

## ARTISTIC DETAIL IN THE HISTORICAL NOVELS OF W. SCOTT AND M. STARYTSKY

**Popadynets Oksana Oleksandrivna,**  
*Candidate of Philological Sciences,  
Senior Lecturer at the Department of Foreign Languages  
Ivan Ogienko National University  
chernoksana@ukr.net  
orcid.org/0000-0001-8178-6233*

**Kovalchuk Oksana Yaroslavivna,**  
*Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor,  
Associate Professor at the Department of Philology  
and Translation  
Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas  
bodnar\_oksana@ukr.net  
orcid.org/0000-0002-8935-597X*

**Purpose.** To analyze the artistic details of W. Scott's and M. Starytsky's historical novels to identify the author's position on the details depicted; to compare the artistic and functional features of their local color, landscape, and objects; to show the intersections and differences in the development of both Scottish and Ukrainian literature and the interaction of different mentalities in the process of reflecting the world around.

**Methods.** The research is carried out from the standpoint of complex literary-textological analysis, cultural-historical and comparative-typological methods.

**Results.** As a result of the research, analysis of the types of artistic details in the historical novels of W. Scott and M. Starytsky was carried out; different types of artistic details were discovered, collected and systematized and their functions were revealed in separate works of the Ukrainian and Scottish novelist; the peculiarities of use of portrait details and landscapes, their place and role in the creative process of the writers are determined.

**Conclusions.** Based on the analysis of the artistic detail in both writers' historical novels, it can be argued that M. Starytsky, having mastered the experience of predecessors and contemporaries (and not only from domestic literature), developed his own system of images of the objective world and generally maintained it, albeit inconsistently, in all his multifaceted work. In this system, the writer's scientific knowledge and his ideological and aesthetic principles were synthesized in a unique way, to which we include various factors – religious, historiosophical, national, stylistic, and so on. Scott's experience became a kind of springboard for actively increasing the role of the authorial-subjective factor in literature and art, which is clearly defined in realistic novels of the second half of the nineteenth century, when attention was given to detailing the environment. Detailing, in the historical novels of W. Scott and M. Starytsky, serves as a historical background, conveys the spirit of the era, helps to reveal the temper and individuality of the character, his/her own artistic image, is a part of the landscape panorama as well as it is a means of emotional impact on the reader.

**Key words:** artifact, subject detail, color local, verbal painting, portrait, ethnography.

## ХУДОЖНЯ ДЕТАЛЬ В ІСТОРИЧНИХ РОМАНАХ В. СКОТТА ТА М. СТАРИЦЬКОГО

**Попадинець Оксана Олександрівна,**  
*кандидат філологічних наук,  
старший викладач кафедри іноземних мов  
Кам'янець-Подільського національного університету імені  
Івана Огієнка  
chernoksana@ukr.net  
orcid.org/0000-0001-8178-6233*

**Ковальчук Оксана Ярославівна,**  
*кандидат філологічних наук, доцент,  
доцент кафедри філології та перекладу  
Івано-Франківського національного технічного  
університету нафти і газу  
bodnar\_oksana@ukr.net  
orcid.org/0000-0002-8935-597X*

**Мета.** За допомогою аналізу художніх деталей романів В. Скотта та М. Старицького виявити авторську позицію стосовно зображуваного, а також зіставити художні й функціональні особливості їхніх описів місцевості, предметів і таким чином побачити перетинання і розбіжності в розвитку літератур обох країн, взаємодію різних ментальностей у процесі відображення навколишнього світу.

**Методи.** У статті застосовано порівняльно-історичний, культурно-історичний, типологічний та контекстуальний методи при порівнянні суб'єктивних і водночас національно-репрезентативних принципів створення художньої деталі.

**Результати.** У ході дослідження здійснено аналіз різновидів художніх деталей в історичних романах В. Скотта й М. Старицького; виявлено, зібрано і систематизовано артефакти та розкрито їх функції в окремих творах українського та шотландського романістів; визначено особливості використання прозаїками деталей портрету, пейзажу, речей, їх місця й ролі у творчому процесі письменників.

**Висновки.** На основі здійсненого аналізу проблеми художньої деталі в історичних романах обох письменників можемо стверджувати, що М. Старицький, засвоївши відповідний досвід попередників і сучасників (причому, не тільки з вітчизняного письменства), виробив власну систему зображення предметного світу і загалом витримував її, хоч і непослідовно, в усій своїй багатогранній творчості. У цій системі своєрідно синтезувалися й наукові пізнання письменника, і його ідейно-естетичні принципи, до яких ми зачисляємо різні чинники – релігійний, історіософський, національний, стильовий тощо. Досвід Скотта став свого роду трампліном для активного підвищення ролі авторсько-суб'єктивного фактора в літературі й мистецтві, що виразно визначається у реалістичній романістиці другої половини XIX століття, коли посилюлася увага до деталізації зображення середовища та аналізу. Деталізація в історичних романах В. Скотта й М. Старицького виконує роль історичного гла, допомагає розкрити характер та індивідуальність персонажа, виступає складовою художнього образу людини, частиною пейзажної панорами, передає дух епохи, доносить до читача авторське, сучасне переживання історії, служить засобом емоційного впливу на читача.

**Ключові слова:** артефакт, предметна деталь, місцевий колорит, словесний живопис, портрет, етнографізм.

## 1. Introduction

The relevance of the study in the most general terms determines the scientific interest of world comparative studies to the problems of literary interaction and to typological comparisons. In our article, the combination of these two aspects is due to the peculiarity of the place occupied by M. Starytsky in the literary process. M. Starytsky, the Ukrainian historical novelist of the late nineteenth century certainly feels like one of the recipients of W. Scott's creative principles, but his connection with the famous Scottish writer of the early nineteenth century cannot be limited only to the historical-genetic. Another time and cultural dimension of M. Starytsky's work gives it sufficient originality, so it is quite justified to talk about the typological comparison of their work. As for the influence of W. Scott on M. Starytsky, there are only brief theses in the studies of the critics who considered the historical prose of the Ukrainian writer as a whole (V. Belyaev, N. Levchyk, V. Polishchuk, V. Tishchenko, etc.), and compared Scott's novels with the works of M. Gogol and P. Kulish (B. Neumann, V. Petrov, R. Bagriy, I. Devdyuk). Some aspects of this problem were considered in the context of the development of Ukrainian prose (A. Gulyak, E. Nakhlik). R. Zorivchak's academic review "Ukrainian-English Literary Relations" and O. Popadynets' monograph "Historical Novels of Walter Scott and Mykhailo Starytsky: The Problem of a Typological Approach" deserve attention.

The issue of artistic detail in literary works was investigated by N. Rudetska "Artistic detail in the Ukrainian realistic prose of the 60-70ths of the XIXth century" (2011); L. Kruchanova one of the sections in the textbook "Introduction to Literary Studies" (2015) devoted to artistic detail; V. Martsishenko in the thesis "Trilogy "Bogdan Khmelnytsky" by Mykhailo Starytsky and the novel "Fire and Sword" by Henryk Senkevych: typological parallels (2016)" mentioned the role of subject detail in the writers' novels; T. Bandura envisages the portrait detail in the historical story of M. Starytsky "The Last Eagles" (2019); I. Swider explores the role of the material image in the artistic systems of Western European romantics, in particular W. Scott (2015). However, the study of artistic details in Scott's historical novels through the prism of comparative methodology and theory with a projection on Ukrainian literature and historical novels by M. Starytsky in particular has not been studied comprehensively, systematically and contextually yet.

**Purpose** is to analyze the artistic details of W. Scott's and M. Starytsky's historical novels to identify the author's position on the depicted world; to compare the artistic and functional features of their local colour, landscape, objects and history; to show the intersections and differences in the development of both countries' literature and the interaction of different mentalities in the process of reflecting the world around.

**Methods.** The research was carried out from the standpoint of complex literary-textological analysis, cultural-historical and comparative-typological methods.

## 2. Landscape detail

W. Scott always attached great importance to the landscape. He compared the historical novel itself with landscape painting. Historical details are similar to the specific features of the landscape depicted by the painter. W. Scott said: "His feudal tower must arise in due majesty; the figures which he introduces must have the costume and character of their age; the piece must represent the peculiar features of the scene which he has chosen for his subject, with all its appropriate elevation of rock, or precipitate descent of cataract. His general colouring, too, must be copied from Nature: ... " (Scott, 2018: Ivanhoe).

The landscape often prompts Scott not only to individual scenes of his works, but also to surprise them. The connection between the plot and the landscape explains the exact topography of Scott's novels. Every battle in the gorges, every journey of the heroes, their travels in the mountains and forests are topographically defined, the path is replaced, the crossings, the names of the hills and valleys are marked.

It is characteristic that W. Scott's descriptions are initially given in summary form, rather in terms of painting and as a general impression. The details emerged as the action unfolded and together with the action, for the needs of the moment. The scene is characterized in the same way as the characters, when it actively enters the plot. Attention is focused on it only when the development of the plot entitles it to this attention. So the summary description gives the impression of extreme accuracy.

As for M. Starytsky, in his novels he also paid much attention to landscapes, which are mostly laconic, extremely condensed and at the same time emotional. This is primarily due to the fact that the rapid, dynamic development of events, the rhythm of the story does not require detail in the description of pictures of nature. «Густий мерехтливий сніг укривав усе кругом білою пеленою. На відстані десяти ступнів важко було розпізнати дорогу; зрідка мелькали крізь цю білу неспокійну пелену світлими плямами маленькі вікна завіяних снігом хат ... Але тепер ці маленькі подробиці рідної місцевості, що завжди викликали в нього золоті спогади дитинства, не привертали до себе його уваги...» (Старицький, 1971: 209)

For the historians of the new school, in particular M. Starytsky, as well as for their teacher W. Scott, the local colour was not trifles, unworthy of attention, but the most important object of study, because in it the romantic consciousness found a visible embodiment “Spirit of the era”, its main and defining idea. Expressive, colorful, deep in content, emotional and in harmony with the character of the hero’s landscapes live in time and space, they carry the spirit of the era, reveal to the reader the richness and beauty of Ukrainian nature. The largest number of landscapes are connected with the description of the forest which the author depicts with remarkable skill. His forest is “dense”, “dark”, “green”, “fresh”, “fragrant” and at the same time “mysterious”, “solemn”, “enchanted”.

For W. Scott, an extremely important task is to recreate the “historical background”, “historical landscape”, the connection of the plot with the landscape, explains the topography of his novels. The setting can be fictional from beginning to end or reconstructed by impressions, but it corresponds to the events that take place in it, explains them and seems to live with people who play their drama in it. Also, the place where the events take place plays an important compositional role in W. Scott, concentrating all the action around one or more centers. A special cycle of events is organized around each such place of action.

In conclusion, we note that the landscape in W. Scott’s novel is static, as it consists of static objects (stones, mountains, rocks, gorges, abysses) and devoid of dynamics (they lack any animals, development, changes, the movement occurs only on a global geological scale in the direction of destruction: some terrible catastrophe turned “The toil, the thirst, the dangers of the way, were forgotten, as the traveller recalled the fearful catastrophe which had converted into an arid and dismal wilderness the fair and fertile valley of Siddim, once well watered, even as the Garden of the Lord, now a parched and blighted waste, condemned to eternal sterility” (Scott, 2018: Talisman) the source is declining; in the desert there is only mechanical movement of gunpowder by wind).

M. Starytsky, on the other hand, has landscape-routes that are described dynamically through the rapid, dynamic development of events. They are not detailed, more concise, extremely condensed, although static objects must also be present.

### 3. Portrait detail

The tendency to concreteness is manifested in the methods of portrait painting. For example: «Лицо у козака було мужественно и красиво: високий, благородно изваянный лоб выделялся от синееющих на подобритых висках теней еще рельефнее своєю выпуклостью и белизной ... умные, карие, узко прорезанные глаза горели меняющимся огнем, сверкая то дивною удалью, то злобой, то теплясь вкрадчивой лаской...» (Старицький, 1991: 4).

Without repeating examples that are synonymous in their semantic and stylistic significance, we note that M. Starytsky similarly makes images of a number of other historical figures, for example, Ivan Mazepa. In the interpretation of the image of this hero there are features of idealization (again, in terms of appearance, character traits, abilities and talents), and clear signs of a realistic image. In the same way, M. Starytsky accurately depicts all the other protagonists of the novels, although the images of minor characters are much simpler and less interesting.

As for W. Scott, the images of Rob Roy, Richard the Lionheart, Robin Hood, etc., are particularly interesting because they are images of real historical figures, and it is well known with what accuracy W. Scott tried to reproduce such characters. This accuracy was explained not only by the novelist’s literary integrity, but also by the specific tasks he set for his work. The significance of a historical figure for W. Scott is determined by how fully it embodies the features that are important and necessary for the social role it performs.

W. Scott managed to realistically and fully reproduce the images of historical figures, and thus convey the full colour of the era. From this point of view, the writer analyzes the characters of strong personalities of real historical figures. Nowhere, perhaps, does this manifest itself with such expressiveness as in one of W. Scott’s best novels, *Quentin Dorward*. “... Brave enough for every useful and political purpose, Louis had not a spark of that romantic valour, or of the pride generally associated with it, which fought on for the point of honour, when the point of utility had been long gained. Calm, crafty, and profoundly attentive to his own interest, he made every sacrifice, both of pride and passion, which could interfere with it. He was careful in disguising his real sentiments and purposes from all who approached him, and frequently used the expressions, “that the king knew not how to reign, who knew not how to dissemble; and that, for himself, ...” (Scott, 2018: *Quentin Dorward*)

The personality and behavior of the monarch are inevitably formed as a result of the socio-political situation in his reign; if its features are determined by time, then time, in turn, is determined by the extent to which the ruler is able to guess the needs of the era and subdue themselves and their policies. Thus, the personal shortcomings of the king are not only caused by the era, but also partially meet its needs.

As for Charles, surnamed the Bold, he was a typical embodiment of the idea of feudalism and chivalry. «The character of this Duke was in every respect the direct contrast to that of Louis XI. The latter was calm, deliberate, and crafty, never prosecuting a desperate enterprise, and never abandoning one likely to be successful, however distant the prospect. The genius of the Duke was entirely different. He rushed on danger because he loved it, and on difficulties because he despised

them. As Louis never sacrificed his interest to his passion, so Charles, on the other hand, never sacrificed his passion, or even his humour, to any other consideration». (Scott, 2018: Quentin Dorward).

So, as we see, the novelist gives us a complete portrait description of his characters right at the beginning of the work, with all the detailed descriptions of their appearance and character. This scrupulous detail and the author's desire to immediately fully and completely reproduce the appearance of his hero, fully characterizes the manner of portrayal of W. Scott. Further portrait details, characteristics, if they are present in the work, only add an additional but insignificant idea of the character and temperament of the hero.

We can speak of man as a constant in the case of M. Starytsky, but his permanence of human nature is conceptually determined by a religious factor. In W. Scott, man acts in power or conflicts with society, while in M. Starytsky such a conflict is only a kind of intermediate link in the system of values, because above it there is a higher, God's truth.

Thus, the characters of the heroes of W. Scott and M. Starytsky are characters who embody the features of the time, not only taking an active part in the historical process, but also assessing the events that take place according to their views of the world. They are directly related to the attributes of the past, not only characterized by them, but also illuminate them themselves, giving them a vital credibility.

#### **4. Ethnographic detail**

W. Scott managed to reproduce and convey the full color of the era, thanks to numerous realistic details in the descriptions of life, costumes, behavior of the heroes, which is naturally due to their position in society and worldview inherent in this era. Everything, down to the smallest detail, complements the whole picture, and each stroke enlivens the canvas, making it multifaceted and multifaceted. W. Scott does not seem to be satisfied with the exuberance of ethnographic details in the text itself, he adds even more and comments on them in page notes. Some of them are quite long, for example, notes on Scottish inns, kings' castles on local life: "Another corner of the court displayed a fountain, where a huge bear, carved in stone, predominated over a large stone-basin, into which he disgorged the water. ... The court was spacious, well paved, and perfectly clean, there being probably another entrance behind the stables for removing the litter. Everything around appeared solitary, and would have been silent, but for the continued plashing of the fountain; ... " (Scott, 2018: *Waverley*) – and here the author presents a long room, which is not at present responsible for each particular castle, but some details of it are in various ancient Scottish courtyards, and alludes to the same castle which is described in more detail. W. Scott tried not to disturb the whole picture of the era.

In the trilogy M. Starytsky repeatedly describes the estate of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, his castle in Chyhyryn, pays much attention to the depiction of the local flavor. For example, depicting the palace of King Wladyslaw of Poland, he tries to recreate the smallest details of his life and surroundings.

M. Starytsky, as well as W. Scott, attached great importance to the reproduction of material culture of a particular time. Home life, the construction of a thousand-year-old castle, the ruins of ancient abbeys, the feudal lord's cup, the poor attire of a humble pilgrim, the heavy armor of a crusader, old paintings by W. Scott are by no means simple picturesque details: they reflect the temporal and national imagery of the past. Such details reproduce the system of historical relations and help to penetrate into the most secret meaning of historical events. For example, a masterpiece of historical detail in W. Scott is a copper ring, tightly sealed around the neck of the Group, with the inscription: «Group, the son of Beowulf, a natural slave of Cedric of Saxony». This small copper object reflects everything – time, country, the nature of social relations.

#### **5. Conclusions**

Thus, the functional flexibility, aesthetic communicativeness of the artistic detail as an important means of manifestation of the general, typical in a separate, individual in the works of W. Scott and M. Starytsky are especially evident in the skill of the writers on the aesthetic expediency of this important visual factor. If for the characters, revealed with sufficient completeness, the artistic detail is only an additional means of their individualization, then for the images that are not in the foreground of the work, it is the main key to their personality.

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