

SERHII YEFREMOV, VASYL DOMANYTSKYI AND «CORYPHAEI OF UKRAINIAN STAGE»

Researchers of literature and theatre have got so used to the definition «coryphaei» that they do not always begin to think: whose definition is that? Meanwhile, it has an author, and to be precise – several authors. In 1900 Saint Petersburg censure permitted, and in 1901 Kyiv publishing house of Petro Barskyi published an anonymous book «Coryphaei of Ukrainian Stage», since the appearance of which the definition mentioned has been used as the most precise characteristics of founders of new (in the last quarter of the XIXth century) professional Ukrainian theatre. The book was actually a concise history of theatrical life in Ukraine from the Renaissance time (XVI-XVIIth centuries), and besides a portrait characteristics of outstanding artists of the end of the XIXth – beginning of the XXth centuries, among which there were theatre enthusiasts and dramatists all in one, «pure» actors and one composer. So, it was about Marko Kropyvnytskyi (1840-1910), Mykhailo Starytskyi (1840-1904), the Tobilevych brothers [Ivan Karpenko-Karyi (1845-1907), Mykola Sadovskyi (1856-1933), Panas Saksaganskyi (1859-1940)], Mariia Zankovetska (1854-1934), Hanna Zatyrykevych-Karpynska (1855-1921) and the glorious musician (as they said then) Mykola Lysenko (1842-1912). The book's anonymity (in particular, in the opinion of the theatre researcher R. Pylypchuk in his study «Marko Kropyvnytskyi and the problem of beginning of Ukrainian professional theatre») conditioned the fact that in Soviet arts studies it was not withdrawn from the scientific circulation, though its publishing was organized allegedly (it was known only to some theatre researchers) by Olexandr Lototskyi (1870-1939) – a public and literary figure of the turn of the XXth century.

There are grounds for thinking that in a certain sense the book «Coryphaei of Ukrainian Stage» did not appear without participation of Serhii Yefremov, the author of «The History of Ukrainian Literature» (1911) and, besides, Vasyl Domanitskiy as the most famous in literary studies participant of publishing of the textologically edited «Kobzar» in 1907. Both of them were good friends, or so to say companions-in-arms of O. Lototskyi; together they founded in 1895 the first Ukrainian publishing house «Vik», in particular, published the first in Ukraine «Antology of Ukrainian Literature» in three volumes, and so on. When V. Domanyskyi died (1910), O. Lototskyi together with S. Yefremov joined in publishing memoirs about him («To the Pure in Heart», 1912), and in the UNR time both S. Yefremov and O. Lototskyi held (as like-minded people) leading posts in its government.