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Antiquity in the historical and cultural legacy of Uman: The “Sofiyivka” park and the Basilian School

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Abstract.

The aim of the article. *The paper explores the presence and cultural significance of elements of antiquity in the historical and symbolic space of the city of Uman. Its aim is to demonstrate how the heritage of ancient Greece and Rome, understood as two foundational pillars of European civilization, influenced the formation of the city’s intellectual, artistic, and educational landscape. **Scientific novelty.** The article seeks to show that classical and mythological motifs appearing in Uman were not accidental borrowings, but rather conscious elements of cultural transfer characteristic of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment Europe, adapted to the specific conditions of a borderland city. **Research methodology.** The study is based on an interdisciplinary analysis of diverse source materials, including literary texts, historical and archival documents, archaeological findings, iconographic evidence, and scholarly interpretations proposed by modern researchers. This approach allows for the examination of both material manifestations and symbolic meanings of Antique tradition within the urban space of Uman. **Conclusions.** The research demonstrates that the impact of ancient culture on Uman’s city space was complex and long-lasting. It was not limited solely to the famous Sofiyivka Park, imbued with imagery of Greek gods, heroes, and philosophers, but also revealed itself through the category of *genius loci*. This spirit of place integrated historical memory, aesthetic ideals, and educational practices, endowing Uman with a multilayered symbolic dimension that reflects the city’s role within the broader European cultural heritage.*

Key words: *antiquity, culture, Greece, Rome, Uman, Potocki, Basilian school, Sofiyivka*

Античність в історичній та культурній спадщині Умані: парк «Софіївка» та василіанська школа

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Анотація.

Мета статті. У статті досліджується присутність та культурне значення елементів античності в історичному та символічному просторі міста Умань. Її метою є демонстрація того, як спадщина Стародавньої Греції та Риму, що розуміються як два фундаментальні стовпи європейської цивілізації, вплинула на формування інтелектуального, мистецького та освітнього ландшафту міста. **Наукова новизна.** Стаття прагне показати, що класичні та міфологічні мотиви, які з'являються в Умані, не були випадковими запозиченнями, а радше свідомими елементами культурного перенесення, характерними для Просвітницької та пост-Просвітницької Європи, адаптованими до конкретних умов прикордонного міста. **Методологія дослідження.** Дослідження базується на міждисциплінарному аналізі різноманітних джерел, включаючи літературні тексти, історичні та архівні документи, археологічні знахідки, іконографічні свідчення та наукові інтерпретації, запропоновані сучасними дослідниками. Такий підхід дозволяє дослідити як матеріальні прояви, так і символічні значення античної традиції в міському просторі Умані. **Висновки.** Дослідження демонструє, що вплив античної культури на міський простір Умані був складним та тривалим. Він не обмежувався лише відомим парком «Софіївка», пронизаним образами грецьких богів, героїв та філософів, а й проявлявся через категорію *genius loci*. Цей дух місця інтегрував історичну пам'ять, естетичні ідеали та освітні практики, наділяючи Умань багатозаровим символічним виміром, що відображає роль міста в ширшій європейській культурній спадщині.

Ключові слова: античність, культура, Греція, Рим, Умань, Потоцький, василіанська школа, Софіївка.

The Problem Statement. The phrase “omnia mutantur, nihil interit”, meaning “everything changes, nothing perishes”, is one of the most important thoughts in the ancient mythology and poetry. Justifications for this adage can be found in the works of both ancient Greek philosophers, like Democritus and Epicurus, and ancient Roman poets, e.g., Lucretius and Ovid (Korzh & Lutska, 1988, p. 133).

Indeed, in spite of technological progress and the IT revolution, not only has the heritage of antiquity not disappeared but rather continues to travel the world, finding itself quite comfortable in new conditions. It is attested to in the names of shopping malls, public food establishments in cities (“Zeus”, “Athena”, “Poseidon” etc.), sport clubs (“Ajax”, “Sparta”, “Spartak”, “Heracles” etc.). For a long time, mythological figures, gods, and legendary heroes of ancient Greece and Rome have inhabited the cinema space (“Spartacus”, “Cleopatra”, “Alexander”, “Troy”, and others) and the world of video

games (*Zeus: Master of Olympus, The Spartans, Alexander: The Heroes Hour, Asterix at the Olympic Games, Rome, Roman Empire* etc.) (GameShare, n.d.-a, n.d.-b).

This paper refers to the historical city of Uman, first mentioned in documents in 1616. Even though the Uman region lay outside of the expansion and domination area of the Antique civilization historically and geographically, there have been archeological findings of the Scythian, Sarmatian, and Chernyakhov cultures recorded there. The findings of gold, silver, and copper ancient Roman coins of Trajan, Nero, Marcus Aurelius, and Vespasian also attest to the region's trade connections with Rome (Didenko et al., 2006, pp. 289–290).

“The legacy of Plato and Aristotle has survived largely due to their persistent focus on education, their ability to talk to new generations of students” (Puchner, 2024, p. 62).

Limitations, such as beliefs in the “superiority” of the West and Center over the East, or vice versa, remain detrimental to the unity of present-day Europe (Mikołajczak, 2002; Mikołajczak & Walczak-Mikołajczakowa, 2003). The interest in Antiquity, however, revived in the Renaissance, did not disappear in the eighteenth century but remained decisive in art and education. It was the ancient culture of Greece and Rome that became the foundation for building a European identity. Latin influences were as crucial for the West and Center as Greco-Byzantine for the East, shaping the European mentality (Dinzelbacher, 2004). Even the art of park building was already developing in Antiquity (Gleeson, 2013).

“The era when the park was created was characterized by a new fascination with antiquity. Educated people of the time knew much more about antiquity than our contemporaries and could understand park allegories. Roman copies of ancient sculptures – gods and mythological heroes, philosophers and writers – ‘populated’ most parks of the era. The location of the statues follows the correct interpretation of the park's conceptual scenario. The marble busts of Homer, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle had to be placed in an Athenian school, where huge blocks of stone were laid in rows like desks and benches for students. [...] The Assembly Square composition, according to Metzel's idea, symbolizes the gathering place on the island of the mythical Phaeacians – the nation of skilled sailors ruled by Alcinous, grandson of the sea god Poseidon. It was there that the sea waves washed Odysseus ashore, and the Phaeacians sent him to his homeland in Ithaca. The center of the island holds a pool with a constant water level and a magnificent decorative pot made of granite (the temple of Poseidon). The angry god turned the Phaeacian ship which carried Odysseus back home into a rock that lies in the water near the rocky shore of Ithaca. The well-known statue of ‘The Old Man’, also called ‘Ahasuerus’ (‘The Eternal Jew’) by various researchers, depicts, according to I. Kosenko, Odysseus returning from his travels” (Rodichkin & Rodichkina, 2005, p. 151).

Then another description reads as follows: “If you want to get a fair idea of what is usually referred to as the Elysian fields or earthly paradise, come to ‘Sofiyivka’ and marvel at its creative genius. There, nature and art combined all their forces to give birth to a magnificent creation... Majestic in its simplicity, ‘Sofiyivka’ makes you forget the gardens of Artemis and Babylon. Nothing can compare with what you see there, everything mesmerizes and enraptures you... I would like to bring Thomson, Virgil, and Delille to immortalize the image of ‘Sofiyivka’...” (Dolgorukii, 1870, p. 236).

The Analysis of Sources and Recent Researches. The body of source materials and scholarly literature devoted to the history and cultural heritage of Uman is extensive and heterogeneous, encompassing historical, literary, architectural, and educational studies. Due to the scope and objectives of the present article, it is neither possible nor necessary to provide an exhaustive overview of this research field. Therefore, the following remarks are limited to selected works that are particularly relevant to the issues addressed here. Among many studies on the past of Uman, we would like to highlight a monograph that is the result of the ReHerit project and covers the entire history of the city. This publication focuses on both Sofiyivka and the Basilian educational center (Barvinok et al., 2021, pp. 109–113, 167–171).

“The mythological fabric of the park's semantics should be ‘read’ with reference to Homeric texts. This allows for a deeper understanding of the meaning of many park compositions and clarification of their names, which have been forgotten or changed over time” (Rodichkin & Rodichkina, 2005, p. 132).

This interpretation of the architectural concept of Sofiyivka is explored in publications by I. Kosenko, both individual (2000, p. 16–21) and co-authored with K. Shif (Kosenko & Shif, 2010, 2007). The Antique influences in the semantics of Sofiyivka, with a particular emphasis on the interaction of water and stone, were not absent from the monograph by S. Shubovich (Shubovich, 2012, p. 183–195). The publication by I. Kosenko and I. Kryvosheya “*Sofiyivka*” – *the Potockis' Odyssey* contains a brief outline of the history of the park and its founders (Kosenko & Kryvosheya, 2007).

In the monograph published in 1978, Ryszard Przybylski analyzed in detail the symbolism of Sofiyivka, which was “a figurative embodiment of paradise, Eden, where the eye should never see anything vulgar, a pearl of exquisite Western design, the pinnacle of civilization, lost on the edge of the ‘Wild Fields’” (Przybylski, 1978, p. 28–54; Beauvois, 2020, p. 394).

The culture of the Antique as the foundation of the Sofiyivka Park is reflected in several guidebooks and poetic works dated from the nineteenth century until today: S. Trembecki, S. Goszczyński, T. Themery, S. Groza, O. Lugantsev (1997), O. Kuzmenko (2003), Ya. Chornohuz (2025, p. 148).

Stanislav Trembecki's poem "Sofiyivka" is "a hymn to the art of gardening in the style of Delille. It contains numerous Antique allegories, which were so admired by members of high society, while the place itself was full of statues brought from Italy, dressed in Antique garments, streams, cascades, and valuable flower beds. They animated and created the illusion of paradise, far from the real world and politics..." (Beauvois, 2020, p. 394).

The Purpose of the Article. The purpose of the article will be to analyze the presence, functions, and meanings of Antique heritage in the historical and cultural space of Uman. The study will aim to demonstrate that references to ancient Greece and Rome in the city's landscape, architecture, education, and symbolic representations were not incidental decorative elements, but conscious cultural strategies rooted in Enlightenment thought. Special attention will be given to Sofiyivka Park as a key locus where classical mythology, aesthetics, and political imagination intersected, shaping a specific *genius loci*. The article will also seek to contextualize these Antique references within the broader borderland reality of Ukraine, marked by cultural plurality and shifting political frameworks, and to show how classical tradition contributed to the formation of intellectual, educational, and symbolic dimensions of Uman's urban space.

The Results of the Research. In his brief historical essay on Uman, Chrysanthus Yashchurzynsky notes that "in the garden, we encounter many names inspired by classical mythology. It should be noted that the garden was laid out at the end of the eighteenth century, when pseudo-classicism reigned supreme in Western Europe and in our country" (Yashchurzynskiy, 1913/1993, p. 36). "Even when precisely located on the map, Sofiyivka and its circle of images make us realize that one and the same place can belong to different geographies: imaginary, mythical, cosmopolitan, Mediterranean, Hellenistic, classicist, pastoral, idyllic, ones that transform Ukraine through the lens of biblical topos into a 'land flowing with milk and honey', Gothic, and even private geographies of memory. It clearly demonstrates how the cultural framework of the era and its perceptions either silence the Ukrainian *genius loci* or, conversely, reveal and emphasize it. It just as clearly demonstrates, however, that *genius loci* in literature is culturally conditioned. All texts also localize authors: they speak of their own geographies, their own positions. Trembecki speaks from a cosmopolitan, supra-local perspective, Siemieński takes a Ukrainian point of view and evaluates Sofiyivka, Trembecki and Potocki from that perspective, while Stempowski carries out a kind of synthesis in the form of 'Ukrainian Hellas,' a multilayered palimpsest of Eastern and Western cultures" (Rybicka, 2011, p. 66–67).

"The pearl of Ukrainian steppe, a museum of nature, a national treasure, a monument of landscape architecture of global significance, one of the seven wonders of Ukraine, a place to immerse oneself in the fairy-tale romantic world of nature, beauty, and love – all this has been said and written about the Sofiyivka Arboretum. It has become an important tourist attraction for Uman, a brand symbol the city is proud of and often uses in heraldry, on postcards, and in faleristics" (Barvinok et al., 2021, p. 109).

There is no doubt who came up with the idea to build a park in the style of ancient mythology: it was Countess Sophia Witt, as shown by her letter, kept in the Central State Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv, sent to her future husband S.S. Potocki in 1795 (Kosenko, 2000, p. 16). And while the idea of the park belonged to Sophia, who kept writing to Stanisław for two years, after visiting Arcadia in Neborovo, about her desire to have a similar park or even a better one (Łojek, 1970, p. 215–215), the author of the project (the topography, architecture, and hydraulics) was Ludwik Metzel (1764–1848), a well-educated and experienced man. It was he who told Stanisław Trembecki the story of the goddess Tethys (Oceanus' wife), had access to the Tulchin library, and was familiar with the best examples of eighteenth-century garden and park architecture (Jaroszewski, 1994, p. 313, 350).

"It seems that the main goal of Potocki and Metzel was to create an island of culture in the boundless ocean of barbarism that was Ukraine. Such are the sources of numerous references to mythology and, more broadly, Antiquity. (...) Sofiyivka should be interpreted not as a sign of Polishness but as a symbol of a magnate's power over the borderlands, scornful of all kinds of civil rights and obligations, a power that pursues its own goals, sometimes as fantastic as this one. A different perspective on Sofiyivka is necessary. It has to be seen not only as a work of art or a magical place but also as a mark of a magnate's seal impressed on Ukrainian soil" (Rudaś-Grodzka, 2005, p. 145).

The ancient epics "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey" have become world's masterpieces, despite the fact that Homer's authorship remains controversial, and the works themselves differ greatly in composition. "Homer's poetry had a significant influence on philosophical thought. The gods in his poems are human-like. All that separates them from humans is their immortality and superior strength.

.....
Fate and providence, the natural order of the Universe, govern both humans and gods” (Turunen, 2018, p. 19).

In the Potockis’ residence in Uman, Antique tradition was not reduced to erudite ornamentation or garden-style decorations. It became an integral part of the lifestyle, particularly prominent in the spectacles and parades that Szczęśny Potocki organized for his wife Sophia. The host sought inspiration from the mythology of ancient Greece and Rome, which in the Enlightenment culture of the time were considered as the source of exalted esthetic and moral standards (Loiek, 2005, p. 293–294). During Sophia’s name day celebrations in 1800, the garden turned into a theatrical stage, on which mythological images came to life. A feast was held among arbors and tents made of light oriental fabrics, while the illumination on the lake in the evening was reminiscent of Antique celebrations of nature deities. The most extraordinary part of the show was the performance of water nymphs clad in silvery garments, who came ashore illuminated by the moon and lights reflected from the surface of water, carrying wreaths and praising the art of the maker of gardens, Ludwik Metzel, in a song (Ivashchenko, 1895, p. 52). The aesthetic act was thus combined with the praise of human work and genius, perfectly fitting the Enlightenment reading of the classical tradition. Sophia, who played the roles of both the main heroine and the priestess of beauty in those spectacles, was dressed in costumes inspired by the Antiquity. At the opening of the garden, she appeared in a guise which evoked associations with Roman Vestals or Greek goddesses. The hosts’ participation in such performances was not just a parlor game: by tapping into the language of classical myths and symbols, the Potockis raised their project to a rank superior to ordinary magnate residences. The garden in Uman became a “temple of nature and art,” and Sophia its goddess and chief priestess. For, in contemporary tales, Sophia was to become an integral part of Sofiyivka, her life infused with mythopoeic meaning. Graf de Lagard compared its history to that of Troy, and Sophia herself to Helen, imbuing the place with heroic and romantic aspects (Rolle, 1993).

Some opinions claim, however, that the garden’s composition is not a simple reflection of “The Odyssey” but rather a romantic landscape, whose contents are focused on Stanisław Potocki’s affection for his wife. Greek and Roman mythology appears in the park where it contributed to narrating about love symbolically or accentuated the meaning of landscape composition (Kuzmenko, 2003, p. 68). By the virtue of this design, the park became a symbolic journey – a space for reflecting upon fate, happiness, good, and evil – and an interpretation game for its owner and his guests. One should remember, however, that Sofiyivka was a testament to Potocki’s magnate power and ambition. His actions, seen by some as a civilizing mission and as high treason by others, show the complexity of the borderlands’ identity and the political implications of the late 18th century. In this light, the park becomes not a manifesto of Polishness but rather a sign of magnate domination and fantasy encoded in the landscape. It is the genius loci that combines those manifold meanings – romantic narrations, mythological allegories, and gestures of power – turning Sofiyivka into a space where history, love, and myth intertwine into a symbolic whole surrounded by cultural diversity. For, as Natalia Yakovenko argued, “The space that is now the territory of Ukraine was, over many centuries, divided by constantly shifting borders: between linguistic and ethnic groups, states, religions, political and cultural systems, and areas with radically different economic structures. This made it a clear-cut contact zone with a highly variegated spectrum of sociocultural phenomena” (Yakovenko, 2002, p. 333). These phenomena should certainly include the Uniate (Greek Catholic) Church and the monastic order of St. Basil the Great, which played an important role in the development of education in Ukraine. Thanks to this influence, one can speak of Basilian Enlightenment (Yakovenko, 2006, p. 490).

Sofiyivka, as already mentioned, was built after the arrival of Basilians in Uman. The Basilian monastery in Uman was founded in 1765 on the initiative of the Polish magnate Franciszek Salezy Potocki (1700–1772) (Zamoyska, 2021), who was called the “little king of Rus” (Czernecki, 1939). Next year, in 1766, thanks to his special foundation, a school was opened by the Basilian monastery in Uman (Kryvosheia, 2009; Kryvosheia & Stetsyk, 2018; Krywoszeja & Morawiec, 2023b).

The educational institution of the Basilian monastery in Uman, the necessity of which was indicated in the founding act of 1765, operated intermittently since 1766. The monastery and its educational institution suspended their activities several times due to the events of 1768, the ban imposed by the Russian imperial authorities at the end of the 18th century, after the second partition of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, and in the autumn of 1830. At the end of 1830, classes at the Basilian school were suspended due to cholera, yet the main reason was the Polish uprising of 1830–31. The Basilian educational institution appears in sources under various names: collegium, academy (Ukr. ‘uchylyshche’), school. Besides the geopolitical upheavals of the eighteenth century, its transformation from a purely ecclesiastical school into a secular one was strongly influenced by the reform of the Commission of National Education (Komisja Edukacji Narodowej) and the liquidation of the Jesuit Order (1773) (Kryvosheia & Morawiec, 2023a).

During the operation of the Basilian school, between 1766 and 1830, the number of classes increased to six general education classes and one preparatory class. The teachers were mostly clergymen of the Basilian Order. Some of them taught in Uman for several years. The lowest number of students was 150 at the time of the opening of the school, and the highest was 600 (800) at the time it was suspended in 1830. Thus, several thousand young men were students of the Basilian school in Uman (Kryvosheia & Morawiec, 2023a). The students also learned under the supervision of foreign (secular) teachers, mainly foreign languages, music, dance, fencing, etc. Having graduated from the Basilian school, some students had the opportunity to continue their education abroad (Merder, 1903, p. 19; Illiashevich, 1892, p. 161–162).

The Basilians played an important role in the dissemination of books in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Pidlypczak-Majerowicz, 2012, p. 85-90). The Basilian center in Uman also contended for the first place in the Uman region regarding book collecting and printing. It is known so far that the first library in the region was indeed organized by the Basilians (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1033; Pidlypczak-Majerowicz, 1995, p. 32). In the years around 1800, the library was small, and its collection included publications on mathematics, physics, and literature, mainly in Polish, Latin, French, and Italian (Giżycki, 1899, p. 943). In 1816 engineer Ludwik Metzelski, architect of the famous Sofiyivka Park, donated his mineralogical collection (his own cabinet with a cupboard) to the school library (BJ Rkp. 4502).

The catalog of books of the Basilian monastery in Uman for 1818 allows us to understand the basis on which were developed, for instance, the poetics of Seweryn Goszczyński, Józef Bohdan Zaleski, Michał Grabowski, and brothers Aleksander and Sylwester Groza. The library contained: 10 books of Holy Scripture, 121 theological, 290 historical, 43 legal, 15 medical, 20 geographical, 220 mathematical and philosophical books, 460 books of poetry and rhetoric, 48 grammar books, etc. A microscope and a barometer are mentioned among the devices used for teaching (IR NBUV, F. II, No. 3350, Ark. 1–2 zv.), together with globes, an electric machine, and a collection of coins (Pidlypczak-Majerowicz, 1995, p. 32).

The Basilians devoted a lot of attention to studying ancient heritage. Thus, in the years around 1800, passages from classical Latin authors were studied in the first three grades, in particular Cornelius Nepos (c. 100–25 BC), epistles of Cicero (106–43 BC) and Pliny the Elder (23/24–79 AD). The intellectual legacy of Latin scholars also laid the foundation for ethics (Giżycki, 1899, p. 943). While in the first-year students studied texts by classical authors and also learned Latin, in the second year they translated texts into Polish (1815). They also studied the life of Themistocles (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

In the third year, they translated from Polish to Latin the *Epitome of Roman History* by Florus (Lucius Annaeus Florus)*, relying on their knowledge of Latin expressions, and practiced their handwriting by making clean copies of these texts (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

In the fourth year, much attention was paid to the ability to speak, write, and create, therefore students were taught to identify metaphor, allegory, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, etc. Since considerable attention was paid to the style of texts, they turned to the legacy of one of the most famous Roman educators and rhetoricians, Marcus Quintilian (c. 35–c. 100 AD) (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279). The students gained a broad knowledge of poetics, became acquainted with the differences between odes, elegies, fables and epics, tragedies, comedies, satires, as well as epigrams (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

In the fourth year, the students also learned the history of Ancient Greece, and the works of Cicero, Curtius, Livy, and Tacitus in the fifth, developing their skills in speaking and poetry. All this was supplemented with knowledge from Roman treatises on geography and morality, Pliny's writings on volcanoes and the animal world of southern countries. In the broad range of historical knowledge, special attention was paid not to contemporary history, which was not covered by lectures at all, but to ancient history, with a particular emphasis on ancient Greece and Rome (Giżycki, 1899, p. 944). Regarding Roman heritage, they translated Cicero's speeches "To the Citizens after his recall from exile" and "Against Catiline", Livy's "Veturia's appeal to Coriolanus leading Volscians against Rome", Virgil's "Aeneid", Horace's "Ode to Postumus", etc. (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

Greek literature was studied in detail, namely its state before Homer, the evolution of Greek science from Homer to Alexander the Great, then from Alexander the Great to Augustus, and further to Constantine the Great. The influences on Greek science and literature were emphasized, as was its subsequent decline after Constantine the Great. Greek grammar was also studied in this context, e.g. Aristophanes and Apollonius of Tiyana (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

* Lucius Annaeus Florus (circa 70–140 AD), a Roman historian who wrote in the time of Hadrian, was the author of the extant two-volume work *Epitome of Roman History* (*Epitomae de Tito Livio bellorum omnium annorum septingentorum libri duo*).

Students often referred to Homer's poetic legacy, in particular studying the Iliad in Latin, Italian, English, French, German, Czech, and Polish translations. They applied the comparative principle, comparing the Iliad and the Odyssey (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

Methodological skills and philosophical thinking were formed by becoming acquainted with the lives and legacy of Hesiod, Pythagoras, Solon, Empedocles, and others. Aesop, Theocritus, Callimachus, Aeschylus, Sophocles, etc. also had their place in the curriculum (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

The historical knowledge acquired by students at the Basilian school was based on ancient history as well, namely the folios (books) by Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Arian, and others. The history curriculum included a section on ancient history, namely: the founding of Rome, the Greco-Persian Wars, the conquests and empire of Alexander the Great, and the emergence of Christianity in the third year, and in the fourth the times from the spread of Christianity to the split of the Roman Empire into Western and Eastern parts (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

They also studied the philosophical works of Pythagoras, Socrates, Aristotle and Plato, Democritus, and various schools: the Sophists, Epicureans, Cynics, Sceptics and Stoics, Eclectics and Neoplatonists (TsDIAL, F. 684, Op. 1, Ref. 3279).

During the visit of Tadeusz Czacki in 1804, the curriculum included "folk" geometry with elements of Euclid, yet there were students who learned both geometry and Latin without enthusiasm (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1032).

Between 1815 and 1817, the teaching of elocution in combination with rhetoric and poetics was given an important place in the school curriculum. This subject, i.e., elocution, was taught extensively at that time (especially between 1815 and 1817), mostly in the history of ancient Roman and Greek literature. For example, in the 1815 curriculum, the Greek language and even the ancient Greek philosophical systems can be found accompanying the usual topics related to this subject (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1037).

Klemens Hryniewiecki approached his teaching mission with much responsibility: thanks to his exemplary zeal and careful guidance, he was able to instill in many young people a taste and a noble zeal for studying Latin classics and for applying their own talents in emulating them. Thus, after successfully completing their studies at that school, some students left behind wonderful fruits of their labor, excerpts from which can be found in the "Diary" – from Virgil's "Georgics" and one about Orpheus and Euridice. These students will be discussed later. Hryniewiecki, born in Volhynia around 1782, studied at a monastery and at Vilnius University. He was ordained as a priest around 1820 and then taught at various schools of his order (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1040–1041).

In 1824–25, under the guidance of the prefect of the Uman School, Father Tomasz Zabłocki, a candidate of philosophy and theology and a teacher of elocution, the Basilian pupils learned ancient history, practiced writing letters and replies, and translated the pastoral works of Vergil and other Latin authors. He taught fifth year students the precepts of oratory and various types of poetry, translated Cicero's speeches against Catiline and on behalf of Ligarius, some of Horace's odes, and gave writing exercises in verse and prose. In the sixth year, he taught "universal principles of fine arts" (which should be understood as literary theory), explaining them with examples from classical authors, from Horace, Virgil's Aeneid, the fourth book of Ovid's Metamorphoses, Cicero's speech in defense of Milo, and from written exercises in verse and prose (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1138).

Father Teodor Kazachyn'skyj, a candidate of philosophy and a teacher of history in the third year, having explained the basics and the general concepts of history and geography, proceeded to the examination of the history of the Assyrians, Medes, and Persians. He also translated "selected moral excerpts from classical authors" into Polish. He then gave lectures on Greek history to fourth year students using those "excerpts". In the fifth year he taught Roman history until Constantine the Great, and in the sixth the history of Poland and the history of Alexander the Great (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1139).

Rev. Anastasius Telezhynskyj was the elocution teacher in 1827. He taught Greek as an elective, based on the Buttman and Grodeck textbook "Polonized by Hryniewicz", and also used excerpts from the works of Feliks Zhukovskyj. He divided his lectures into two courses, in which he covered elementary grammar and translated Homer, assigning some passages to be memorized (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1142).

Józef Jeżowski, candidate of philosophical sciences, a native of The Vasilkov uезд born in 1794, member of the Philomath Society, studied at Vilnius University in 1820. He probably graduated from a charitable educational institution in 1816. A prominent philologist and scholar, whose works were published in Vilnius (1821–23, Horace's "Odes, more accurate for school use") and Moscow (1828–31, on the progress of philological research on the works of Plato, Homer's "Odyssey" published with annotations and index), Jeżowski taught at a university in Moscow. He died in 1855 (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1166).

Józef Bohdan Zaleski began to test his poetic abilities while still in Uman: “Vaclav’s Pride” from a folk song, “Mary Stuart in Prison” – a translation from French, and two odes by Horace, which he submitted to *Dziennik Wileński* (Vilnius Journal) in 1819. Since his subsequent poetic work, widely known to be so majestic and enchanting, is beyond the scope of this paper, we shall not dwell on it. We shall only say, however, that in the cozy village of Villepreux, near Versailles and Saint-Cyr, in a quiet house shaded by a garden, on 31 March 1886, Zaleski gave his soul to God. The deep faith and high morality he acquired at the Basilian School in Uman remained with him until the very end and were always the fundamental tone of his sublime poetry (Giżycki, 1899, p. 1178).

Seweryn Goszczyński wrote in his memoirs in 1816, recalling the beginnings of his friendship with Bohdan Zaleski, who had already shown a talent for writing and poetry at that time and was making attempts at translating the Iliad into Polish. It was during that period that Goszczyński first read the Iliad (translated by F.K. Dmochowski, Warsaw 1791), which made an extraordinary impression on him. However, as he notes below, his poetic work had not yet reached the level required to create any poetry (Goszczyński, 1924, p. 16). In 1817 Goszczyński noted that he and his friends often started their day by visiting Sofiyivka, near which they lived. As early as at four in the morning, they would be reading literature in the park. At school, students were given tasks to translate ancient works into Polish, which trained not only their language skills but their poetic talents as well. Later, in *Dziennik Wileński*, a translation into Polish of one of Horace’s Odes was published under the signature of Jozef Prawdzic Zalecki. At the Basilian school, however, it was Goszczyński’s version that was recognized as the best, which made him famous as a poet (Goszczyński, 1924, p. 17–18).

Translations became the foundation on which Seweryn Goszczyński’s poetic skills developed. Even during his vacations in Illintsi in 1818, free from his studies, he worked on a verse translation of Numa Pompilius, which he has already read as a child in Staszic’s translation (Goszczyński, 1924, p. 12, 21). He also translated the first book of the Iliad from French (in Anna Dacier’s 1699 translation) (Goszczyński, 1924, p. 22). While students read the *Jagiellonida* by Dyzma Bończa Tomaszewski, which had a significant effect on the formation of patriotism, Goszczyński noted that he was dissatisfied with it (Goszczyński, 1924, p. 24–25). He most likely also worked in 1819 on the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius in the French translation by A. Thomas and in the Polish one by Staszic (1815) (Goszczyński, 1924, p. 26).

The influence of Sofiyivka on the daily life and creative works of the alumni of the Basilian school requires separate study. The description of the park published by Sylwester Wężyk Groza in 1843 is of particular note (Groza, 1843). There was also Teodor Themery, director of the local girls’ academy, who taught at the Basilian school in Uman for a long time and later wrote one of the earliest descriptions of Sofiyivka (Themery, 1846).

The heyday of the Basilian monastery and schools in Uman coincided with the time when the famous trio of S. Goszczyński, B. Zaleski (Tretiak, 1911), and M. Grabowski studied there: “The years spent in Uman constitute a whole era in Goszczyński’s ideological and literary development. He became one of the active participants and leaders of school youth’s literary interests, together with his new close friends Bohdan Zaleski and M. Grabowski. Young people read new literature, follow periodicals, and reveal their independent literary talents. Already in his school years, Goszczyński published ‘Duma na gruzach ojczyzny’ [Duma on the Ruins of the Fatherland]” (Hnatiuk, 2003, p. 156–157). In the estate of Jan Krechowicki (the village of Leshchynivka), Goszczyński finished writing “Zamek Kaniowski” [Kaniv Castle] (Łopuszański, 1970, p. 263).

Seweryn Goszczyński would see a different Sofiyivka: a nocturnal, wintery, and ghostly “romantic antithesis” to Trembecki’s “Sofiyivka.” The poem “Night in Sofiyivka” was written in 1824, when Goszczyński was hiding from the tsarist police in Uman and only wandered around at night. One of the places he visited was Sofiyivka, with which the poet had become acquainted in his youth (Goszczyński, n.d., as cited in Przybylski, 1978, p. 248).

“The romantic poets B. Zaleski and S. Goszczyński were close to the life of the Ukrainian people and their folklore. They lived and were raised in Ukraine, became fascinated by Ukrainian nature, listened to the singing of kobzars from childhood, and studied Ukrainian songs. Polish literary scholar P. Chmielowski recalls that B. Zaleski, S. Goszczyński, T. Padura, and M. Grabowski, while still students at the secondary school in Uman, sang Ukrainian songs during their walks together. They were particularly captivated by the song “Soika, soika, hei letiła Tai zwynula kryła: Hore zh meni, hore, Ne khochu za more” [Jay, jay, hey she flew And folded her wings: Woe is me, woe, I don’t want to go overseas]. Grabowski, who took part in those walks and later became a literary critic, noted in an article about the Ukrainian element in Polish literature: “Our newest poets, born in Ukraine, became enamored with the songs of long gone and past centuries that sounded by their cradle and brought their scent and hue into the national poetry” (Grabowski, 1837, p. 101–102).

Ivan Franko claimed that “the name of Mykhailo Hrabovsky, one of the most prominent representatives of the Ukrainian-Polish school of writing, is also interesting to historians of the Ukrainian school for various reasons.” However, as stated further in the review, the researcher of

M. Grabowski's work cast aside his interest in Ukrainian folklore, the use of folklore in works on themes from Ukrainian life, and his connections with Ukrainian writers. Franko expresses "regret that the author [of the study on Grabowski – T.P.] did not adopt a broader perspective; M. Grabowski is, in any case, an important figure in the history of Ukrainian and Polish spiritual development." In Polish literary studies, only poets of the Romantic era and some of their followers were included in the Ukrainian school. Franko expressed his view on this question in his report "Wzajemny stosunek literatury polskiej i ruskiej" [The mutual relationship between the Polish and Ruthenian literature] he read in 1894 at the congress of Polish writers in Lviv, as well as in the introduction to his study of Antin Shashkevych, one of the representatives of the Ukrainian school (Pachovskyi, 2017, p. 681).

Here is what the Ukrainian scholar writes in his latest work: "What historians of Polish literature have come to call the 'Ukrainian school' – the poetry of Malczewski, B. Zaleski, and Goszczyński, the stories and poems of M. Czajkowski, T. Olizarowski, and Groza, some of Kraszewski's novels, some works of M. Grabowski, and others – are, on closer inspection, like the top of a large mountain, illuminated by the sun and visible from afar, but they actually rise above a large number of smaller hills and form, as it were, the effective end of a long mountain range, the origins of which are lost somewhere in the twilight of the sixteenth century." The works of the aforementioned poets abound with artistic representations of Ukrainian images and landscapes. Ivan Franko rightly believed that the works of romantic poets represent the pinnacle of a much broader Ukrainian school (Pachovskyi, 2017, p. 681).

Though the Basilian school was liquidated together with the monastery in the nineteenth century, the Antique trend remains popular in Uman today, and teachers conduct classes for history and philology students in Sofiyivka. Recently, in 2021, a new site with ancient imagery (Gorgon Medusa, Perseus, Poseidon, Pegasus, and others) was opened in one part of the park – the "Aegean Valley" (Procherk, 2021; Mazurenko, 2024, p. 25).

Conclusions. The reception of the Antique in Uman and Sofiyivka shows how the classical culture may have taken root in the space of the site and its memory, creating a multilayered landscape of meanings. The park, founded by Stanisław Szczęsny Potocki, became not simply a manifestation of magnate prestige but also an educational and symbolic space, wherein the spirit of the place – *genius loci* – combined manifold interpretation perspectives. The connection between Sofiyivka and the Basilian school in Uman was supported by three complementary planes: the systematic teaching of ancient history, the comprehensive study of classical literature, which had a significant impact on the creative work of the representatives of the Ukrainian school in Polish literature, and the direct contact with the park's scenery, where ancient statues, names, and allegories embodied educational and moral values. It was the *genius loci* that brought these experiences together, turning Sofiyivka into the space where history, education, and aesthetics met one another in one symbolic landscape and gave it a permanent dimension of culture and identity. Because for both Poles and Ukrainians, Sofiyivka is "a volatile spot of the old days, an ecological phenomenon, a recreational haven, a refuge for Muses, an artistic composition, a scientific institution, a lecture hall, an emotional niche, a cultural relay from the day before yesterday to the day after tomorrow, an optimistic gift from of a living to distant descendants, an expressive symbol of the relentless flow of fragile moments into the greedy perfection of the future" (Usenko, 1999, p. 138).

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