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**“THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME”: MYKOLA KHVYLOVY’S
“NON-CANONICAL” SHORT STORIES AND “CANONICAL” WRITER’S STYLE**

The paper analyzes Mykola Khvylovy's selected 'non-canonical' small pieces of prose ("A Happy Secretary", "The Last Day"). The writer was found to have resorted to a set of literary means and techniques that had previously proven effective in baring his views on the issues of the time. These include various types of stylistic repetition, antithesis, and irony as a way of criticizing ideological differences. A renewed emphasis is placed on the relevance of the colour blue in the writer's works as one of the means of creating a stylistic contrast between the explicit context and the overtones that lie beneath it. The texts under study centre on the fate of the new Soviet man, diligent, industrious, and submissive, capable of a personal life but doomed to failure because of certain irrevocable obligations. The writer exemplifies the existential dilemmas his characters face by reinforcing the ironic aspects of the discourse. Narratological and architectonic features of the stories have been studied. The various types of chronotope have been distinguished — the everyday life, the socio-historical, and the road chronotope. The holistic view on the problem under study is due to a combination of cultural-historical, semantic-stylistic, comparative-typological, and descriptive-analytical methods. The findings are to prove useful to all those involved in: the study of the Ukrainian writer's signature world-view; the issue of personality both in Khvylovy's fiction and some Ukrainian prose writers of the 20-30s of the twentieth century; the analysis of the Ukrainian literature of the first half of the twentieth century development; the studies on the perception of Khvylovy's works by literary critics and scholars; for experts in artistic anthropology and narratological analysis of Khvylovy's written works. It will also be relevant in pursuing the studies of both the writer's late fiction and his mature pieces of work; studying the texts of the latter phase with regard to intertextual interaction (for instance, the short story "The Inspector-General", 1929).

Keywords: short story, character, writer, discourse, structure, chronotope, repetition, narrator, existential, irony.

Introduction

Mykola Khvylovy (1893–1933) is regarded as one of the founders of the 20th century Ukrainian literature. He began his artistic career as a poet but soon progressed to a writer, not to mention his merits as a polemist and a pamphleteer. Since the late 1980s, Khvylovy's works have become a major focus of academic studies in Ukraine, as with another victim of the Soviet regime — Valerian Pidmohylnyi (1901–1937). Hryhory Kostiuk, the compiler of Mykola Khvylovy's five volumes of works published in Ukrainian in exile, divided the literary artist's creative work into three cycles. Much of these studies are concerned with the short stories, stories and sketches written during the first (1921–1924) and the second (1925–1930) cycle of Khvylovy's creative work. Less attention is drawn to those, which appeared during the third cycle (1931–1933), among them the short stories *A Happy Secretary* («Shchaslyvyi

sekretar», 1931) and *The Last Day* («Ostannii den», 1931). However, other scholars split Khvylovy's creative prose into two main phases slightly varying in years, but sustaining a similar view towards identified artistic issues in his works (Aheieva, 1993, p. 544; Ferguson, 1976, p. 427; Kratochvil, 1999, pp. 3–4). An overview of these works was provided mainly by Hryhory Kostiuk in the third volume of Khvylovy's writings (Kostiuk, 1982, pp. 7–19) and by Antonina Mykytenko in her thesis *Means of Publicistic Expressiveness and Efficacy* (based on pamphlets and sketches by Mykola Khvylovy) (Mykytenko, 2005, pp. 157–169). These sketches represent Khvylovy's compliance with the requirements of the socialist realism on the one hand, though they may also be considered as some fine examples of the author's modernistic ideals, his idiosyncratic style, and partly acclaimed intertextuality on the other hand.

In the present study, therefore, we will examine the distinctive features of the author's manner in his least known and reviewed short stories. We will confirm Khvylovy's rigid and invariable position towards presenting his literary means: the appliance of attributive adjectives to make the assessed status of the character or appraise the situation under consideration (most often expressing the irony of the situation where there is a reversal of expectations); skilful employment of reiteration serving a structure formative function in the texts; the juxtaposition of contrasting words, phrases, or ideas, so as to mock the social ideal of the society under the state communism and to portray the tragedy of suburban.

Hermeneutics of the person under state communism

The short story *A Happy Secretary* focuses on comrade Stark, a very talented, skillful and committed to the mutual cause person. He is the man whose abilities and knowledge are required for the coal mine normal running. The only thing in the whole universe that can emotionally influence on him is his four years old son Vova. As the narrator informs us:

As soon as there was a breakthrough somewhere, and the district felt a strong need of a good manager, a man like comrade Stark was called to mind in the first place. Having ensured that he had already settled the matter at his last workplace, they offered him to go whereto a steady hand and good thoughtful head were required. Did comrade Stark complain about that? Never! On the contrary: he even was proud of such an attention to him from the party and did not feel at all that anything was standing in the way of his family life. (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 389).¹

Stark is a rolling stone that lives out of suitcases, though somehow he has managed to enter marriage and become a fond father.

The early Khvylovy's reviewers, his contemporaries, have already referred to the employment of contrast as one of the distinctive features of the writer's style. Mykola Chyrkov, for instance, noted, "The antithesis between humdrum existence and the allure of the revolution is one of the most beloved contrasts in the writings of Khvylovy" (Chyrkov, 1925, p. 41), whereas Oleksandr Leites (1926, p. 11) pointed to "naturalism and romanticism, captured fact and fictional grotesque, mean sarcasm

and lofty pathetics" entwined in the majority of his pieces of writing. In *A Happy Secretary*, we observe some of these contrasts when the narrator counters Stark's behaviour at work to the transformation into a gentle and caring father:

He loved Vova the way an affectionate and passionate father could love. Even Dusia (Stark's wife), a woman of submissive and meek kind, even she gave in to her love for her son. There was just a curly-haired "merry little one" in comrade Stark's private life (this was the name the father dubbed Vova with due to his constant smiling). However, he wasn't able to find much time to pay heed to his son and he often didn't see him for weeks on end: at times he would go to the administrative centre, at others he would stay in the backwoods, helping those underdeveloped. (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 390).

In this short story, we have an antithesis of personal (the longing of a man for his wife and son) and common (holding the responsibilities to the coal miners, the party authorities, the Soviet society), of one own desires vs. the call of the Party, i.e., the political tenor of the accounted events. There widens the gap between the state socialist rhetoric and the 'communist body' encouraged to neglect particular aspects of everyday life. In the citation quoted above, Khvylovy vividly underscores it by way of spacing each letter of the adjective 'private' out. Aside from the internal contrast, this story is an opposition to his earlier experimental writings that are viewed as the examples of expressionistic, impressionistic and even partly surrealist paradigm.

One of the ways to counter the harsh reality of state communism and to retain the chance to work during those turbulent times was irony and satire implicitly present in tackling the suppressed sociocultural issues. We may observe this retrospectively when juxtaposing the title of the story to the tragic ending of it. The attributive adjective *happy*, its synonyms and the meaning-bearing related words (Hayakawa, 1978; Apresyan, Botyakova, & Latysheva, 2000) describe the secretary's state of mind regarding the son, "All of a sudden, comrade Stark became pensive, and the image of his child, so dear to him, arose in his mind. This image caressed his eyes to the extent where he narrowed the lids with joy" (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 390). It is also employed for conveying Stark's ability to do his job in the best way possible:

Comrade Stark has already handled even the miner's pick well. When he took it in his hands, it did not sink irrevocably into the seam, as it would with the novices.

¹ Here and subsequently, unless indicated otherwise, translations from Ukrainian are by Eugene Lepokhin.

'What a lucky fellow!' he was talked about everywhere. 'Whatever he undertakes, he is already great at it... A happy secretary!' (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 391).

He was fortunate to find new lodging for the family and was anticipating for their arrival so much that:

He (confidentially speaking) even wanted to run out into the street, stop in the middle of it, and, like a boy, shout at the top of his lungs.

Look, how happy I am! I'll tell you what it is: there is no other happier secretary at all, both in social and private life! (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 392).

Each one and everything surrounding him was radiating this elevating vibe. Thus, we may consider the title relates to the text of the story itself: it is indeed about the secretary, who carries out the orders of the Party, is very young, handsome, industrious, hard-working pal and a happy family man. However, Stark tries to subdue his inner strives, feelings, longings, that is why others consider him to be a grim, rough person, who fills everybody with fear.

This may also be verified when we re-examine his name — Stark. In German, the word *stark* means 'physically strong or powerful' [Wahrig-Burfeind, 2011, p. 1405], "He climbed the most dangerous places, and within a month, there was no such a winze in the area that would not let his young body sleek with health in the minefield. He was already somersaulting the way the true miner was arguably able to do" (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 391). Concurrently *stark* is synonymous to 'leistungsfähig', 'hart', 'zäh' [Dudenredaktion, 2014, p. 848] — all these adjectives eventually describe the protagonist of the story. Mykola Khvylovy gives us the first hint to the story's twist in this. His name foreshadows the bitter result of the choice Stark is to make in favour of the society under state communism, thus living up to its requirements at the end. This is further pronounced when Stark envisions his son to become one of the leaders of the Party, for which Stark is ready to die right away:

There suddenly flashed a thought through his mind: as far as he goes, he may die, but what about his son? Would he immolate his merry little one, if the Party demanded so? Say, a supreme and an unexpected sacrifice? In case yes, would he still be as happy as he is at the moment? Comrade Stark gave a wave of the hand, as if someone really argued with him claiming, why should one speculate?! Does anyone require making a sacrifice from him? (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 393).

Mykola Khvylovy's modernistic outlook rested upon the notions of hopelessness and *ressentiment*. The contemporary Ukrainian scholar Yurii Bezkhutryi points out that almost in every story, short story or sketch the main characters are doomed either physically or morally, "Tragicness as the staple of Khvylovy's artistic world forms a proper pathos of all his texts without any exception" (Bezkhutryi, 2004, p. 81). The tragic outcome of *A Happy Secretary* is significant as well. However, we do not observe here any disrupted self-consciousness of the main character that is indicative of modernistic paradigm, as Yurii Bezkhutryi rightfully suggests, nor are we witnesses of infatuation with death. Yet, Khvylovy's character do reaches an impasse that leaves him emotionally devastated but kept in a state of thrall to a sovereign power. Hence, we may go further in defining Stark as an 'object body': a docile and governable one that results from sociopolitical oppressiveness produced by specific historical experience of totalitarian state management.

The setting of the story is the one that is intrinsic to the works of Khvylovy — Ukraine in the first decade under the Soviets. Although no battles, no insurgents, no Cheka men and agents, no revolutionary romanticism — these times are all gone. We have a totally committed person who fails to pass an exam on basic human ethics. This is not the first time Mykola Khvylovy uses the family bonds to juxtapose with the social obligations and duties. Khvylovyi already articulates this straight in his *My Self (Romantica)* («Ya (Romantyka)»), when homodiegetic narrator utters, "And I realize that I am a *chekist*, but still I remain a human being" (Khvylovy, 1960, p. 33). There is again this subtle irony of Khvylovy that emits from the title and the quoted words, if one is aware of the imminence of his deeds. The economic, the emotional, the intellectual future of the character has been compromised. He was the last one to hammer a sharp nail into his sanity, when killing the mother.

The style of *A Happy Secretary* is not so highly poetic in comparison with *My Self (Romantica)* that is defined by a profusion of descriptive adjectives and adverbs, but it succeeds in making its point. Marta Rudenko resumes it even more vividly than Hryhorii Kostiuk, "The one, who neglects the life of his son today, will disregard the lives of millions of other people tomorrow" (Rudenko, 2003, p. 117). The gap between people and their nature, which will widen at the end of the story, reveals an absolute division betwixt right and wrong, life and death. Khvylovy leaves his story with a dramatic, ambivalent ending: the reader encounters an ironic reversal in the sense that the decision to pursue

the new production mission instead to reunite with the family and the terminally ill child negates his previous achievements in the workplace.

The point of view used in *A Happy Secretary* is third-person omniscient. For example, after reading the second wire from his wife, Stark leaves the office shocked and emotionally ruined, reeling past the doorkeeper who believes the valorous fellow is drunk, “The secretary staggered out of his office, passed the surprised doorman round without a word (the doorman thought the heroic secretary was tipsy) and went outside. He went into the blue night and then suddenly he turned into the lane to the post office” (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 396). The syntagm *синя ніч* (blue night) with the adjective *синій* (blue), one of Khvylovy’s favourite colours, is also meaningful for conveying the essence of the story, more importantly — its ending. The significance of colours in Khvylovy’s literary discourse has already been studied by the scholars. They point out *blue* with its derivatives forms a larger scale of the writer’s both linguistic paradigm and mythopoetic system. Zoriana Hodunok explains:

Considering the time aspect of M. Khvylovy’s works, it is blue that is the symbol of the future, to which the characters aspire and which, as it has already been noted, can only be achieved either through death under anti-national, anti-humanistic communism, or by means of an escape from the drab realities of everyday life. (Hodunok, 2008, pp. 283–284).

Is Stark aware of what he is setting up? Is he capable of plotting his future as a successful employee, highly efficient and active? Unfortunately, no, as he has lost himself in the system that defines, gratifies and controls Stark’s needs. The invisible narrator, however, stays close to the central character, the secretary Stark, and the readers are presented to with his thoughts. He is fully revealed from outside and within.

Rhetorical figures of reiteration to convey irony, diversify the narration flow, amplify the high artistic value of the discourse

Another hallmark of the writer’s style, so prominent in his previous works, is the employment of repetition. In *A Happy Secretary*, this repetition is embodied in Stark’s thoughts about his son’s sacrificial demise to solve the unsettling ethical issues of the time. Thus, it intensifies the grave consequence of the way the things turn out. It is not solely Stark who is in the focus of Khvylovy’s scornful mocking, but the system that prevailed in post-intestine war Ukraine and the subsequent

way of life under it. The secretary is just (a pun of words) an unlucky lad because he has to choose what is initially wrong. Therefore, Hryhorii Kostiuk’s words are true to say that Stark is the Party loyalist, “A *bona fide* ‘lackey’ of the Party, no longer he is a living being. He has got neither fatherly, nor familial feelings. He is a robot. Furthermore, he is a cog in the callous party machine” (Kostiuk, 1982, pp. 16–17). The reiteration is also featured at the level of words and phrases:

Finally, comrade Stark had a stroke of luck finding a *suitable flat*. At first, the *flat* didn’t look quite *suitable*: a *room* with a *kitchen* and a small *pantry*. Then the *flat* changed its exterior. Comrade Stark was not going to cook something in the *kitchen* (he decided to settle the whole family in the dining room for the newcomers), which is why he converted the *kitchen* into a second *room*. As for the *pantry*, it proved to be not an altogether bad lavatory with a shower: every morning, he poured cold water over himself. (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 391). [emphasis added]

This excerpt demonstrates the compositional reprise — anadiplosis (‘flat’), which, in its turn, exposes the principal connection between the parts of the text combined around the concept of ‘flat’. The author emphasizes the importance of the described fact to the character through ‘appearance’ — ‘face’ (of the flat) correlation. In other instances, the repetition highlights the emotional state of mind of the character, e.g., most prominently with the adjective ‘happy’ in predicative position and those implying a similar notion, “The day, too, was unusually *happy*. The sun was *happy*, the blue sky was *happy*, the wide open space within the *happy* secretary’s eyeshot radiated joy” (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 392) [emphasis added]. The applied epanalepsis contributes to the rhythmical pace of the text. One may also spot iteration in the form of framing, as in the example below:

How *nice* it is to *return* home after a hard but efficient work, to *return* driving a Ford across summer steppe, and while poking his hand out in the window under the unsettling air (the car was rushing), to think about *meeting* his wife and son, whom he hasn’t *met* in about six weeks. Exceptionally *nice*! (Khvylovy, 1982a, p. 394) [emphasis added].

The reiteration grants the text with completeness and amplifies its underlying meaning — ‘nice’. Advanced repetition of the ‘return’ lexeme serves as a means of enhancing the emotional and logical content of the statement. Readers are given access

to the character's thoughts, rendered in the form of free indirect speech, which provides an account of Stark's thoughts. This bears a clear impression of the narrator's mediating involvement.

The structure of the story is classical, i.e., with its typical constituents — paratextual elements, but specific of Khvylovy's style: it has got a title (*A Happy Secretary*); a preface / commentary by the author, in which he defies another biting remarks of pro-communist reviewers regarding the ethical maxims of the story; the dedication to the eminent 20th century Ukrainian writer-satirist Ostap Vyshnia (true name Pavlo Hubenko). Coupled with another two stories (*The Last Day* and *The Future Miners*, «Maibutni shakhtari»), it forms a trilogy about the pit workers' issues and those related to this kind of trade. *A Happy Secretary* is divided into three structural parts. The title of any story and the discourse itself are always interrelated. In case of «Schaslyvyi sekretar», this connection is tangible by way of utilizing the adjective *happy*.

When we compare the arrangement of the parts or elements of the story *The Last Day*, we see it shares the same preface / commentary by Khvylovy as *A Happy Secretary*. No dedication is written. The titles of the stories do not reflect any concrete chronotope: there is no metaphorical relation to some historical facts or events that resonate in the discourse, age determination etc. *The Last Day* is divided into five structural parts / chapters. It may be viewed as more dramatic and existential than its predecessor, but at the same time with the traces of bitter irony. The story is about a coalface worker named Kravchuk. He started to work at the mines while being 17 years old. The fellow was very enthusiastic and anxious regarding everything that concerns the well-being of mines and miners. To stress this feature of the character, Mykola Khvylovy renders Kravchuk's ideas by way of repetition as well:

What was Kravchuk *thinking about* on this road? He was *thinking that* he was one of the best colliers, *that* it was very gratifying to be aware of *it*, and that there was nothing wrong about *it*. He was *thinking about* the *maladies* of the mine and how to get rid of these *maladies*. And while he was *thinking about it*, he fancied himself as a much-anticipated doctor, whom the settlement lacked. (Khvylovy, 1982b, p. 400) [emphasis added].

The author conveys the implications of the character's reflections by dint of amplification. The repetition of 'thinking about / thinking that' contributes to the enhancement of significance and expressiveness of speech. The worker fell in love with the wife of one of the engineering

managers. When it came to some romantic issues like displaying love and affection, he was shy and coy; however, he was very energetic, brave, zealous and fervent slogger. The title *The Last Day* refers to the intention of Kravchuk to declare his feelings to Olena Oleksandrivna who appears to be benevolent towards him (though it is unclear, we are never allowed to enter her mind, the narration is limited to the point of view of Kravchuk and at the same time marked by ubiquity). Her husband is supposed to be transferred to another region, so the miner rushes to confide to her. Each time, Kravchuk postpones his declaration of love due to different hindrances on his part. When rendering the flow of thoughts of the worker, heterodiegetic narrator shifts from the direct speech to free indirect one:

'It's about time I'll tell her everything,' Kravchuk thought. 'Everything, all and everything. I won't hide anything... How now, indeed, till when will I cry craven? I should immediately pull myself together... Sweet Jesus! How good it feels for him to walk with her, what a poignant enrapturing delight to feel her shoulder cuddled up to his.' (Khvylovy, 1982b, p. 409).

The reader observes concurrently the growing conflict between Kravchuk and the pitman Shrub, a much older perky, cocky fellow, envious of Kravchuk's vocational achievements as a shock worker. In the climax of the story, these two lines intertwine with a tragic outcome: the jealous colleague stabs a young worker, thus rendering Kravchuk's confession to the lady impossible. The ironic inversion exhibited in the short story is that the possibility of romance is extinguished by killing off Kravchuk with whom Khvylovy solicits the reader's identification. The writer invites the readers to a sympathetic alignment with the character of Kravchuk despite the obvious moral repercussions. The predicament of the miner is that of disability to speak out his feelings as opposed to secretary Stark who was given the chance to make it on his own, albeit he was tacit. The readers' identification is usually associated with the feelings of sympathy they may get for a character that is rooted in the evaluation of that character's moral worth. However, it is rather disputable what turns out to be viler: infidelity / disruption of one's family life or stepping outside the boundaries of family responsibilities.

As in the previous story, this one also contains foreshadowing components with reference to the title, exhibiting the pun of words. Olena appoints the meeting for Kravchuk the next day after their brief encounter. The man believes that she has already decided on something

in connection to him. So, the next day is to be the pivotal one:

'You also have a decisive day tomorrow, don't you?' inquired Olena Oleksandrivna while shaking collier by the hand.

'Yes, I do. A workplace competition with a neighbouring mine is due to end tomorrow. Tomorrow is the final day.'

'Don't say that,' the woman quavered in her voice. 'The day is crucial, but not the l a s t one. I want it to be day one. Ok?' (Khvylovy, 1982b, p. 411).

This utterance becomes again a harbinger of the inevitable, even more distinctly when Kravchuk ponders on the words of the lady:

'Now I will tell you everything and I will be all through straight with you,' he thought. 'Now you'll have to b r i d l e me. Today is a decisive day, both beneath and on the ground... The last day!'

She said, one shouldn't refer to it as 'the last one'. Kravchuk remembered her quavery voice protesting against the naming of the day as the l a s t, and then an unexpected anxiety of something wicked surged through his heart. (Khvylovy, 1982b, p. 414).

There is a rapid transition from direct to free indirect and indirect discourse. Similar to the previous story, the narrator is third-person subjective. The protagonist receives some veiled warning from the fate in the manner of the one in *A Happy Secretary*, but he is unable to recognize these signs.

Blue is again employed to reach the effect of irony. After working at night shift, Kravchuk was heading home to change the clothes, the morning was fondly blue, and he felt elated. As Nataliia Demediuk points out, blue may be interpreted as the colour of hope, well-being, happiness (Demediuk, 2011, p. 152). The writer has an adverse effect on the colour symbol this time. It does not suggest success for Kravchuk, but on the contrary, emphasizes the dialectical opposite of the perceived situation. This is particularly significant in the last passage of the text, where the reader observes the outcome of the fight between Kravchuk and Shrub as well as the sun "that ever so slowly, hardly visible, moved over the blue field of the summer morning sky and indifferently bypassed the still body" (Khvylovy, 1982b, p. 416). The narrator grants us access to the last images that arise in the dying mind of Kravchuk. The things we witness are again stylistically rendered by way of reiteration:

And so, the ray of morning light shone on before his eyes in something acutely disturbing, and he felt

an unimaginable pain around his heart. *And so, for an instant, a soggy drift flashed before his eyes as well as avalanches of coal, which he has mined a lot today on this decisive, last day. Finally, there appeared the face of Olena Oleksandrivna: at first, it was normal, then it began to grow smaller, and then suddenly, it vanished completely. Then he passed out once and for all.* (Khvylovy, 1982b, p. 416) [emphasis added].

The writer utilizes the compositional reprise of an anaphora ('and so...'). In the third sentence, he introduces the adverb 'then', which semantically repeats the combination 'and so' thus producing the effect of a climax finalizing it in the regrettable resolution. A separate technique employed in the text is a semantic gradation ('today on this decisive, last day'), which emphasizes the increasing significance level of the words. Due to the gradation of the words 'shone', 'flashed', 'appeared', the writer also increases expressiveness, while describing the character's last living moments.

The time of the plot events in *A Happy Secretary* covers a day and late night. It starts at 8 o'clock in the morning and ends late at night of the very day. The whole first structural part and a bit of the second one the narrator gives a background on Stark, his appearance, his nature, his attitude towards the job and the family. In *The Last Day*, the action takes place for two days. As in the previous story, the first structural part refers to social origin of the main character, his status, the type of work experience he had. In both stories, the events are rendered chronologically. The implied author does not take part in the described events, but his time goes by along the time of the narrated events. Besides, he is integral to the place his characters are put in.

In *The Last Day*, the everyday chronotope is more distinct than in *A Happy Secretary*. We find here things, phenomena that indicate the action takes place amidst the miners of Donbas region, Eastern Ukraine under the Soviet regime: coalface worker, driver, yield curve, trolley, cage, miner, collapse, waste pile, haulage man, the mining committee, procurement station, drift, pick hammer, bed, barn, winze. The space where action takes place is vaster in *The Last Day* than in *A Happy Secretary*. It is restricted to the temporary apartment where Stark resides. The narrator informs us about the distinctive features of the dwelling the protagonist is in, his routine regarding making it habitable. We also follow the secretary in the car to his place of work and back home. During the trips, Stark is contemplating about the way he will be happy to reunite with the family. Thus, we may conclude that Stark is defined by the chronotope of the road.

Conclusion

The stories under study are not abundant in words that describe the writer's idiolect, though there are some lexemes, which signify the setting, socially and historically concrete: comrade (*tovarysh*), shock worker (*udarnyk*), engineering manager (*tekhruk*), party member (*partiiets*), party meeting (*partzbory*), district committee (*raikom*), socialist emulation (*sotszmahannia*), wealthy peasant (*kulak*) etc. In *A Happy Secretary*, the word 'comrade' functions to underline the Stark's membership in the USSR society, possibly also hinting at the final choice the clerk will make in favour of the Party to which he obediently belonged. The endings of two stories stress the existential and irremediable nature of the human condition.

We note the presence of socio-historical chronotope in *A Happy Secretary* and *The Last Day*. The grounds of our views lie in the fact that socio-historical chronotope tends toward pathos and an ironic distance in narration; describes the way in which a man and the society regard and behave toward each other; the tragedy of the loss of personal, communal time and place

(Nonna Kopystianska). The stories are structured by a kind of flip where the protagonists try to change identity: Stark is a family man who is as extremely happy when there arrives an opportunity to see his son, a blue-eyed merry little one (*smikhunchyk*). At another part of his routine, Stark is serving as a manager at the coalmines in Donbas. Similarly, Kravchuk is split by his inner turmoil: the discrepancy between his potential love affair and the harsh feud with Shrub.

Therefore, it is obvious that even in his late artistic career Mykola Khvylovy was following the tenets of his earlier writings, both thematically and stylistically. The stories indicate that beneath the historical surfaces an unchanging armature can be found: production and subjection are the mainstays of a normalised society; the needs of an individual are monitored and not satisfied; a person is the body, whether individual or collective, regarded as a nexus of often-competing forces, affects and ideologies. It is notably prominent in *A Happy Secretary*, where Stark is, in fact, unhappy. He has to move each time, his family is always left behind, he is left with his obligations and that is it.

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**«ПІСНЯ ЗАЛИШАЄТЬСЯ УСЕ ТІЄЮ Ж»: «НЕКАНОНІЧНІ» ОПОВІДАННЯ
МИКОЛИ ХВИЛЬОВОГО Й «КАНОНІЧНИЙ» АВТОРСЬКИЙ СТИЛЬ**

У статті проаналізовано вибрані малі твори «неканонічного» Миколи Хвильового («Щасливий секретар», «Останній день»). З'ясовано, що письменник послуговувався набором художніх засобів і методів, які попередньо вже довели свою ефективність у розкритті поглядів митця на тогочасні проблеми. Серед них слід виокремити різні види стилістичних повторів, антитезу, іронію як спосіб критики ідеологічних розбіжностей. Ще раз наголошено на значенні у творах прозаїка синього кольору як одного із засобів створення стилістичного протиставлення явного контексту і прихованого підтексту. У центрі досліджуваних текстів — доля нової радянської людини, старанної, працелюбної й покірної, здатної мати особисте життя, але приреченої на невдачу через певні безвідкличні зобов'язання. Письменник ілюструє екзистенційні дилеми, з якими стикаються його персонажі, шляхом підсилення іронічних аспектів дискурсу. Комплексний підхід до досліджуваної проблеми забезпечено поєднанням культурно-історичного, семантико-стилістичного, порівняльно-типологічного, описово-аналітичного методів. Розглянуто наратологічні й архітектонічні особливості оповідань, виокремлено різні види хронотопу — побутовий, соціально-історичний, дороги. Отримані результати дослідження будуть корисні всім, хто займається вивченням індивідуально-авторського світосприйняття українського письменника, проблемою особистості у творчості митця та низки українських прозаїків 20–30-х років ХХ ст, аналізом розвитку української літератури першої половини ХХ ст., досліджує рецепцію прози автора літературною критикою і літературознавством, фахівцям у галузі художньої антропології та наратологічного аналізу прози М. Хвильового. Вони також будуть актуальними для продовження студій як пізньої прозової творчості автора, так і зрілої, вивчення текстів останньої фази з позиції міжтекстової взаємодії (наприклад, оповідання «Ревізор»).

Ключові слова: новела, оповідання, герой, письменник, дискурс, структура, хронотоп, повторення, наратор, екзистенційний, іронія.

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