

# МОВОЗНАВСТВО, ЛІТЕРАТУРОЗНАВСТВО

УДК 821.161.2Кож.7

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**UNOBVIOUS "THE LOGIC OF  
THINGS": STORIES BY  
V. KOZHELYANKO  
IN AESTHETICS OF PARADOX**

**Ключевые слова:** *Василий Кожелянко, малая проза, новелла, модернизм, экзистенциализм, жанровая форма, парадокс, поколение восьмидесятых.*

**Анистратенко Антонина. Неочевидная «Логика вещей»: малая проза В. Кожелянко в эстетике парадокса**

Из всех текстов малой прозаической формы В. Кожелянко в новеллах и рассказах книги "Чужой" полно и самых многообразных реализован архетип времени, с помощью воплощения которого автором воспроизводится эстетическая концепция парадокса. Описав модели писательской разработки произведения на примере интерпретации сюжетов рассказов и дальнейшее развертывание их в формат романа, мы пришли к выводу, что большинство новелл и рассказов В. Кожелянко развил в форму романа или сюжетной линии большой эпической формы. Также на художественное оформление и сюжетную основу влияла поэтическая символика автора.

This article deals with the 80-th generation in Ukrainian literature, its particular, aesthetic, thematic, genre features of short fiction and its connection with the Ukrainian novel.

The problem of the plot interpretation, novelistic scheme of Western and Eastern Slavic canon model drive the prose works by writers of 80-th generation to the periphery of literary process. The genetic feature of the 80-th generation played the important role in its considerable functioning especially their antihermetic and, at the same time, attachment to local schools, its biographical and situational fundamentals creative implementation.

In definite context, we are going to observe a small V. Kozhelyanko's short stories and his first book consisting of five deep in meaning, expressive and canonical due to the form of the existential novels "The logic of things"<sup>1</sup>. The book was published in Lviv at the publishing house "Calvary" in 2007. Five short stories in one book together are written by the author during the 2002 - 2007 years including "Tea Euphoria", "The Deserter", "Narcissus", "The Wine", "Happiness". The novels are combined in mimetic way focusing on the internal monologue of the main character as

well as on the social and psychological area with existential intentions and hidden gothic which develops into a Brahmin skeptical philosophical view of the World.

First of all social thematic line of prose attracts our attention which is on the surface relatively to receptive components of the third and fourth levels of the text. Thus social motivation of the psychological feature of the characters in the stories by V. Kozhelyanko constitutes the situational valence of plot of his novels and builds the foundations of the ideological and thematic content of short fiction. In this sense revealing look is depicted in stories "The Deserter" and "Narcissus". The absurdity of the Soviet way of life highlighted with the help of psychological and actual portrait of Victor Kolobok the marginal character in the "Narcissus" story who was in the psycho narcissistic, proximity, chronically unwilling to coexistence in this "Land of the Soviets." Disagreement with the world and social system is expressed in his manic and extraordinary attention for his appearance. This behavior is opposed not only to common sense, it is banned by the Soviet governmental policy. It is not

desirable to dress well, to make importance to the quality of his shoes etc. So, Victor makes all these forbidden things daily.

Inner, almost unconscious resistance, however, is not growing only in Kolobok. It is time for restructuring and the subsequent collapse of the USSR. The Ukrainian national movement is growing up in the Ukrainian towns and cities. Unexpectedly for himself the main character finds himself in a whirlwind of events. He attends meetings, joined the National party named "Rukh". The narcissistic snob is tired of that "[...] for breakfast (sprats in tomato sauce, bread and tea with chamomile) and picking his teeth with sharpened match [...]"<sup>2</sup> but nobody can even complain because the same condition is all over the country.

Lack of normal things for a person in a democratic, liberal or monarchical-hierarchical society such as toothpicks, aftershave lotion, hair color dye and comfortable shoes causes fetish-affection. Later the main character loses his temper and rest of common sense as to his things and therefore, the idea of sovereignty and independence of Ukraine to Victor Kolobok is rooted in the desire to gain substantive benefits of the capitalistic rate: "And still it's not so bad for today because he has professional hair dye and Ukraine has its hope for independence"<sup>3</sup>. Comparison in associative sense his hair color dye and independence of the state serves as a transfer or psychological allusion of actual demonstration of social order of the states where citizens have freedom of choice and in contrast to the first totalitarian state in which the will of citizens is considered a betrayal of ideals.

Three separate reasons caused the marginal suffered from complexes Victor desire to participate in the fight "for Ukraine", first, his personal desire of freedom (the fear that "he will have to dye his hair, whiskers and mustaches with the simple Basma from a paper bag")<sup>4</sup>, second, his ambition ("[...] he has already become a prominent figure in his political party as he created and headed the organization the NRU for the reconstruction in his district. Also he became a member of National Council and often spoke at a general meeting [...]"<sup>5</sup>) and, third, gender motivation ("Since autumn Viktor Kolobko actively watched the girl seen then in the street with a blue and yellow ribbon in her braids. He knew that her name was Oksana [...]. Her only fault was that she absolutely did not pay attention to him who was already an active politician [...]"<sup>6</sup>). So, the temporal and ideological conflict of the breaking millennium and collapse of the USSR and the creation of an

independent Ukraine lies in the basis socio-psychological novel "Narcissus".

Existential intention of the novel appears in accordance with the fate of the state and its citizens (for example, the main character). Fictitious independence and democracy in the country and the value of fictitious marriages of V. Kolobok and the attempt of illogical but selfless struggle against bribery and falsification during the election campaign, lead to moral, ideological death of the main character: "[...] By his way home he recently understood for the second time that he was mortal but he is not alone in this problem for Ukraine is the same [...]"<sup>7</sup>. Acute sense of finitude, mortality of all existing is the essential feature of the collection of short stories "The Logic of Things." You also see the hidden gothic of the story; focus on the unknown, subconscious understanding of gloomy future of the state and the individual. Higher knowledge comes from the inevitable fate the belief in which is reflected in medieval literature of gothic. V. Kozhelyanko used condensed symbolic achievement in this literature: "[...] Viktor Kolobko began to climb up to the attic slowly. He was not thinking about his death any more. He was sure about it. [...]"<sup>8</sup> V. Kozhelyanko completed novel "Narcissus".

The moments in the life of the main character when finds himself in the most critical existential situations associated with the opposition "life-death", "getting-loss," "love - freedom", "action-inactivity" are basis to comprehend personal exit and invariably lead novelistic scheme to solutions. For instance, the main character in the story "The Wine", an ardent atheist, outspoken supporter of contemplation of life, Mr. Mykolai, after helpless hanging in the unfinished well awaiting death from drowning comes to Zen Buddhism understanding of the meaning and nature of life and becomes a deeply religious man.

But let's come back to the social and psychological topics and other important story in this regard "The Deserter." The novelistic scheme of this work reduces greatly the first of its three parts its introduction. In the course of the novel the reader of the plot falls spontaneously and without narration without descriptions of "disposition" and "dislocation" of the action. It starts with as: "... upon, and he found himself in the mountainous very high quality asphalt road. On the right hand the vertical rock was flat and without any bush and on the left was seen bottomless abyss. [...]"<sup>9</sup>. However, this sentence itself is serving a minimum necessary for an understanding of the recipient of chronotypical

conditions of future performance. Immediately obvious is the fact that it is not in Ukraine: a good asphalt road in the mountains is a clear indication of non-Ukrainian territory. Suddenly, as if we missed something, the beginning of the narration speaks for a time span: the action takes place in the present time.

Later the reader learns that the main character is in the Caucasian mountains and he drives military GAZ-66. "Unremarkable, a kind of "Vasily" comes to the path of desertion to be saved from his own state which sends troops to certain doom because once in the Soviet army man ceases to be just a man (which it is by definition be stopped having received a passport in one of the Soviet republics) but also a citizen. Thus, due to substituted values the deserter without any specific name "[...] falls into slavery to the local manufacturer Abdullah who produced "Armenian" and "Kyslyar" cognacs [...]"<sup>10</sup>.

However, the main character is unremarkable at first glance. His main objective is to create guerrilla group in the Western Ukraine which would fight against the Soviet regime in Ukraine. So he ran away from slavery having kidnapped Abdullah's son and cheated vengeful Caucasians and returned to Ukraine. There Ruboros had to hide for a while and came to Mrs. Stefa where he rented the apartments, and that twice older woman did that the army and slave labor failed to do. "Ruboros lives in Ms. Stepha's apartment and soon he revised his views. He slowly but steadily matures to the fact that it was not clear why he should fight even for a free Ukraine when life is getting better [...]"<sup>11</sup>. Stefa fell in love with 23-year-old Ruboros and did all her best to stay with him but the psychological pressure causes man's resistance.

He still embodies the dream of insurgent struggle but the social situation of the native state is that Ruboros suffers in this fiasco no matter that in the blind case that "[...] be called truthfulness, realism or simple logic [...]"<sup>12</sup>, the guy dies having fallen from the helicopter on the way in which the racing car is riding. It's obvious that an inevitable fate follows him as the Ukrainian state. Consequently, socio-psychological and existential sam intertwined in semantic- symbolic field of short stories of the book "The Logic of Things."

The ideological and thematic plan and symbolic and archetypal layers of the reception of the text go out in the story to an active level that is the influence to the emotions of the reader is created by these levels because novelistic scheme extremely brief and formally conservative and does not allow the writer to play with

the language styles and plot superstructures (descriptions, author jokes, remarks, complex stylistic neoplasms, eclectic casts, etc.). The plot as an important component of every prose is under considerable pressure of formal characteristics novel as a genre: "[...] a form of story or novel implies that the writer recreates the moment which is concentrated in a thought or emotion needed for the author [...]"<sup>13</sup>. So, the whole body of the story text is a reflection of character structures and thematic components. Thanks to this mimetic attraction the story gets to a new syncretism level "text-idea." It lies in the recovering the series of moments of life which have been seen or imagined by the author and displayed using artistic means and genre models (genre matrices scheme of novels, stories, novelette, sketches and so on. specimens of short fiction).

Structure of modern text demonstrates a new understanding of the traditional principle of reflection as it was pointed by Y. Polishchuk. This refers to the approach of literature to document, to the real fact and the creation of the impression of extracredibility through direct imitation of linguistic and cultural code of journalism. "The highly-expressed characteristic presentation is common... for V. Kozhelyanko's prose"<sup>14</sup>, but as a way to implement the principle of mimetic and small prose author linguistic and stylistic principle is similar to the linguistic and cultural code of mass communication. Also in that sense the most notable is Y. Vynnychuk's book "Tales of Freedom" that resonates in the discourse of socio-political essays of V. Kozhelyanko<sup>15</sup>. Journalistic achievements of the writer remains on the margins of his literary fame but we cannot avoid the impact of journalism aspect on V. Kozhelyanko's artistic creativity. For example, in the articles "These different the same Russians"<sup>16</sup> and "Red humor in blue and yellow universities"<sup>17</sup> in reporting format we can see ideological basis for the novel "Parade in Moscow", "Terrorium" a collection of short stories "The Alien" and so on. It grows in small prose of V. Kozhelyanko from creative method to a specific style which are subjected composition and sometimes the plot.

Moments of reflection of the world in short stories and Ukrainian 80-th and 90-th generations take place in the plot complementarity with canon of Ukrainian stories. So, mimesis itself ceases to be artistic and valuation intentions of the writer: "[...] It seems that today we can say that the display becomes even more sense: literary texts create quasi-reality that often is" realistic ", thicker, refined and finally

desirable than the reality itself [...] "<sup>18</sup>. These features of quasi-reality noticed by Y. Polishchuk which was created by the writer is becoming an extreme expression in a short story coinciding on the genre matrix that provides the tension and thickness of time-space.

Existential deep melancholy rooted in a symbolic and thematical story "Happiness" especially sacred melancholy for the lost paradise of a Man, Eden Gardens, which melted in the hustle and bustle of life events on which people have lost their original essence. Love advances us to sheer identification of a Man but "flowers are withered, / shoes are spoiled- / pass days are passing"<sup>19</sup> and life refers a person from the point of bifurcation when the choice was not made on time.

This existential situation is played by the author in the short story "Tea euphoria." Only as the way out of crisis of broken relationships the character chooses time-tested exit in the form of alcohol. Described in details course of alcohol intoxication, his physical and mental sensations, transition from a single binge intoxication to durable, attempts to escape from the vicious circle of dependence and alcohol addiction, withdrawal symptoms - perhaps the first time in Ukrainian literature V. Kozhelyanko resorted to a detailed analysis these states and made this literary work in the plot of the short story. He made his intentions in such a way that the character hasn't lost the support of the reader that is not caused disgust. The problem of balancing rights at the border between personal freedom and family happiness, the issue of male logic selection makes the "Tea euphoria" text labeled brighter gender factor than we have seen in the lyrical almost romantic story like "Happiness". But here in "Tea euphoria" we can see that the psychological aspect, the state of the character outweighs the rest of the plot and thematic components of the expression. Existential melancholy for the lost paradise is often repeated in motive short fiction by 80-th generation writers. Although V. Kozhelyanko is assumed to be literary hermit because, we have no writers in Bukovina on which creativity we can clearly trace the continuity of generations in the literature regarding Kozhelyanko creativity, however, we cannot isolate him from the circle of 80-th generation of our literature.

Volodymyr Danylenko is considered to be a devoted researcher, a writer and a short fiction of XX-century recreator, a literary critic, a writer-neoimpressionist. 80-th generation writers in their functional role takes place among observers deliberately committed the massacre ideo-

logy steady resistance 60-th generation writers and burlesque carnival minded and rebellious 90-th generation writers. So it is obvious that not only those who by birth date had to belong here but those who joined this group because of their aesthetic tendencies were in those ranks, - said V. Danilenko - (for example, T. Fedyuk, Zholdak B., O. Lysheha., B. Medvid).

The founder in Ukrainian prose of 80-th generation became V. Tarnavskiy. He first broke the hermetic isolation of the Seventieth. "Tarnavskiy introduced [...] the spirit of the modern city in the Ukrainian prose on the subsiding wave of hippies. Although there were other forerunners Y. Shevchuk and V. Shcherbak before V. Tarnavskiy. The latter, of course, was the master of Ukrainian prose of the Eighties [...] "<sup>20</sup>. The ideologist of 80-th generation is considered to be M. Riabchuk although much of them remained outside his circle. In fact Vladimir Shevchuk considers urgent problem 80-th generation the lack of ideologists of given generation such as they were for the generation of the Sixties I. Svitlychny E. Sverstyuk, I. Dzyuba.

Criticism of society is the most significant motif of creativity 80-th generation that appear in various formal and semantic schemes of the short fiction. So, the J. Lyzhnyk's story-parabola "The Money Changer's Day" parodied Ukrainian neo-colonial society. Although his other short stories have unique multilevel. "The author turns to neo-romantic and postmodern techniques. Plot stories fades into the background, sometimes we see the meditative psychological story like "Before Dawn". The text of temporal change (from night to dawn) provokes change settings impressionable character. In the interchange memories are left at night and the way opens with the first rays of the sun and the main character begins to look to the future ("... It has come already - New Day ...")<sup>21</sup>.

The short story "That's why I'm with you" has a similar structure but only it measures time changes with the days of a week from Monday to Saturday. The internal struggle of the character is related to disagreement with the world and life that he leads "<sup>22</sup>. Thus we see a modification of social issues because aesthetic discourse of the short story writer Bukovinian J. lyzhnyk goes to the existential.

"The main topic of degeneration of the Ukrainian society sounds in the novel of V. Portyak" "The Exit" "(an allusion to the biblical Moses proceeds impressed with slavery originally)"<sup>23</sup> - V. Danilenko noted further in the introduction to the anthology of contemporary

short stories. This biblical allusion that contains conceptual shift from realization the canonical plot to mental "symbolic expression of its modern incarnation became the ideological basis for Kozhelyanko's short story "The Deserter. In the frame of an ironic writer gives a long-term scheme of the internal economic and legal slavery of the citizens of their country. In addition the second plot-line is conceptual demonstration of violence against a citizen of the state with the help of the institution of military service. This second aspect is also considering by the most well-known writer of 80-th generation Y. Andrukhovych: "[...] The Soviet army appears as embodiment of violence, condensed essence of the State in the stories of Yuri Andrukhovych" To the left where the heart is ", " The Royal Hunting " [...]"<sup>24</sup>.

Social and socio-psychological topics are among of interest to authors of short fiction of the last century, that's why "at the time when Western literature meticulously stared at movements of the human soul, or pondered the philosophical categories of existence, works of Slavic writers in most stand on social issues [...]"<sup>25</sup>. The vast niche opened a large domain in satirical and humorous prose in the field of psychological and social short story the evidence of which became the anthology "The Scarecrow"<sup>26</sup>. B. Kozhelyanko's works were not included to the anthology because of his short stories tend to classical short stories of modernism, the existential short fiction which doesn't suit to it.

The short stories of the book "The Logic of Things" became the new page of Ukrainian short form of literary prose, reveal the marginal "uncomfortable" questions of human behavior, understanding the world of the things, patterns of thinking and action in standard difficult situations.

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#### **Аністратенко А. НЕОЧЕВИДНА „ЛОГІКА РЕЧЕЙ”: МАЛА ПРОЗА В. КОЖЕЛЯНКА В ЕСТЕТИЦІ ПАРАДОКСУ**

З-поміж усіх текстів малої прозової форми В. Кожелянка у новелах та оповіданнях книги „Чужий” найповніше та найрозмаїтіше реалізований архетип часу, за допомогою втілення якого автором відтворюється естетична концепція парадоксу. Струнка компо-

зиція вивільнює для В. Кожелянка безмежне різноманіття сюжетних поворотів та чотири виміри для розвитку дії. Ні час, ні простір не диктують умов розвитку дії. Лише сама людина, персонаж, веде себе від гріха до покаєння, від вибору до наслідку, від втечі до повернення і це змушує героя бути сильним, бути дієвим і відповідальним.

У малій прозі час виконує ті ж функції, що й у епічних творах великих форм, що-правда, його якості змінюються: час новели найчастіше є реліктовим, таким, що не має тяглості. Часто хронотоп новели заміняє момент часу. Тому хронотоп і його сюжетний відповідник – подієвий ряд – спостерігаються читачем відсторонено. Момент часу в новелі заміняє період часу, в той час як в оповіданні все ж таки має місце невеликий часовий проміжок, що відбувається, і хронотоп залишається в його класичному для прози варіанті.

Виявивши моделі письменницької розробки твору на прикладі інтерпретації сюжетів оповідань і подальше розгортання їх до формату роману, ми прийшли до висновку, що більшість новел та оповідань В. Кожелянко розвинув до форми роману або сюжетної лінії великої епічної форми. Також на мистецьке оформлення та сюжетну основу впливала поетична символіка автора.

**Ключові слова:** *Василь Кожелянко, мала проза, новела, модернізм, екзистенціалізм, жанрова форма, парадокс, вісімдесятицтво.*