

Title: The Representation of Free Will and Freedom in Hryhorii Skovoroda
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The concepts of free will, personal freedom, and liberty have been at the core of philosophical debates since early antiquity. In Early-Modern Ukrainian literature the topos of “golden freedom” gained particular significance under the influence of Neo-Latin schooling, the religious polemics before and after the Union of Brest, and the general political circumstances in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Even at the *trivium* level pupils were expected to debate the nature of liberty in their rhetoric course, whereas those who pursued theology in the *quadrivium* would revisit it from a more religious perspective. Throughout the seventeenth- and eighteenth- centuries the question of liberty became a fundamental personal issue for many military and church leaders. Toward the end of the eighteenth century the most comprehensive and multifaceted treatment of the topos can be found in the oeuvre of Hryhorii Skovoroda, a peripatetic thinker and writer. This paper explores his representation of the concepts of free will and freedom, analyzing the manner in which he reconciles the seemingly antithetical deterministic, indeterministic, and libertarian positions. The paper also posits the possibility of St. Augustine’s and Desiderius Erasmus’s influence on Skovoroda, thus situating the Ukrainian author in a broader literary and philosophical context.

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