

**BIBLICAL EXEGESIS IN OLD UKRAINIAN LITERATURE
OF THE 11TH AND 12TH CENTURIES**

Nataliia Levchenko¹

Oksana Zosimova²

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Abstract. The research deals with biblical hermeneutics in the works of Old Ukrainian literature of the Kyivan period, namely the chronicles and hagiography by Nestor Pecherskyi and the sermons by Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi. Despite the fact that some areas of Old Ukrainian literature have been studied from the point of view of biblical hermeneutics, e.g., in the works of O. Aleksandrov, P. Bilous, and V. Sulyma, thorough research into this field is still necessary. Particular attention must be given to the original and translated literature of the Kyivan period that has not mostly been the object of academic research from this perspective. The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the place and role of biblical hermeneutics in the poetics of Old Ukrainian literary texts of the 11th and 12th centuries. The subject of the research is the before-methodological process of the formation and development of biblical hermeneutics as the dominant element which has structured the poetics of literary works of different genres during the Kyivan period. In order to achieve the goal within the framework of the hermeneutic approach, we followed the principles of polysemy, parallelism, paraphrase, two-tier completeness of meanings within the spiritual and corporeal parable, four-sense (literal, allegorical, moral and anagogical) interpretation of the Scriptures and extrapolation of the New Testament from the Old Testament; contextual, symbolic, Christological, typological, metatextual and intertextual principles of biblical interpretation. The research shows that the use of various ways of interpreting biblical texts, plots and images has been not for Nestor, like for any other the Old Kyivan author, only a neutral literary

¹ Habilitated Doctor of Philology, Associate Professor, Professor at the Professor Leonid Ushkalov Department of Ukrainian Literature and Journalism, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, Ukraine

² PhD in Philology, Associate Professor, Associate Professor at the Department of Practice of Oral and Written English, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, Ukraine

technique employed to describe contemporary events and portray real people. The methods and techniques of biblical hermeneutics in the structure of the poetics of both chronicles and hagiographic genres enabled the author to make the educated and sagacious reader pay attention to the implications of the text, its additional semantic meaning. Thus, Nestor created an integral text that was based on both the literal meaning of the Bible quotations and the mystical (allegorical) way of recoding the original information that underlies its form. The writer considered the origin and content of Scripture to be a sacred mystery, protected by the efforts of theologians who established the rules of perception and understanding of the Word of God as a way of acquiring one's knowledge of the world. The distinctive feature of the Orthodox writer's exegetical sign system is the holistic mysterious feeling of the language as an important means of communication with the incognizable God. The authors of the article also point out that the most popular genre of the Old Ukrainian literature of the 11th and 12th centuries, the poetics of which was greatly influenced by biblical hermeneutics, was the sermon. The analysis of Kyrilo (Cyril) Turivskiy's works shows that the preacher considered people's following the Word of God, keeping His commandments, and acknowledging the Symbol of Faith to be the key to the union of man with God.

1. Introduction

Christianity became fertile ground for the development of biblical hermeneutics. The interpretation of the canonical texts was inseparable from their understanding and constituted a particular level of comprehension of God as a whole. This intention was the focus of many theological concepts that differ over the ways to achieve the goal. The original premise of this movement was an unquestioned belief in the Highest, the Perfect, and the Almighty. Theoretical understanding of the methods of interpretation was stimulated by the need to interpret the Holy Scriptures.

Given that initially Christianity did not have the time to develop stable theoretical laws for the exegetical perceptions of the Old and New Testaments, but definitely needed them, it borrowed the principles of interpreting texts from a highly developed Greco-Roman culture, transformed them into an exegetical system, and introduced them into the European literature as a dominant structural element of the poetics, thereby laying the foundations for the search for common or similar features of literary works.

Not only did the new religion has changed the humanistic matrix of the world, but, as L. Kurbatov notes, it “ has adapted for its purposes a large number of spiritual values that had been developed during the earlier eras: from moral norms and fragments of philosophical movements to literary traditions and techniques of psychological influence” [22, p. 5].

Despite the fact that some areas of the Old Ukrainian literature have been studied from the point of view of biblical hermeneutics (see, e.g., works of O. Aleksandrov [2], P. Bilous [7; 8], V. Sulyma [38]), thorough research into this field is still necessary. Particular attention must be given to the original and translated literature of the Kyivan period that has not mostly been the object of academic research from this perspective.

The **purpose** of this study is to identify and describe the place and role of biblical hermeneutics in the poetics of the Old Ukrainian literary texts of the 11th and 12th centuries.

The **subject** of the research is the before-methodological process of the formation and development of biblical hermeneutics as the dominant element that structured the poetics of literary works of different genres during the Kyivan period. The **object** of our study is Nestor Pecherskyi and Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi’s literary heritage.

The **novelty** of the research is determined by its object and purpose. For the first time, the elements of biblical exegesis in the structure of the chronicle genre, original hagiographic works, and sermons of the Kyivan period have been identified and described.

The **topicality** of this study lies in concluding that the use of biblical hermeneutics in the original literary works of the Kyivan period is the first, before-methodological, stage of its development in the Old Ukrainian literature.

In order to achieve the goal within the framework of the hermeneutic approach, we followed the principles of polysemy, parallelism, paraphrase, two-tier completeness of meanings within the spiritual and corporeal parable, four-sense (literal, allegorical, moral and anagogical) interpretation of the Scriptures and extrapolation of the New Testament from the Old Testament; contextual, symbolic, Christological, typological, metatextual and intertextual principles of biblical interpretation.

2. Major issues of the Slavic biblical studies

The adoption of the Christian culture by the Slavs required translating the books of the Bible (both the Old and the New Testament) from the Greek language that was necessary for church services. Kyivan Rus borrowed biblical texts from Byzantium through Bulgaria; the books came under a threefold functional classification: in the service registers, the texts selected from the Biblical Canon were arranged in the order they were read during the liturgy throughout the year; Menologion (Lives of Saints etc.) was structured in accordance with the established order, and the interpretative text was broken down into small fragments, which were accompanied by the commentaries by the Church Fathers. Each of these genres had its own specific purpose, composition, textual features, its own history of origin and functioning [4; 9; 10; 18; 42].

The translation of the Bible was a complex and lengthy process, stretching from the 9th to the 12th century [6]. A large number of the Slavic scholars contributed to this challenging project, as mentioned in the legend of St. Cyril and Methodius [4].

Many issues of the Slavic biblical studies have not yet been clarified. One of the unresolved problems is the correspondence between the translations and the original Greek texts. The complexity of this issue is determined and increased by the fact that in the Slavic lands and in Kyivan Rus in particular, there were several types of biblical texts functioning in parallel, namely: the service text, Menologion and the interpretative text.

Accordingly, we can not only assume, but we must assert that translators used different versions of the original, the biblical, texts that came from different branches of the textual tradition [6, p. 117–120].

Given that out of all the books of the Bible, popular in Kyivan Rus, we have only a critical edition of the text of the Book of Genesis (the Menologion version) and the official (liturgical) text of the Book of Exodus [27; 32], it is not yet clear which group of Greek texts was used to create them, and the characteristic features of the translation principles and techniques are only briefly outlined [32].

The problem is compounded by the fact that the liturgical books have been preserved in relatively recent versions. This, for the most part, makes it practically impossible to compare them textually with particular authors' works where the elements of biblical hermeneutics are used as structural components of the poetics.

It should be also kept in mind that biblical quotations permeate almost all the translated works used by the Kyivan intellectuals. P. Bilous calls the ancient authors “gardeners”, who “took care of their garden, though it was partly planted with the trees brought from foreign lands” [7, p. 295].

It is sometimes impossible to determine whether the author used an unknown Slavic translation of the Bible, its original Greek text, patristic, theological or liturgical texts, consisting primarily of biblical quotations, or the writer reproduced the text of the Holy Scriptures from memory.

The comparison of the original texts of the Biblical Canon, hagiographic literature and sermons, and above all the Holy Scriptures, with the corresponding Old Slavic translations would restore the exact meanings of both separate words and phraseological units (idioms), as well as the whole set of concepts, terms and techniques that helped the Kyivan men of letters to perceive and describe the world and the events that took place around them.

However, because of the lack of the original Scripture translations of the Kyivan period, it is nearly impossible to do it today. Therefore, the need to use the Bible translations of later times arose. O. Mykhailov believed that this issue should be approached with great care, emphasizing the high likelihood of the independent updating of the text, characteristic of the Slavic and Greek copyists [28, p. 304].

The controversial issues of the Bible translation, the lack of its full text, on the one hand, determined the urgent need for its interpretation in the original genres of the Old Ukrainian literature during the Kyivan period, and on the other hand, complicated the process of formation and development of biblical hermeneutics as an important component of the poetics of literary works.

3. The textual face of the Bible in *The Tale of Bygone Years*

It should be noted that, when referring to the biblical hermeneutics in the Old Ukrainian literature of the Kyivan period, we mean its before-methodological aspects, since for the first time even “the term *hermeneutics* in relation to the Holy Scriptures appeared in the title of the book “*Hermeneutica sacra sive methodus exponendarum Sacrarum Litterarum*” (1654) by a Protestant theologian Johann C. Dannhauer, and later – in Joseph Julius Monsprenger’s introduction “*Institutiones Hermeneuticae Scripturae Sacrae Veteris Testamenti*” (1776) to the Catholic Bible” [45, p. 64], not

to mention the long period of the formation and development of biblical hermeneutics, to which Nestor Pecherskyi made his own practical contribution. He considered the origin and content of Scripture to be a sacred mystery, protected by the efforts of theologians who established the rules of perception and understanding of the Word of God as a way of acquiring one's knowledge of the world.

The absence of the full text of the Bible in the Kyivan culture as a whole and in the literature of the period in particular, was compensated by references to Holy Tradition, patristics, apocrypha, and other religious writings of Byzantine and Old Bulgarian origin. Naturally, such a diversity of works, assimilated on an almost equal basis, had a significant impact not only on the formation of methods for interpreting Scripture, but also directly on the nature of knowing the world and one's being.

T. Tselik, referring to M. Gromov, noted that “during the Kyivan period several aspects of cognition started to synthesize, namely the artistic level, inherited from the oral poetic tradition; the symbolic aspect that emerged from primordial magic and was re-interpreted to meet the requirements of the medieval ideology, and the scientific type that was just beginning to develop” [39, p. 65].

The fusion of these three types of cognition is a characteristic feature of Nestor Pecherskyi's work in general and the way he interprets the Holy Scriptures in particular, e.g. in *The Tale of Bygone Years (The Primary Chronicle)*, *Reading about Borys and Hlib* and *The Life of Feodosii (Theodosius) Pecherskyi*.

The canon of the chronicle genre narrowed the opportunities for the author to incorporate detailed interpretative commentary on the books of Scripture into the text of the work but, according to Riccardo Picchio, “*The Tale of Bygone Years* encapsulates the religious and ecclesiastical features of Old literature of Kyivan Rus” [31, p. 67]. The textual face of the Bible in *The Primary Chronicle* is mostly manifested at the level of quotations, reminiscences, allusions, and paraphrases from the Old Testament, namely the Books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, the Books of Kings, the Book of Proverbs (of Solomon), Ecclesiastes, the Major Prophets (the Books of Daniel, Isaiah, and Ezekiel), the Minor Prophets (the Books of Micah and Amos), and the New Testament, namely: the Gospels, Epistles and The Book of Revelation (the Apocalypse of John).

The incorporation of authoritative and indubitable biblical quotations into the chronicles gave the texts special significance, solemnity, sophistication, and emphasized the divinity of the subject under discussion.

Thus, describing the ancient population of Kyiv, the chronicler characterizes the townspeople as wise and discerning [29, p. 107]. Here he definitely refers to the well-known words from the Old Testament. A. Gippius [11], citing I. N. Danilevsky's books [14; 15], points out that the probable source of the expressions used in this description is a dialogue between Joseph the Wise and the Egyptian Pharaoh in the Book of Genesis ("...let Pharaoh look out for a discerning, wise man..." Genesis 41:33; "...there is none as discerning and wise as you" Genesis 41:39) and a verse at the beginning of the Book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 1:15).

The biblical paraphrase, used to structure the chronicler's description of the Polans (Polianians), who had settled in Kyiv, highlighted the fact that this tribe was chosen by God, because "Christian writers heard in the voices of biblical authors the voice of God himself, and saw their purpose in ensuring that the Holy Voice led all the tribes and clans, united around ancient Kyiv in a great state, to the path to salvation" [38, p. 4].

At the same time, Nestor developed the fundamental idea of the church doctrine, the idea of dynastic rule that pervades the whole chronicle. The history of Kyivan Rus was regarded by the author as a conflict between good and evil, God and Satan.

However, the accuracy of citation of the Old and New Testament texts, as well as the sources, on which the chroniclers relied in their creative work, have not been sufficiently studied. This topic goes far beyond our research goals and requires a careful and thorough analysis.

Our observations only give grounds for stating that the essential feature of Nestor Pecherskyi's linguistic and philosophical thought in this case is obviously not only the understanding of language as a sign system, but its holistic and mystical experience, spiritual comprehension as an energy emanation of the Spirit. This perception of language by the author is a result of the influence of the Eastern Church theological thought, which formed holistic perception of the world and of man as "res integra". According to V. Horskyi, "the old Ukrainian philosopher and sage acts as a holistic subject; he thinks of himself as a fact inside being" [13, p. 30]. Hence, special attention is paid not so much to the object of knowledge (as in Western culture),

but to one's path to God, to the spiritual aspects of existence, to the world that is only known through deep insight and intuition.

Therefore, the distinctive feature of the exegetical sign system of the Orthodox chronicler is not the categorical understanding of language, which is based on a rationalistic, scientifically perceived world with a fairly clear hierarchy of constituents, but the holistic mysterious feeling of the language as an important means of communication with the incognizable God. The characteristic features of this interpretation of the linguistic signs in *The Tale of Bygone Years* gives us reasons to speak about Nestor Pecherskyi's God-inspired understanding of its essence.

4. The biblical archetype of fratricide in Nestor Pecherskyi's *Reading about Borys and Hlib*

The Byzantine influence on the Old Ukrainian hagiographic literature of the Kyivan period prompted the men of letters to focus on holiness and commitment to the moral ideals of behaviour in their works. The idea of likening man to God (theosis) framed the concept of man's similarity to Christ, which was central to the poetics of the saints' lives genre.

The infinity of the object world, the absurd pursuit of the material values, which do not give complete consolation, but on the contrary, provoke military clashes, internecine warfare, sudden death, fratricide and other tragedies, – all these issues are considered by Nestor Pecherskyi in his hagiographic works that created sacred models, propagated the moral ideals of people's behaviour on their path of seeking to be similar to God. The discovery of this path was a major humanistic breakthrough in the Middle Ages since it showed a way out of the hermetic object world.

In accordance with the canonical demands of the hagiographic genre, Nestor in *Reading about Borys and Hlib* recounts the lives of the prince brothers from childhood to death. Moreover, the chronology of their life story extends beyond the conventional life of the saints, due to the detailed prehistory of the creation of the universe and man by God. Being placed at the beginning of the text, it gave the martyrdom of Borys and Hlib universal significance in the Christian world.

The most authoritative pattern for medieval philosophy was Scripture, through which the artists established a formal analogy between the events of secular and sacred history. Therefore, the main characteristic of the Ky-

ivan texts is their twofold nature, which is realized by intertwining a direct account of one's earthly life and the biblical exegesis. The switch of the story to the other, higher, sense of the text is the Bible key – a Scripture quote. This thematic key was put in a specially designated place, mostly at the beginning of the 'exposition' (introduction), and served as the leitmotif of the whole work [35, p. 120].

Nestor's *Reading about Borys and Hlib* begins with the Bible code of the fall of man, tempted by the serpent, which embodies the world evil, or Satan. This code, in its essence, is the key to reading the hagiographic text as a model of the struggle between good and evil, God and Satan, Princes Borys and Hlib with their brother Sviatopolk. Given the basic Christian concept of the eternity of God and the transience of the material world, this code reduces the meaning of the hagiographic text to the aphorism: it is better to die for God's sake than to fight for one's worldly possessions on earth.

The semantics of this aphorism brings the meaning of the saint's life genre far beyond the literary text according to the theory of Yu. Lotman, who stated that "a text created by the author turns out to be an element of an elaborate system of extra-textual connections, which, by their hierarchy of non-artistic and artistic norms of different levels, summarized by the experience of the previous creative work, create a complex code that allows you to decipher the information given in the text" [25, p. 280].

The biblical keys were not chosen at random. The choice was dictated not by the personal erudition of the author, but by the traditional corpus of quotations characteristic of a certain genre; it obeyed the general canons of medieval literature. According to O. Savenko, it primarily met the demands of the biblical canon as well as the literary means (sources), which the writers most often relied on when composing their texts. The scholar notes that "a canonical text has inherent authority. In the Middle Ages, the authority of this type of text was based on its connection with the Scriptures in the form of direct references (quotations), allusions, paraphrases, and illustrations" [34, p. 16].

On the canonical list of the 'righteous men' (a type of saints in the Eastern Orthodox Church) and other biblical characters, each figure has their symbolic meaning. In the allegorical sense, the story of Cain and Abel is interpreted as an allegory of the Savior's sacrificial death. This interpretation of the archetype of fratricide was first suggested by Paul the Apostle,

when referring to the coming of the Jews “to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Hebrews 12:24).

In *Reading about Borys and Hlib* Nestor expands on the biblical archetype of fratricide embodied in the Bible story of Cain and Abel. The archetype was realized in the content and structure of the literary work and influenced the formation of the binary-opposition paradigm of the pious, God-fearing and loyal to the clan traditions Borys and Hlib on the one hand, and the wilful, treacherous, power hungry, and ‘cursed’ lawbreaker Sviatopolk on the other.

In referring to Abel’s image, Nestor emphasizes the connotation of sacrifice, which he obviously borrows from the scale of biblical values described in one of the sermons by Proclus of Constantinople: “Abel is named in relation to sacrifice; Enoch is mentioned because of his piety; Melchizedek is associated with the Messiah; Abraham is glorified for faith; Isaac is praised as a prefiguration of Christ; Jacob is mentioned because of his wrestling with the angel; Joseph is honoured for chastity; Job is called blessed because of his patience; Moses is celebrated as the lawgiver; Samson is associated with Jesus; Elijah is praised for his struggle and challenge to Baal; Isaiah is described as a theologian; Daniel is honoured for his intelligence; Ezekiel is celebrated for his amazing prophecies; David is mentioned as Christ’s ancestor; Solomon is honoured for his great wisdom” [36; cf.: 1, p. 236].

According to the hagiographic canon, the meaningful structure of the genre is based on the confrontation between the two moral worlds that are polar opposites. The world of light and good, embodied in the figures of Borys and Hlib, confronts the world of darkness and evil, associated with Sviatopolk and his accomplices. Sviatopolk becomes the epitome of a hagiographic villain. The archetypal essence of hagiographic characters is realized in the binary opposition “love – hatred”. As our research shows, this dichotomy is correlated with the contrast “two versus one” that brings on a psychological reaction of “acceptance – rejection.” The common element in this opposition is the verbal reaction “struggle”, the struggle for power to be exact. The canonization of the princes, who were killed in the struggle for power, may seem absurd, as power is an absolutely secular category, that has nothing to do with sacredness or holiness.

However, a thorough analysis of the sources of the text under discussion gives grounds to state that Nestor creates here a biblical allusion to the Massacre of the Innocents – Bethlehem male babies killed by Herod, king of Judea, in his search for Jesus Christ, in order to protect himself from the potential claimant to the throne. Such semantic similarities give reasons to speak of the conceptual closeness of *Reading about Borys and Hlib* to the Byzantine homilies [27; 43; 44], in which Herod's crime is widely interpreted as a sin against humanity and Jesus Christ. This interpretation of sin enables us to reveal a tendency to its binary perception by the author from moral, theocentric, and religious perspectives.

Thus, following the Byzantine tradition in the Scripture exegesis, Nestor Pecherskyi conclusively proves the validity of the idea of the sacrificial death of Borys and Hlib, which takes a hypertrophied form of obedience, humility, and holiness, and shows no indications of worldly events. O. Sli-pushko notes, "Being able to escape, they did not make use of the chance. The main thing for them is not to harm their eldest brother. The moral significance of the principle of eldership is a decisive factor; it is a moral imperative that is realized through a sacrificial deed" [37, p. 51].

After death, the murdered princes become part of Divine Providence, which, according to the medieval intellectual, determines the historical fate. "This view is supported by the cosmic scale of the scene where the tragedy of Borys and Hlib takes place – from the creation of the world and man, the first fall of man up to the Day of Judgment" [23, p. 142]. Given that the place of the historical event of fratricide, through a clear link to the biblical mystical text, is extrapolated to the whole world, the death of Borys and Hlib is transferred by the author from the profane sphere to the sacred one. Together with holiness, Borys and Hlib gained the right to pray to God for forgiveness of sins of their Christian brothers and sisters, who, in return, are obliged to thank and honour the saints in their prayers.

5. The idea of Christlikeness in Old Kyivan hagiographic literature

Nestor depicts a completely different type of man, the type of the holy ascetic, the embodiment of the monastic ideal, in the hagiography *The Life of Feodosii (Theodosius) Pecherskyi*, where the author's tendency to follow the literary traditions of Byzantine hagiography is revealed even more clearly than in his previous work.

In the literary space of *The Life of Feodosii (Theodosius) Pecherskyi* it is possible to distinguish the main semantic subspaces with vertical and horizontal interpretive vectors, where the vertical interpretation vector corresponds to the Christian medieval *τοποί* (traditional images) of hell, earth, and heaven, while the horizontal vector correlates with the opposition “the world – the monastery”. Accordingly, “the movement in a symbolic, spiritual space becomes a movement up and down a vertical scale of religious and moral values, the upper part of which is located in heaven and the lower one is in hell” [24, p. 297].

From birth to death, the life of Feodosii Pecherskyi is depicted by Nestor within the framework of horizontal development and vertical ascent. The monk’s asceticism is characterized by living a simple life, social humiliation, strict self-denial and self-restraint. When his mother tries to save the honour of their noble family and shows no understanding of her son’s self-humiliation, the ascetic responds with a sermon on Christ’s sacrifice, “Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself chose to be poor and humble giving us an example to follow, so that we should humble ourselves in His name; he was insulted and spat upon, and hit – he endured all the sufferings for our salvation. All the more reason why we should endure hardship, so that we may gain Christ. As to my work, listen to me, my mother. If our Lord Jesus Christ, when having supper with his disciples, took bread, and blessed it; and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body, broken for your sake and for the sake of the many, for the forgiveness of their sins.’ Therefore, even if the Lord Himself called bread His body, all the more reason why I should rejoice that God lets me share in the making of His body” [16]. Such descriptions of the saints’ self-humiliation and humility are a must in the texts of the hagiographic genre. It is a carefully planned technique, the essential element of the plot and the embodiment of the biblical antithesis of pride, that is the sin, which led to the fall of man and his expulsion out of Paradise. Humility enables man to overcome the powerlessness of his nature, or his carnality.

Feodosii makes the final decision to take monastic vows after he has heard the words of the Gospel, “Anyone who does not leave his father or mother and does not go after me is not worthy of me” [16]; cf.: “He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me” (Matthew 10:37). Quoting the Holy Scriptures, Nestor, for the most part, pursues the goal of

intensifying the motives of the inner world of the main hero, stimulating him to strive for self-perfection and Christlikeness by rejecting the demands of the usual secular environments and renouncing the world.

O. Alexandrov notes that “in the worldview, characteristic of the clan system, the break with the homeland is equal to death, while for Feodosii it is an indispensable condition for his personal salvation” [2, p. 53]. In our opinion, the author of the hagiography under discussion tries to prove that Feodosii is guided here not by the ‘narrowed’ motive for his own salvation, but by the global choice of the vertical vector of man’s path to God by means of reorienting the scale of human values, the highest hierarchical point of which is the image of God. Therefore, the dramatic relationship with his mother only emphasizes the firmness of Feodosii’s decision to change his life.

Besides, in Yu. Lotman’s view, “the pursuit of holiness implies the need to abandon settled life and set out on a journey. The break with sin was thought of as a departure, movement in space. Thus, the coming to the monastery was a transfer from the sinful place to the holy one...” [24, p. 299].

After becoming a monk, Feodosii embodies the concept of an ascetic, he is a perfect example of a person who defeats the devil and works miracles. He is admired by other monks and laymen. Even the prince comes to him for advice and blessing. The literary text, created by Nestor, is distinguished by vivid pictures of worldly and monastic life that are a notable example of one’s service to God and people, which is definitely worth following.

D. Chyzhevskiy emphasizes that “Nestor recounts Feodosii’s attempts to ‘imitate Christ’ in his obedience and humiliation: Feodosii wears poor clothes, works in the field, later bakes prosphora (he chose this job, which is not appropriate for his social status, in order to be ‘a collaborator in the making of Christ’s body’), finally even wears chains” [41, p. 96]. However, D. Chyzhevskiy does not consider Feodosii to be a representative of extreme asceticism, which manifests itself in the Egyptian monastic tradition of escaping from the world to the desert and ‘mortifying the flesh.’ According to the scholar, Feodosii is closer to the Palestinian monastic tradition, which combines moderate asceticism with productive work and activities for the benefit of the world.

The model of the world in Christianity is dualistic, divided into two unbalanced parts that oppose each other. These are the sacred heaven and

the sinful earthly world, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Nestor Pecherskyi emphasizes that Feodosii, due to his ascetic deeds, has risen above the fundamentally split world of reality.

6. The exegesis of Scripture in the Old Kyivan sermons

The special nature of biblical hermeneutics lies in the fact that “it encompasses all the parts of the interpretative process, including the researcher. And the more fully the researcher comprehends the Word, the more he is involved in the ‘truth of being’, the more he himself becomes the object of interpretation and self-cognition. The latter, from the perspective of the Christian mind, is not limited by external experience and self-examination, but implies a certain moral atmosphere, because the truth is revealed not merely to the ‘rational eye’ but to the ‘eyes of the heart’ ” [3, p. 168]. Medieval rhetoricians revealed the ‘truth of being’ in their sermons and homilies.

Those few examples of the Old Kyivan sermons, which have survived from medieval times, do not enable us to fully understand and describe the model of developing and functioning of the sermon at that time, as well as to have an overall picture of the biblical hermeneutics formation. However, even a brief analysis of the major works by Ilarion (Hilarion), Klyment Smoliatysh and Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi shows that biblical hermeneutics was an essential component of the Ukrainian sermon of the Kyivan period.

According to the sermon addressee (target audience), the pre-Mongolian Ukrainian sermon can be divided into three groups. The first group includes sermons intended for the educated circles, the second one – for the common people, and the third group – for the monks. The recipient type determined the artistic level of the sermon. The sermons of the first group were naturally written in a sophisticated style, the language and devices, characteristic of the texts of the second and the third groups, were ordinary and unpretentious. “The preachers of the first group include, first of all, Metropolitan (Bishop) Ilarion, followed by Klyment Smoliatysh and Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi; the second and third groups are represented by other preachers, namely Luka Zhydiata, Theodosius Pechersky, and the authors of the nameless sermons” [30, p. 26]. Given that the sermon is a genre of ecclesiastical literature, intended to be preached, which means that it serves a communicative purpose, the preacher was obliged to use both his knowledge of exegetics

and rhetorical skills. It brought about a combination of rhetorical techniques and hermeneutical models in the sermons under discussion.

It is well-known that the main purpose of hermeneutics is to interpret and understand written texts, intended to be read either aloud or to yourself. Rhetoric focuses on persuading, influencing, and informing the audience when giving a public speech. In Ancient Greece and Rome, where speeches were mostly delivered, the art of writing was chiefly seen as the ability to make text markings, concerning its declamation.

As much as understanding overlaps with interpretation in hermeneutics, speaking overlaps with declamation in rhetoric.

Classical examples of the Greco-Byzantine version of rhetoric, characteristic of the genres of sermon and homily, were first assimilated in their Church Slavonic form by Macedonians, Bulgarians, and Serbs, and later borrowed in local translations by the Eastern Slavs. According to O. Horbach, “in the original works by Ilarion and Kyrylo Turivskyyi one can observe fine examples of preaching eloquence” [12, p. 19].

There was a close relationship between hermeneutics and rhetoric in the Middle Ages. In order to interpret, understand, and persuade the recipient, the Scripture interpreter of the Kyivan period had to use rhetorical figures and techniques extensively. In order to inform and persuade the audience, the rhetorician had to accept the norms and follow the rules of hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics and rhetoric were inextricably and equally intertwined in the sermon, which was the most popular genre of the Old Ukrainian literature of the Kyivan period. Its main purpose was to promote the spread of Christianity, to teach people to fight against sin and all kinds of temptations, to master the rules of new life and meet the standards of Christian morality. Therefore, the first literary works of this genre were, first of all, didactic; they mainly interpreted the basic Christian commandments and focused on the central Gospel figure – Jesus Christ, in particular the virgin birth of Jesus, the nativity of Christ, his death and resurrection.

The function of the sermon, determined by its genre, was important. A didactic sermon was intended to teach the Christians a moral lesson, the purpose of a eulogistic sermon was glorification of biblical figures and saints, a holiday sermon (‘kazannia’) was aimed at describing Christian holidays and their significance in the church and people’s life, etc. The type of a sermon influenced “its structure and poetic language, but not the connection

of the text with the Holy Scriptures. The sermons on specific biblical events were based on Scripture or Holy Tradition stories. The events were discussed within the framework of a complete dogmatic system, where the connection between the religious holiday and the salvation 'program' was traced. Thus, the soteriological nature of the holidays was emphasized. The mechanism had the same effect on the whole liturgical cycle of the holiday; the Gospel narratives were combined with psalms, apostolic readings, the Bible commentaries, and iconographic texts where its poetic structure was realized. Biblical issues were only partly taken directly from the Bible, they were largely derived from the previous liturgical services" [46, p. 52].

The preacher, as an interpreter of the indestructible truths of Scripture, was to meet certain demands. As P. Bilous points out, the author of the sermon is always "a propagator and apologist for the Christian faith, its guardian and bearer. Such is the initial and traditional role of the preacher, who takes on the duty and responsibility for following the path of apostolic activity as a science. But as a creator of the text, he becomes aware of himself as a sage and scholar who draws wisdom from the Scriptures and the works of the Church Fathers, from historical and hagiographic sources. The function of the preacher is expanded by the need not only to create the text, but also to deliver it as a speech, therefore, at the same time, he thinks of himself as a speaker, a propagator of the art of oratory. The author of a sermon is a medium, a mediator between the Word and the Work of God and people, who sees his task as conveying to them the divine meanings of life, and most importantly – strengthening their faith, so the preacher is also a 'suggester' who, with the help of words, inspires a feeling of anticipation of the Kingdom of Heaven. The bolstering of one's faith, in the preacher's opinion, is connected not so much with the awareness of the tenets of the religion as with the ability to 'feel' them, that is, faith is formed on an emotional basis. As a result, the word should be directed precisely to the emotional sphere of the listener, to carry a suggestive charge. Such a role is effectively performed by the word in its figurative sense, by the language that is emotional and stylistically expressive; the author of the sermon seeks to create an expressive fiction text, and therefore is regarded as a master of weaving words" [8, p. 41–42].

At that time, the sermon was chiefly a part of the canonical theological discourse, and the preacher performed the role of a mediator between God

and people. Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi was one such mediator, whose works are found in various text versions dating from the 13th to the 17th centuries together with the sermons of other preachers, and, for the most part, they were signed with the names of the Church Fathers. The oldest scroll of the 13th century contained 9 sermons ('teachings'), the others included up to 20 works.

In all his sermons and the works, attributed to the bishop, the author "does not explain any dogmatic or moral truth of faith. Only in two of his writings (A Sermon on Pentecost ('Green Sunday') and A Sermon on Wisdom) he teaches moral lessons. Indeed, according to their content, all his 'teachings' are homilies, or rather panegyric sermons" [30, p. 69].

However, one of his best works, "Cyril Mnikh's parable about the human soul and body, and the violation of God's commandments, and the resurrection of the human body, and the Last Judgement, and the future tortures," Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi begins with an appeal to the reader to read the Holy Scriptures, thoroughly engrossing themselves in the sensory fabric of the plots, themes, ideas and images [20, p. 286].

According to him, the preacher's primary goal is cognition by means of the interpretation and fulfillment of the Word of God through the imitation of Christ, who is the embodiment of the Word, the Logos, and God who created, by saying ten words, the world out of nothing.

It was natural that the traditional Christian theme of the corporeal body and the immortal soul was close to the author, who expanded on it in his work. The allusion to the Resurrection of Christ leads to the preacher's reflection on human sinfulness. Adam's physicality and his inability to resist temptation were the causes of original sin. Adam's body was tempted to eat forbidden fruit; due to that mankind is sin-stained. However, people's faith in the resurrection of Christ and His atoning sacrifice, gives everyone hope for their deliverance from sin. Kyrylo (Cyril) convinces us, "Believe in the truth about the resurrection of human bodies" [20, p. 306].

From the author's point of view, in the holiday services there is a mystical connection with the Gospel stories that repeatedly appear in the believers' imagination. Thus, Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi demonstrated a time model according to which the sacred events of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ "exist in the world of eternity and occur in the temporal earthly world" [19, p. 417].

Following the example and will of Jesus Christ, the renewal of the whole earth will take place and the resurrection of all the dead will occur [20, p. 308].

The author sought to show the parishioners the greatness of the religious holiday, emphasizing its spiritual significance, and this could only be done by communicating to the audience in simple and lucid terms the complex orthodox metaphysical doctrine of the Symbol of Faith, of the Holy Trinity – God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit that is a signpost pointing to the spiritual world of kindness, mercy, high moral standards, to the world of Christianity, which is far from the world of pagan cosmogony. Condemning the barbarians' rituals of human sacrifice, Kyrylo Turivskyi contrasts them with Jesus's atoning sacrifice. "The Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ is an allegory of rebirth that at the same time symbolizes the victory of the light of good" [34, p. 112]. Therefore, following Gregory the Theologian, the preacher considered Easter the most important Christian holiday, which, according to the Bible, has a three-tier structure, where the first level is represented by the Old Testament story of the salvation of the sons of Israel from the destroying angel (angel of death) with the help of the blood of slain lambs whose blood prefigured Christ's blood; the second level is constituted by the blood of Jesus, shed for the sins of mankind; the third level is the sacrament of Holy Communion (the Eucharist) – the ceremony in which people eat bread and drink wine as signs of Christ's body and blood. As Kyrylo (Cyril) says, "Christians, who are savoring this body with faith, are purified and are granted an eternal life" [21, p. 10].

The key to the union of man with God is following the Word of God, keeping His commandments, and acknowledging the Symbol of Faith.

The allegorical biblical exegesis of Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi was in harmony with rhetoric. While interpreting biblical texts, he created metaphors based on certain passages. The preacher widely used stylistic figures, in particular anaphora, pleonasm, syntactic parallelism, repetition, and parabola. However, the author showed a strong preference for the antithesis. For example, within the framework of contrast the writer interpreted the Old and New Testaments, the figures of Adam and Christ, the images of heaven and earth, sinfulness and holiness, life and death, etc.

Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyi's creative work of is one of the highest achievements of allegorical exegesis. Following the Church Fathers, he

expressed his thoughts and ideas with the help of allegories and symbols, giving nearly each of the images and themes of Scripture his own interpretation and understanding. The main rhetorical devices, used by the author for persuading his listener and reader, were the power of the word and the depth of his thought.

6. Conclusions

The truth of the universe and human existence, determined by God, was revealed by medieval rhetoricians mainly in sermons and hagiography, somewhat less – in chronicles.

The Bible metaphorical conceptual sphere is realized by Nestor at the level of the following relations: “word – consciousness”, “word – sign”, “word – text”. The genre of hagiography is assimilated by him as a socio-cultural set of texts, the explication of the characteristic features of linguistic consciousness, an illustration of the process of theosis whose aim is likeness to God. The author fills the hagiographic conceptual sphere with biblical linguistic concepts, which determine the essence of hagiography that is a verbal description of holiness.

The use of various ways of interpreting biblical texts, plots and images was not for Nestor, like for any other Old Kyivan author, only a neutral literary technique employed to describe contemporary events and portray real people. The methods and techniques of biblical hermeneutics in the structure of the poetics of both chronicles and hagiographic genres enabled the author to make the educated and sagacious reader pay attention to the implications of the text, its additional semantic meaning. Thus, Nestor created an integral text that is based on both the literal meaning of the Bible quotations and the mystical (allegorical) way of recoding the original information that underlies its form.

The level of Kyrylo (Cyril) Turivskyy's works enables us to suggest that the Ukrainian sermon was in its heyday during the Kyivan period due to the harmonious combination of rhetoric and biblical hermeneutics as its fundamental components.

Given the format of this article, we have only briefly discussed one of the topical issues of contemporary literary studies and provided a framework for future comprehensive and detailed research into the place and role of biblical hermeneutics in the poetics of Ukrainian literature of the 11th and 12th centuries.

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