

The Lyrical Dramas of Lesya Ukrainka (A Distinctive Writing Style)

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This article explores the lyrical aspects of Larysa Kosach's (Lesya Ukrainka, 1871-1913) dramas, which delve into themes such as the establishment and development of Christianity, ancient mythology, basic plots, national history, and folklore. Known for her openness to various languages and cultures, Lesya Ukrainka significantly enriched the genre system of Ukrainian literature. She established genres such as the dramatic poem, feerie drama, and drama etude, which are all integral to lyrical drama. The lyricism in Ukrainka's dramas is primarily seen in the construction of conflict, which unfolds not through actions, as in classical theatre, but rather through the consciousness and experiences of the characters, their discussions, and reflections. This lyricism is also evident in the structure of her works, including the character's language, rhythm, tone, pace of speech, and melody. Her dramas predominantly feature monologues, meditative digressions, subtle hints in the character's thoughts, sketchy descriptions, and telegraphic syntax. Along with the content of her works, the lyricism is further enriched by detailed descriptions of nature and the incorporation of folklore.

Kľúčové slová: lyrickosť, lyrická dráma, ukrajinská literatúra, Lesia Ukrajinka, modernita, neoromantizmus, antikoloniálny diskurz

Lesya Ukrainka's creative heritage encompasses more than 270 poems, twenty-two dramas, fifteen short stories, numerous articles, and various translations, putting her on a par with Ukrainian literary giants like Taras Shevchenko and Ivan Franko. Their works reveal the intellectual, aesthetic, and spiritual strength of the nation, reaching the highest artistic achievements. At the same time, Ukrainka's dramas connect her with the legacy of Western European literature, including the works of Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Gerhart Hauptmann, Hermann Sudermann, Henrik Ibsen, Maurice Maeterlinck, and August Strindberg.

By the end of the 1890s and the *fin de siècle* era, Ukrainka had focused her attention and an increasing amount of energy on the dramatic genre. Like many modern writers, she was drawn to drama for its artistic syncretism and openness to experimental and creative solutions. Her intensive literary efforts produced several dramatic works that tackled a range of themes and issues, such as the establishment of Christianity (Одержима [The Possessed, 1901]; У полоні [Captive, 1903]; Руфін і Прісцила [Rufin and Priscila, 1906–1910]); antique mythology (Кассандра [Cassandra, 1903–1907], Іфігенія в Тавриді [Iphigenia in Tauris, 1898]); basic plots (Кам'яний господар [The Stone Host, 1912], Три хвилини [Three Minutes, 1905]); and national history (Бояриня [The Boyar Woman, 1910]). Her feerie drama Лісова пісня [The Forest Song] (1913) is based on folklore. It is now performed in more than twenty languages, ranging from English to Crimean Tatar and Mariupol Greek (one of the languages of modern Greeks in Ukraine). It is a highly famous work of Ukrainian literature worldwide, second only to Shevchenko's Заповіт [The Testament] (1845). Through these dramas, Ukrainka testified to the history and fate of the people living under the looming shadow of the empire's colonialist policy. At the same time, her works became a powerful force for awakening national consciousness, resistance, and spiritual revival.

One recognizable feature of Ukrainka's dramatic works, as well as her entire body of work, is her lyricism (i.e. emotionality, sincere warmth, high sensitivity, and reflection). The purpose of this article is to examine the lyrical nature of Ukrainka's artistic thinking in her dramas. This lyricism is influenced by the peculiarities of her style, which is a manifestation of the Ukrainian mentality known for its "cordocentrism" (sincere warmth), high emotionality, openness, and sensitivity. Additionally, her immersion in Western European literature – especially the plays of Hauptmann, Maeterlinck, and Ibsen – and the influence of the modernist and neo-romantic movements in Ukrainian literature at the turn of the twentieth century also shaped her work. This article also aims to outline the lyrical techniques used by Ukrainka, such as monologue, meditative interludes, intimations in expressed thoughts, sketchiness, and clipped syntax. It examines the genre diversity of Ukrainka's dramas, noting her contributions to existing genres in Ukrainian literature (such as poetic drama) and the emergence of new lyrical dramatic works (including feerie drama, drama etude, and fairy-tale drama). The article further explores the role of lyricism in the development of the plot, composition, narrative structure, and chronotope of her dramas. Finally, it highlights the impact of the modern era on the unique characteristics of Ukrainka's writing.

Several literary critics (Якубський 2012: 144; Мороз 2008 [online]; Левчук 2015 [online]: 10, 37) have highlighted the lyrical elements in Ukrainka's dramatic works; however, there has not been a dedicated scientific study on this subject.

A natural lyricist, Ukrainka infused her dramas with vivid imagination and emotional depth. She often referred to her dramatic works as “dramatic poems” in their sub-headings. Ukrainka frequently spoke of the “passionate element” in her dramas to her friends; for instance, in a letter to Franko dated 13–14 January 1903, she mentioned “a lyrical and dramatic scene à la *The Possessed*” (Українка, 3: 185) in Вавилонський полон [The Babylonian Captivity] (1903). To emphasize the lyrical orientation of her drama, and following literary scholars like Franko, Natalia Shumylo, and Anatolii Tkachenko, her dramatic works herein are referred to as lyrical dramas (Українка, 3: 185; Шумило 2012: 16; Tkachenko 2003: 129–130).

According to Borys Yakubsky, the catalyst for this new genre in Ukrainka's repertoire was the death of her friend, the political activist Serhii Merzhynsky (Якубський 2012: 148). Back then, she wrote *The Possessed* (1901) overnight. In this lyrical drama, Ukrainka draws on the biblical narrative of the days of Jesus Christ's teaching, his prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, his crucifixion on Golgotha, and his resurrection.

The lyricism in this drama, as in most of Ukrainka's works, is revealed primarily through the construction of the conflict. While classical drama has its conflict unfold through actions, for Ukrainka this takes place in the consciousness, the experiences of the characters, their discussions with each other, and in thoughts and reflections that resonate with her worldview. In tune with the modern era, Ukrainka focuses on the drama of imagery, the psychology of her characters, intense polemics, the “verbal tournaments” between her characters, and aphoristic expressions (Бойко 1974: 324; Зеров 2007: 386) rather than on theatrical drama.

The central character of *The Possessed* is Miriam (Mary Magdalene), who, despite her strong love for the Messiah, struggles to accept his teachings of forgiveness and kindness towards everyone, including one's enemies. The inner conflict of this spiritually possessed woman, caused by her thoughts and experiences, is so intense that it drives the tension throughout the entire work:

Я любить не вмію ворогів.
О, кожний тихий усміх фарисея
Для мене гірш від скорпіона злого... (Українка 2021, 1: 130).

I love no enemies.
Oh, every quiet sneer of the Pharisee
For me, is worse than an evil scorpion ...

The protagonist's inner struggle is highlighted through rhetorical questions, exclamations, and appeals, with emotional and semantic tension heightened by metaphorical language, anaphors, syntactic parallelisms, and amplification. The impression of a free conversation, unburdened or restricted by rhymes and stanzaic construction, is created by the five-line unrhymed iambic meter in

which the work is written. Lesya Ukrainka's drama maintains the "confessional" tone of the heroine with her lyrical reflections on the events (Блашків 2008: 193). Through her lyrical worldview, she emphasizes the value of a subjective perception of the world, focusing on the inner, spiritual realm. Despite its psychological and emotional depth, this and other dramas by Ukrainka are notable for their dynamic plots that bind the works together.

The lyrical drama *The Possessed* concludes with Miriam's sacrificial death by stoning from a crowd who are indifferent to Christ's teachings. Ukrainka leaves the question of the worthiness of her self-sacrifice open. The last lines of the work are fragmented, creating a sense of confession that adds frankness, intimacy, and sincerity to the lyrical drama:

Mecie! Коли ти пролив за мене...
Хоч краплю крові дарма... я тепер
За тебе віддаю... життя... і кров...
І душу... все даремне!.. Не за щастя...
Не за небесне царство... ні... з любові! (Українка 2021, 1: 144)

Messiah! If You shed for me ...
Even one drop of blood in vain ... Then now
I give for You ... my life ... my blood ...
My soul ... all in vain! Not for joy ...
Not for the kingdom of heaven ... no ... But out of love!

The clipped or telegraphic syntax is preserved in most of Ukrainka's dramas, such as in *У пущі* [In the Woods] (1897–1909), *Cassandra*, *Йоганна, жінка Хусова* [Johanna, the Wife of Chuza] (1909), *Rufin and Priscilla*, and others. One of the many examples of lyrical permeation of text through a character's monologues and reflections is the drama *Iphigenia in Tauris*, which is dedicated to antique Greek culture; Ukrainka admired antique Greek culture for its aristocratic and vital spirit. Iphigenia's monologue, revealing her mental struggle due to her longing for her homeland, Greece, is perceived as "a plot poem written from the hero's 'I'... [...] The lyrical stream is so strong that it literally floods the drama" (Аврахов 1964: 162). Behind every statement made by Iphigenia, one can feel the presence of Ukrainka and her beliefs.

А в серці тільки ти,
Єдиний мій, коханий рідний краю!
Все, все, чим красен людський вік короткий,
Лишила я в тобі, моя Елладо.
Родина, слава, молодість, кохання
Зосталися далеко за морями,
А я сама на сій чужій чужині... (Українка 2021, 5: 193).

And in my heart, there is only you,
My only one, my beloved native land!
Everything, everything that makes the human life sweet

I left in you, my Hellas.
 Family, fame, youth, love
 Remained far beyond the seas,
 And I am alone in this strange foreign land ...

Lyrical intimation enriches and concretizes the image of Iphigenia, who accepts her fate and, for the sake of her homeland and its glory, gives up personal happiness and remains on the Crimean island to serve in the temple of the goddess Artemis.

Despite the focus of the Ukrainian cultural tradition on strong-willed, active women, Lesya Ukrainka often portrays lyrical heroines in her works as sensual, introverted, inconsistent, fatalistic, tender, and intuitive intellectuals rather like the female characters of modern drama *L'Oiseau bleu* [The Blue Bird] (1908) by Maeterlinck and *Et dukkehjem* [A Doll's House] (1879) by Ibsen. A poignant example of such a heroine is Cassandra from the drama of the same name; she is based on the ancient Greek myth of the princess of Troy with the gift of prophecy whose words are not believed. Ukrainka described her image in a letter dated 14 March 1903 from San Remo to her friend Olha Kobylanska: "She foresees everything, she knows everything, [...] she observes everything unconsciously and directly ('with her nerves', as they say nowadays), not with her mind, but with her feelings" (Українка 2021, 13: 247). Cassandra, "with her unacknowledged truth, with her useless prophetic talent" (Українка 2021, 13: 247) and with sincerity and frankness, defends the freedom of her family and homeland; at the same time, she is weak in her doubts and in her inability to prevent the tragedy. The author reveals Cassandra through transcripts of her internal states and her suffering from ominous visions:

Я тільки знаю, що воно вже є
 і що його ніхто вже не одверне,
 ніхто, ніхто. Ох, якби тільки можна,
 то я б сама те горе відвернула! (Українка 2021, 2: 23).

I only know that it is already here
 and that no one can stop it,
 no one, no one. Oh, if only it were possible,
 I would have averted that grief myself!

Literary scholar Tamara Hundorova notes that Ukrainka's focus on her character's emotions and personalities was influenced by her interest in the developing fields of psychology and psychiatry (Гундорова 2023: 10–11). Works by Max Nordau, such as *Paradoxe* [Paradoxes] (1885) and *Entartung* [Degeneration] (1892), and Sigmund Freud's *Die Traumdeutung* [The Interpretation of Dreams] (1900) explored the psychophysiological theories of genius and talent and the creative sublimation of energy. The *fin de siècle* era itself established the image of the decadent artist, defined by their pain, sensuality, and intuition (Зборовська 2002: 224; Weber 1986: 9, 24). These traits, often attributed to women, were reflected in the characters and creativity of Ukrainka herself.

Ukrainka's works are made even more lyrical through meditative digressions. In the lyrical drama *In the Woods*, the protagonist, the sculptor Richard Iron, contemplates the eternal question of art as both a dream and reality. Such digressions do not advance the drama's action but instead slow it down, shifting focus to timeless philosophical questions about the meaning of existence, the nature of the world, and the purpose of life.

Трудно розказати,
до чого, власне, нам потрібна мрія,
і що вона таке, та, певне, в світі
ніхто без мрії не прожив (Українка 2021, 3: 92).

It's hard to say
why we truly need a dream,
or what it really is
but surely, no one in this world has ever lived without one.

Життя і мрія в згоді не бувають
і вічно борються, хоч миру прагнуть.
А в skutku боротьби – життя минає,
а мрія застається (Українка 2021, 3: 119).

Life and dream are never in accord
they struggle endlessly, though they long for peace.
And in the clash between them, life fades away...
but the dream remains.

Hints and understatements in the conveyed thoughts add a lyrical touch to Ukrainka's dramas. By using this literary technique, information is revealed gradually, increasing the emotional tension:

Раб
Можний пане!
(Замовк.)
Хуса
Чого тобі?
Раб
Там пані прибула...
Хуса
Хто? Марція?
(Заметушився.)
Раб
Ні...
Хуса
Хто ж?
Раб
То... наша пані...

Дружина мого пана...

Хуса

Як?!

Раб

(падає на коліна)

Благаю!

Не покарай свого раба!

Хуса

(зміняє раптом гнівний тон на холодно-спокійний)

Устань.

Скажи, що жду її у цій світлиці (Українка 2021, з: 159–162).

Servant

Mighty master!

(pauses)

Chuzha

What is it?

Servant

A lady has arrived ...

Chuzha

Who? Marcia?

(gets agitated)

Servant

No ...

Chuzha

Then who?

Servant

It is ... *our* lady ...

The wife of my master ...

Chuzha

What?!

Servant

(falls to his knees)

I beg you!

Do not punish your servant!

Chuzha

(suddenly changes from anger to cold calm)

Rise.

Tell her I await her in this chamber.

(From the drama *Johanna, the Wife of Chuzha*, 1909)

One of the techniques that enhances the lyrical quality of Ukrainka's dramas is the use of sketchiness. She employs this creative tool in character depictions and plot development. A prime example of this technique is the fantasy drama *Осінь казка* [The Autumn Tale] (1905). In this play, Ukrainka deconstructs and transforms the plot of a chivalric romance. The play is divided into four scenes featuring a cruel king, an imprisoned princess, who was once a shepherdess and

who was given a title by the enamored king, and an unfortunate knight. All the characters remain nameless. The king never appears; he is only mentioned. One by one, the rescuers attempting to free the princess fall off the walls and crash onto the rocks. Meanwhile, the princess, whose contact with the world is limited, reflects deeply on the concept of freedom. She concludes that salvation equates to slavery because she will belong to her rescuer: “Хто визволиться сам, той буде вільний, // хто визволить кого, в неволю візьме” (Whoever frees himself will be free, // whoever is freed by someone else will be taken into captivity) (Українка 2021, 1: 195). Initially, the knight, whose love was shared by the princess, has a big aim: to win freedom for all. Under mounting pressure, however, he abandons this idealistic quest and his ideals as something that cannot be achieved, and he gradually aligns with the king. The end of the play remains open-ended: the struggle for freedom is taken up by the princess. She inspires the craftsmen and workers to fight, but it remains uncertain if they will achieve freedom. These events are presented in a fragmented manner, with semantic gaps and uncertain time and space. The scenes are disproportionate, with the fourth scene being larger than the first three. The characters are depicted in fragments. Ukrainka herself noted the drama’s incompleteness, which was published in various editions. This work emphasizes emotions over rationality. By using sketchiness, Ukrainka deepens the lyrical quality of *The Autumn Tale*.

The lyricism in Ukrainka’s work cannot be considered without the folklore component. Her most famous work, *The Forest Song*, is deeply rooted in folklore. The genre of this work is lyrical; it is a feeerie drama which is based on fabulousness, a romantic plot, and a poetic narrative. Ukrainka pondered the concept of this genre in her letters to her family: “This is characteristic of *ein ‘Märchendrama’* [fairy-tale drama] under Hauptmann’s terminology (this is what he calls *The Sunken Bell*¹ that he wrote), but I do not know how we would call it! Did you know that I love fairy tales and could invent millions of them? But I haven’t dared to write any yet!” (from a letter to Ahatanhel Krymsky dated 11 August 1911) (Українка 2021, 14: 275).²

The main theme of *The Sunken Bell* has also been incorporated into *The Forest Song*, reflecting Hauptmann’s tragedy of a man who yearns for beauty but cannot overcome everyday challenges. The sense of unfulfilled happiness is emphasized by the continuous tolling of the bell throughout the play. In *The Forest Song*, Ukrainka conveys the tragedy of a scorned soul (Mavka) and highlights lofty aspirations that are thwarted by a mundane existence; however, Ukrainka’s primary motif differs because it centres on the immortality of the human soul, inner freedom, and the development of a harmonious personality.

It is fascinating to observe how both works utilize nature to describe events and reflect the characters’ inner states. In *The Forest Song*, the drama’s connection to the rhythm of the seasons adds to its sensuality. Nature mirrors the

1 In the original: *Die versunkene Glocke* (1896).

2 After a few months, she raised this topic again: “Ah, it is so sad we cannot translate ‘Märchendrama’ into our language. ‘Feeerie drama’ is close, but not perfect! How else can I put it? ‘Fairy tale drama’ sounds poorly put together, doesn’t it?” (from a letter to her mother, Olha Kosach, dated 2 January 1912) (Українка 2021, 14: 285).

322 emotions of Lukash and Mavka; the awakening and fading of trees, the blooming of flowers, the singing of nightingales, and the movement of the wind are all synchronized with the development of their relationship from love to separation. Leading Ukrainian literary critic Mykola Zerov highlighted the “visual picturesqueness of the scenes” and the enchantment of nature expressed in the feerie drama, which left a strong impression (Зеров 2007: 386). Similar techniques are employed in Hauptmann’s play, which is structured around the cyclical changes of day and night and of darkness and light. It is also notable that in *The Sunken Bell*, nature is portrayed as hostile to humans. With the aid of Rautendelein, Heinrich compels the dwarves to work for him against their wishes. Conversely, in *The Forest Song*, a harmonious coexistence between forest forces and human beings is achieved through a wise and equal agreement.

Both works are enriched by folk beliefs; however, the depiction of fantastical creatures differs significantly between the two authors. In Hauptmann’s play, the Woodsman is portrayed as a repellent goat, and the Water Man is dirty, whereas in Ukrainka’s play, the forest world and its inhabitants are depicted with delicate sensuality. Fantastical beings like Mavka, Will-o’-the-Wisp, He Who Rends the Dikes, He Who Dwells in Rock, Lost Babes, Forest Elf, Water Goblin, Kutz, and Starvelings symbolize various aspects of nature, embodying both its kind, gentle, and dark forces. Ukrainka drew inspiration from the imagery of Volyn: “I think I just remembered our forests and longed for them. And the idea of Mavka has been in my head for a long time,” Lesya wrote to her mother on 2 January 1912 (Українка 2021, 14: 284). “Only a woman could describe her like that,” she acknowledged in another letter (August–September 1912) (Українка 2021, 14: 329). Additionally, the mythical story of Mavka’s superhuman nature in Ukrainka’s drama aligns with the neo-romantic style prevalent in Ukrainian literature at the time.

The lyricism of the work is further enhanced by the inclusion of music and songs within the text. Lukash’s flute playing awakens Mavka’s soul, and their friendship blossoms into pure, passionate love. When Lukash neglects this poetic, sensual world and betrays his musical talent, he loses both his happiness and his beloved. As the character’s emotions change, so too does their language, rhythm, tone, and pace of speech. This variation in speech underscores the emotions of joy, sorrow, and longing, thereby amplifying the drama’s sensitivity.³ Notably, in European literature, the unity of music with elements of drama and poetry was practised by Richard Wagner (*The Artwork of the Future* [Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft], 1849), whose work became popular in the late nineteenth century and resonated with Ukrainka.

Today, Ukrainka’s *The Forest Song* is part of the repertoire of nearly two dozen Ukrainian theatres, and episodes from the drama are featured in the new production *Леся. Історія* [Lesya: The Story, 2023; text by Oksana Danchuk], which is dedicated to a woman who defied her circumstances, environment, and geopolitical situation to shape her own life. Three ballets (1936, 1961, and 1964–1967),

3 Many scholars have emphasized the diversity of strophic forms, rhythm, metrics, and melodiousness in Ukrainka’s writing, which significantly enriched Ukrainian literature (Драй-Хмара 2015: 315; Зеров 2007: 385; Одарченко 1994: 14; Петров 2013: 385; Vladiv-Glover 2015: 248).

an opera (1957), and two feature films (1961; 1981, directed by Yurii Illienko) were created based on *The Forest Song*. Despite its popularity, no stage performance of *The Forest Song* has fully captured the essence of Ukrainka's drama, likely due to the lyrical depth of the work.

In a letter to the poet Ivan Drach dated 28 August 1963, the literary critic and dissident Ivan Dziuba reflected on this issue: "I am sure that what we call Lesya Ukrainka's 'unstageability' is just a different stageability: she was ahead of her time and made the main motive of dramatic development not mechanical action but rather the internal and more complex development and struggle of ideas; this is not mechanical drama, but drama of the spirit. No director has yet been born who could establish a theatre for it and stage it appropriately" (from the private archive of Marta Dziuba).⁴

Ukrainka significantly enriched the genre palette of Ukrainian literature. It is well known within the history of literary criticism that she managed to establish the genre of the dramatic poem. This genre dates back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Ukrainka's body of work includes nine dramatic poems: *The Possessed* (1901); В катакомбах [In the Catacombs] (1905); *Cassandra* (1907); *The Babylonian Captivity* (1903); На руїнах [On the Ruins] (1904); *In the Forest* (1910); На полі крові [On the Field of Blood] (1910); *The Boyar Woman* (1910); Адвокат Мартіан [Martian the Lawyer] (1911); and Оргія [The Orgy] (1913). She defined the genre of these works in the sub-headings. She categorized her other dramas as follows: the fantasy drama *The Autumn Tale* (1905); the feerie drama *The Forest Song* (1911); the dramatic sketch *Johanna, the Wife of Chuza* (1909); and the dialogues *Three Minutes* (1905), В дому роботи, в країні неволі [In the House of Work, in the Land of Slavery] (1906), and Айша та Мохаммед [Aisha and Mohammed] (1907). Ukrainka referred to her poems *Rufin and Priscilla* (1910–1911) and *The Stone Host* (1912) as "dramas". The blending of different genres in literature is a distinctive feature of the modern era. Lyricism was a powerful factor that influenced the evolution of the genre system in Ukrainka's dramas.

Her works often lack completeness and logical coherence, blending rational and emotional elements within the context of modern times. A new aesthetic era in Ukrainian literature shifting to neo-romanticism, supported by symbolism, impressionism, psychology, and intellectual thought, further fuelled Ukrainka's lyricism. Her dramas are characterized by high emotional intensity and philosophical depth, featuring strong-willed protagonists and an uncompromising clash of opposing principles that never reconcile.

It is also noteworthy that Ukrainka's dramatic works, despite their lyricism, are deeply rooted in national issues. In the absence of their own state, writers in non-sovereign nations often become the voice of national development and the moral compass of the nation. The literary critic Mykola Zhulynsky describes

4 Later, in an interview with Canadian journalist Myroslava Oleksiuk-Baker, the film director and screenwriter Serhiy Parajanov admitted that directors are "most afraid of Lesya Ukrainka. Because the filming of *The Forest Song* involved already two experiments. However, the great poetry turned out to be non-cinematic; it remained literary. This was despite the fact that the talented Yurii Illienko was directing the film. He won the film adaptation of Gogol's *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka*, but in Lesya Ukrainka, he did not fully reveal the great poetry that the author had" (1988) (Параджанов 2014: 271–272).

324 Ukrainka's dramas as manifestations of "spiritual chivalry under the conditions of colonial unfreedom of the native land" (Жулинський 2017: 6). Vira Ahieieva, a scholar of Ukrainka's work, has written about the anti-colonial focus of these works and their role in awakening national memory (Ageyeva 2021: 169–182).

Lyrical tendencies are also evident in Ukrainka's prose. This fairly modest creative heritage consists of texts with a subjective, lyrical nature where the narrator also serves as a lyrical protagonist. Her lyrical or philosophical impressionistic prose, such as *Над морем* [By the Sea] (1898) and *Помилка. Думки арештованого* [Mistake: Thoughts of an Arrested Man] (1905), features fragmented, clipped plots connected by meditations, lyrical digressions, reflections, and dialogues. Gradually, lyricism, which is particularly prevalent in Slavic literature's prose genres, evolved in the works of other Ukrainian authors (Павличко 1999: 117–118), such as Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky's novels and short stories, Vasyl Stefanyuk's "poetry in prose", Marko Cheremshyna's short stories, and Oleksandr Oles's lyrical dramas.

In her lyrical dramas, such as *The Possessed*, *Cassandra*, and *The Forest Song*, Ukrainka successfully captured certain aspects of the national character. These works resonate with the dramas of European modern literature from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This era marked a resurgence of Ukraine's contact and cultural dialogue with Slavic and European traditions, which had been stifled since the Baroque period due to the loss of statehood. As Lina Kostenko, a poet and a founder of the Sixtiers poetry movement, observed, Ukrainka's dramas showcased her genius and demonstrated the "aesthetic value of the word and the fanaticism of feeling" (Костенко 1989: 54). Through her lyrical texts, Ukrainka expanded the themes and motifs explored by Ukrainian authors, bringing a new relevance to the historicism of artistic thinking. She also enhanced the philosophical, intellectual, and mythological dimensions of poetic expression, thus initiating processes of national revival.

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