

Y. SHPOL'S UNDERGROUND NOVEL "ZOLOTI LYSENIATA" ("LITTLE GOLDEN FOXES"): THE FIRST UKRAINIAN NARRATIVE QUEST

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We have every reason to suggest that the romantic-ironic novel by Y. Shpol "Little Golden Foxes" is the first Ukrainian quest novel. The text is multilevel, the reader has to create a "world of text" from the different chapters by himself because there is no holistic plot in the novel, it is a kind of mosaic of the lives of various characters who are united by a single thing – all of them are the members of a secret society. The work was written on the crest of the popular in Ukraine at the time adventure parody genre when the novel turned into a literary play. The event layer of the novel is targeted at the mass reader. It is organized by the canons of adventure genre (dangerous-romantic journeys, happy moments of unexpected love, love triangles, expectation of death and unexpected salvation, escapes, loss of associate, death of a colleague, hideouts, secret meetings, conspiracy, unsuccessful acts of terrorism), and the main characters are deceptively romanticized.

The characters of Y. Shpol, having organized their "underground" activities with the proper attributes (underground aliases, secrecy, ideological disputes, etc.), enjoy this exciting adventure game greatly. They are convinced that they are leading the revolution, but society itself is unlikely to notice their existence. In the novel, codes are scattered all over to understand the life of actants as a romantic game of children who lack adrenaline (recurrent micro-images of dreams, fantasies, delusions, or perhaps even the only detail of the characters' appearance – blue eyes). However, the distinctive feature of this game of underground revolutionaries is that it takes place in reality, with real people, real arrests and sometimes even death. The only difference here is that all the surveillance and the provocations are largely a result of the random events or tumultuous imagination of the revolutionaries themselves and the failed operations are a consequence of inconsistency and excessive secrecy.

The semantic multilayer property of the novel is revealed in the first place by its title: the mass reader will certainly grasp the superficial interpretation of the golden foxes as the rays of revolution. Nevertheless, Yulian Shpol by applying the poetics and the stylistic features of fairy tales, chivalric romance, realistic novel, psychological and adventure fiction, a stream of consciousness and journalism within the same literary work provokes the reader to intellectual efforts. He compels the readers to decide for themselves whether this is a romantic story of young revolutionaries or an ironic pastiche about the people who play underground activities and do not feel any sentiments for the masses but only for their own idea of the masses. Or, maybe this is a novel-quest about people who live their lives as if it was a game with the sole purpose of having fun from the adrenaline rush.

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