg; and in 1895 he visited Lviv and Warsaw. During his travels, Morfill established close contacts with some Slavonic scholars. Mykhaylo Drahomanov and Oleksa Kovalenko were among his correspondents.

Morfill's interest in the Slavonic world was far removed from the academic pursuits of his Oxford milieu, and just a few of his colleagues knew about his fascination. As late as in 1870, after he read public lectures on Slavonic culture in a series of Ilchester Lectures did Oxford realize with surprise that it had a distinguished Slavonic scholar in Morfill. In 1889 he was elected staff lecturer in Russian and other Slavonic languages at the University. He was promoted to a personal Chair of Slavonic languages, the first in Great Britain. He retained the professorship until his death in 1909. Morfill embodied the old-fashioned virtues of the literary historian: he was humane, sensitive, non-dogmatic, widely read in many literatures and with a command of many languages, scrupulous in his use of sources, and generous in his acknowledgements. In appreciation of his contribution to research Morfill was elected Fellow of the British Academy in 1903. The Prague University conferred an honorary doctorate on him in 1908.

Morfill bequeathed his greatest treasure, a library of classical and Slavonic literature, to Queen's College. Since 1936 it has been preserved at the Taylor Institution, one of the Oxford's largest centres for studying European languages and literatures. The Taylor Institution was established in 1845 following the bequest of Sir Robert Taylor (1714–1788), the sculptor and architect, who left the residue of his estate for establishing a foundation for teaching modern European languages (but English).

Morfill authored the Polish (1884), Serbian (1887) and Bulgarian (1897) grammars in English for the 'Simplified Grammars' series. He also wrote a grammar of Russian (1889) and Czech (1899); the monograph 'Russia' (1880) for the 'Foreign Countries and British Colonies' series; the history of Russia (1885) and Poland (1893) for the 'History of Nations' series. In 1883 he produced a book based on his Ilchester lectures entitled 'The Dawn of European literature. Slavonic literature' [Morfill, 1883]. This book not only covers the literatures of all the major Slavonic peoples but concludes with two

short chapters on 'The Wends in Saxony and Prussia' and 'The Polabes' [Morfill 1883]. Writing on Ukrainian literature Morfill admits the wealth of the Ukrainian language [Morfill 1883, 101–102].

Morfill produced only three articles devoted exclusively to Ukrainian studies. But in his numerous works about Russia and Poland, as well as in his lectures, articles and essays, particularly for the ninth edition of 'The Encyclopaedia Britannica' (Edinburgh, 1875 – 1888) the scholar lavishly commented on Ukraine's fiction, language, history, geography and research institutions.

In September 1964 David Howells, a staff member of the Taylor Institution, was kind enough to send the author of this article an inventory of Morfill's Ukrainian library. In 1991–1992 as the British Council scholar I was happy to spend some time at the Morfill personal collection. The Ukrainian section of it numbers 110 valuable items, among which are quite a few multi-volumed editions, such as Volodymyr Hnatiuk's six-volume 'Ethnographic Materials of Transcarpathia [Гнатюк 1897–1911]. two editions of the three – volume anthology 'A Century' [Вік (1798-1898), 1900, 1902], the two-volume collection of Halychyna Folk Melodies compiled by Ossyp Rozdolskyi and Stanislav Liudkevych [Галицько-руські народні мелодії 1908].

The Ukrainian language did not come easy to the Oxford Slavistbecause of the lack of suitable textbooks and dictionaries. He was helped a lot in this matter by Mykhaylo Drahomanov. Their letters, unfortunately, have not survived to this day, but Drahomanov's letters to Meliton Buchynskyi and Mykhaylo Pavlyk testify to the fact that the correspondence between Morfill and Drahomanov spanned the period from 1871 to 1895 (the year of Drahomanov's untimely death) [Переписка 1910, 41].

The first time Morfill wrote about the Ukrainian language and literature was in the article 'The Russian language and its Dialects' [Morfill 1875/1876] of 1876, in which he treated the Ukrainian language as an independent system and emphasized that owing to their distinctive and talented works the Ukrainian writers had won their people the complete right to be a nation boasting about its own rich literature. The researcher also indicated that the writings promoted the Ukrainian national awareness. In this article Morfill

provided brief information on Taras Shevchenko. A more detailed information is supplied in the monograph 'A history of Russia' [Morfill 1902]. The tragic life of the Ukrainian poet is described. It is also noted that his grave at Kaniv had become a 'Mecca of the South Russian revolutionists' [Morfill 1902, 78]. We should correct the information provided by the British scholar: Shevchenko's grave became a Mecca for the whole Ukrainian nation. Here is how the British scholar characterizes Shevchenko's poetry: 'Many of the poems by Shevchenko celebrate the early history of the Ukraine (we should excuse Morfill for the not proper article! – R. Z.), the national heroes, Ivan Pidkova, Nalyvaiko, Doroshenko and others' [Morfill 1902, 78]. Morfill was fascinated by the fire and vigour of the lyrics by Shevchenko. Like E. L. Voynich later on, he mistakenly claimed that Shevchenko was exiled to Siberia [Morfill 1902, 78]. Many of his works comment on Shevchenko's poetry, to whom he devoted two articles. The first, 'The Peasant-Poets of Russia' (1880), is only partly dedicated to Shevchenko [Morfill 1880]. It was a response to the publication of the *Kobzar* in Prague in 1876. Concentrating more on Shevchenko's life, the author paid less attention to his writings, although he presented his prose version of the eight opening verses from the *Testament* for the first time in the history of Anglophone Shevchenkiana.

In April 1886 Morfil published the second article, 'A Cossack Poet', which was completely dedicated to Shevchenko [Morfill 1886]. This is more elaborate than the first study and thoroughly analyzes Shevchenko as Ukraine's national poet and fighter against serfdom. Apart from the first eight lines from the *Testament*, the article also includes prose versions of the poem *Cherry Orchard by the Garden* (given as *A Garden of Cherry Trees*)*, Here Three Broad Ways Cross* and *I am Solitary* (first eight lines).

In January 1903 Morfil submitted his review on the anthology '*Vik'* ('A Century') to the magazine *The Athenaeum* [Morfill 1903]. Although the name of the author was not indicated, the style and separate paragraphs taken from other works by the scholar (in particular, the territorial distinctions of the Ukrainian language, Shevchenko's sojourn in Ukraine in 1859 and the like) unmistakably indicate Morfill's identity. Admittedly, a review, in the true sense of the word, for the anthology could have been written only by a profound

connoisseur of Ukrainian letters. Thus the word 'review' is used here rather relatively. Still the review is very interesting and valuable: to the Britons, who were accustomed to confining the fiction of Ukraine only to folklore and the folk bard Shevchenko, the review introduced a whole number of names and literary trends and a diversity of genres. Morfill dwelled upon the writings by Ivan Kotlyarevsky, Panteleimon Kulish, Olexa Storozhenko, Marko Vovchok, Stepan Rudansky, Agatangel Krymskyi, Ivan Franko and many others. The material about Shevchenko is mostly the same as in the article 'A Cossack Poet', but here we find a rhymed translation of four verses from *Imitation of Psalm XI (I shall extol those small, dumb slaves)* and the first eight lines from the *Testament:*

When I die the steppe around me
Shall enfold my grave;
Lay me in my own loved Ukraine
That is all I crave.
Let me see the Dnieper rushing
Where broad grasses wave;
Let his beetling banks be near me,
Let me hear him rave

Up till now twenty-three Anglophone versions of Shevchenko's 'Testament' are known. Morfill's rhymed translation was not the first one. For the first time the initial eight lines of 'Testament' were translated as a rhymed poetry by F. P. Marchant in 1897 [Marchant 1897].

For all his respect for the poet and sympathy for him as a fighter against serfdom, Morfill was far from understanding Shevchenko as an outstanding classic of world literature. He underestimated the poem.

The Haidamaks, and could not understand that the folk bard of the peasantry (that was his opinion) Taras Shevchenko, raised Ukrainian literature to world caliber. More than 90 years were to pass before Professor C. H. Andrusyshen gave such a characteristics to the greatest Ukrainian poet: 'Shevchenko's a volcanic spirit, towering titan-like above his own people, and high enough to be seen and heard by other nations of the world as he proclaims to all mankind the universally applicable virtues by which the moral fibres of humanity thrive and are strengthened. In the history of Eastern Europe he was one of the leading formative democratic forces,

contributing, as a champion of Liberty, to the social betterment of men and to peaceful coexistence among them. The world has need of him, and of men like him, at this dire and perilous hour' [Andrusyshen 1964, XI].

The full-fledged characteristics of the Ukrainian language, its phonetics, morphology and syntax, were presented in his article "The Slavonic Tongues" for the 22nd volume of the ninth edition of 'The Encyclopaedia Britannica' [Edinburgh 1875–1888]. Much attention was paid to Ukrainian lexicography, particularly to the dictionaries compliled by Ye. Zhelekhivskyi [Малоруско-німецкий словар 1884] and F. Piskunov [Піскунов 1873]. Morfill provided an extensive article on "Poland, Russia, Servia and Slavs" in collaboration with P. A. Kropotkin. The eighth edition of the Encyclopaedia (1853–1860) did not contain any information on the Ukrainian language and the Ukrainian literature at all, although it included an extensive article about Russian language and fiction by Henry Bishop. Therefore, Morfill is credited with introducing Ukrainian studies into Britain's prestigious Encyclopaedia.

Morfill was fascinated by Ukrainian oral folk literature. In his inaugural lecture delivered at the University of Oxford on January 25, 1890 [Morfill 1890] and in his books about Russian and Slavonic literature, he quoted his translation of the works by the German poet and translator Friedrich Bodenstedt, who wrote in the collection of his German versions of Ukrainian songs and dumas 'Die poetische Ukraine' ['The Poetical Ukraine' 1845]: 'In no country has the tree of popular poetry born such lordly fruit, nowhere has the spirit of the people exhibited itself in so vigorous and truthful way as among theUkrainians! What a charming air of sadness, what deep true human feeling do those songs express, which the Cossack sings while absent in a foreign country! What tenderness and manly strength breathe throughout his love songs!..The Ukrainian lives in the closest communion with nature; from her the beautiful similes which we find in his songs are borrowed. Has the Cossack fallen on the field, the eagles, his brothers, fly to him and speak comfort to the dying hero; are his eyes closed, the cuckoo sings his grave-song from the flowering elder-tree. Every brave warrior is a noble falcon; he follows the enemy as a bird chases its prey through the air'.

The fullest characteristics of Ukrainian letters are presented in Morfill's book 'The dawn of European literature. Slavonic Literature' and in the essay 'The Literature of Russia' for the 21st volume of the 9th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. The author briefly outlines the development of early Ukrainian literature, dwelling in greater detail on the Peresopnytske Gospel. Writing on folklore, he names all the major folklore collections and analyzes in detail the collection of historical songs compiled by Volodymyr Antonovych and Mykhaylo Drahomanov [Историческія пъсни малорусскаго народа 1874] and the latter's collection "Political Songs of the Ukrainian People of the 18th–19th centuries". Morfill noted that despite political persecution, Ukrainian writers were working fruitfully, particularly in L'viv where William Shakespeare's works were being published in Ukrainian.

Morfill contributed immensely to popularizing Ukraine and her letters in Great Britain. Without any doubt he merits recognition as the first Ukrainian studies scholar not only in UK, but in the English-speaking world in general. Among the other pioneers of Ukrainian studies in Anglophone world the American researcher C. A. Manning (1893–1972) and Canadian scholar W. Kirkconnell (1895–1977) should be mentioned. But they in a way were the followers of Morfill.

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Уильям Ричард Морфилл как первый украинский ученый-исследователь в англоязычном мире

Статья посвящена деятельности Оксфордского профессора Уильяма Ричарда Морфилла (1834–1909). Изложена общая характеристика его научной деятельности, с акцентом на украиноведческие интересы, на заинтересованность украинской историей, литературой, особенно творчеством Т. Шевченко. Также обращено внимание на научное сотрудничество между У. Р. Морфиллом и славянским миром. Исследования ученого, посвященные Украине, дают возможность сделать вывод, что он был первым украинистом в англоязычном мире. Принимая во внимание скудные познания славянского мира в эпоху У. Р. Морфилла в Великобритании, можна утверждать о его важном вкладе в распространение знаний об украинской культуре и об украинцах как отдельной нации в англоязычном мире.

Ключевые слова: *исследование, украинский, анализ.*

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Вільям Річард Морфілл як перший український вчений-дослідник в англомовному світі

Розвідку присвячено діяльності Оксфордського професора Вільяма Річарда Морфілла (1834–1909). Подано загальну характеристику його наукової діяльності з наголосом на українознавчих інтересах В. Р. Морфілла, його зацікавленнях українською історією, літературою, зокрема творчістю Т. Шевченка. Певну увагу звернено на наукову співпрацю між В. Р. Морфіллом і слов'янським світом. Праці науковця, присвячені Україні, дозволяють зробити висновок, що він був першим україністом в англомовному світі. Ураховуючи мізерні знання про слов'янський світ у добу В. Р. Морфілла у Великобританії, можемо стверджувати його вагомий внесок у поширення знань про українську культуру та про українців як окрему націю в англомовному світі.

Ключові слова: *дослідження, український, аналіз.*