



# **Mykhailo Oleksandrovykh Maksymovych**

**September 15 (3), 1804 – November 22 (10), 1873**

*Mykhailo Maksymovych was a polymath scholar – a naturalist, folklorist, ethnographer, historian, writer, poet, Master of Physical and Mathematical Sciences (since 1827), Doctor of Slavic-Russian Philology (since 1871), Professor of Botany (since 1833), Russian Literature (since 1834), Dean of the 1st Division of the Faculty of Philosophy (1834, 1837), the first Rector (1834–1835) of Saint Volodymyr University, and Corresponding Member of the Saint Petersburg Academy of Sciences (since 1871).*

Born in Tymkivshchyna hamlet in Zolotonosha County, Poltava Governorate (now Bohuslavets, Cherkasy region) into an impoverished noble family with Cossack roots, he began his education at the Annunciation Women's Monastery (Zolotonosha) and continued under the guidance of his uncle, Professor of Illya Tymkivsky University of Kharkiv. In 1812, he enrolled in the Novhorod-Siversky Gymnasium, graduating in 1819 and continuing his studies at the Department of Philology, Faculty of Philosophy, Moscow University. In August 1821, he transferred to the Department of Physics and Mathematics, graduating in June 1823 with a degree in Physical and Mathematical Sciences.

After completing his studies, Maksymovych stayed at the university, working in the university library to organize books for a systematic catalog, studying flora, and collecting plant and mineral specimens in the Moscow Governorate. At the same time, he attended lectures in the Medical Faculty and the Department of Philology. Between 1825 and 1829, he taught agricultural botany and horticulture at the Agricultural School. From February 25, 1826, he headed the university's Botanical Garden and Herbarium. Between February and May 1826, he lectured on natural history at the university's Noble Boarding School.

On June 30, 1827, after defending his dissertation "On Systems of the Plant Kingdom," he received the degree of Master of Physical and Mathematical Sciences and began lecturing on botany at the Department of Physics and Mathematics of the Faculty of Philosophy at Moscow University. In October 1829, he was appointed adjunct professor, and on August 23, 1833, he was elected Ordinary Professor of the Department of Botany by the University Council.

Maksymovych's diverse interests were reflected in numerous scientific works. His first article, "What are Leaves for on Plants?" was published in 1821. By 1834, over 100 of his works were published, including significant contributions to botany and zoology. These works became part of his renowned monograph "Fundamentals of Botany" (1828). His popular booklet "Naum's Book on God's Great World" (1833) was republished twelve times by 1876.

Between 1830 and 1834, he published the literary almanac "Denitsa" (three issues). He compiled and published collections of "Little Russian Songs" (1827), "Ukrainian Folk Songs" (1834), "Voices of Ukrainian Songs" (1834), and "Collection of Ukrainian Songs" (1849).

In 1834, Maksymovych began his Kyiv period. Wishing to work in Ukraine, on March 4, 1834, he was appointed Ordinary Professor of Russian Literature and Dean of the 1st Division of the Faculty of Philosophy at the newly established Saint Volodymyr University. On July 13, 1834, the curator of the Kyiv educational district entrusted Maksymovych with the temporary duties of Rector, confirmed by the Emperor's decree on October 16, 1834.

As Rector, Maksymovych carried the primary burden of organizing academic and administrative activities at the university. On June 27, 1835, through Maksymovych's efforts, permission was obtained to establish a Temporary Committee for the Search of Antiquities in Kyiv. Maksymovych chaired the committee alongside university professors.

Due to health issues, Maksymovych retired on December 11, 1835, from the positions as Rector and Dean but remained a professor of Russian Literature. Throughout 1837, he again served as Dean of the 1st Division of the Faculty of Philosophy. He taught Russian literature history in the faculties of philosophy and law. In 1845, he retired fully and settled on his estate at Mykhailova Hora near Zolotonosha, dedicating himself to scientific and literary activities.

Maksymovych contributed significantly to the study of history, folklore, and linguistics. His works on the formation of the Ukrainian language and its place in the Slavic world included: "History of Ancient Russian Literature" (1839), "The Song of Igor's Campaign" (1837), and others.

Recognized for his achievements, he was elected a member of numerous scientific societies. On September 6, 1871, the 50th anniversary of his academic and literary career was celebrated, and he was awarded honorary titles and memberships.

Mykhailo Maksymovych passed away on November 10, 1873, on his estate Mykhailova Hora (now Prokhorivka, Cherkasy region), where he was buried.