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SELF-ALIENATION AS MANIFESTATION OF NARRATIVE STRATEGY IN THE STORY "THE PAINTER" BY TARAS SHEVCHENKO

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The article focuses on the narrative analysis of the novel "The Painter" by T. Shevchenko in order to trace how the narrative strategy of the text contributes to the actualization of the writer's self-alienation phenomenon from his own colonized "I". The analysis is based on the system proposed by Gerard Genette: the types of narration (mimesis and diegesis) are defined, how the narration is focalized, who tells the story (types of narrators), how time is expressed in the story, how words and thoughts (discourses) are represented. The phenomenon of self-alienation is considered from the point of view of Hegel as one of the forms of alienation, as the ability of the individual in some sense to be free from their desires. As a result, they reach a higher degree of self-awareness. In the story the self-alienation expresses Taras Shevchenko's desire to distance himself from the traumatic colonial experience and isolate himself from the part of the hostile and unacceptable things in himself. He transforms his own biography unfolding before the reader a new story of redemption from serfdom: an intelligent, knowledgeable Ukrainian helps a talented young Russian artist to gain freedom. But he does not have enough strength to develop his own talent and eventually dies. In the madness and death of the Russian Shevchenko's will metaphorically appears from his colonized "I", self-alienation. The writer's use of self-irony can be traced in the written work in the humiliation and physical destruction of the former serf image. The narrative strategy of the work such as: the story on behalf of the intradiegetic homodiegetic narrator being present in the artistic world, the internal focalization of the story, the introduction of additional narrators (letters – the principle of "a text in the text"), intellectual narrative distance between the main narrator and the young artist serves as an instrument creating the phenomenon of self-alienation in the story.

Keywords: self-alienation, narrative strategy, narratological analysis, narrator, focalization, discourse, narrative distance, irony.

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САМОВІДЧУЖЕННЯ ЯК ВИЯВ НАРАТИВНОЇ СТРАТЕГІЇ В ПОВІСТІ "ХУДОЖНИК" ТАРАСА ШЕВЧЕНКА

Коваленко К. С.

У статті представлено спробу нарративного аналізу повісті Т. Шевченка "Художник" для простеження того, як нарративна стратегія тексту сприяє реалізації у творі феномену самовідчуження письменника від власного колонізованого "Я". Аналіз має в основі систему, запропоновану Жераром Женетом: визначено типи нарації (мімесис та дієгезис), як фокалізовано оповідь, хто розповідає історію (типи нараторів), як в історії виражено час, як репрезентовано слова та думки (дискурси). Феномен самовідчуження розглядаємо з позиції Г. Гегеля як одну з форм відчуження, як здатність індивіда в певному сенсі до звільнення від своїх бажань, у результаті чого він досягає більш високого ступеня усвідомлення власного Я. Самовідчуження в повісті виражає прагнення Тараса Шевченка відсторонитися від травматичного колоніального досвіду, самоізолюватися від частини ворожого й неприйняттого в самому собі. Він трансформує власну біографію, розгортаючи перед читачем нову історію викупу з кріпацтва: інтелігентний, освічений українець допомагає здобути свободу талановитому молодому російському художникові. Але той не має достатньо сили, щоб реалізувати власний талант, і врешті гине. У божевіллі та загибелі росіянина метафорично постає воля Шевченка від свого колонізованого "я", самовідчуження. У пониженні та фізичному знищенні у творі образу колишнього кріпака простежується застосування письменником прийому самоіронії. Нарративна стратегія твору, а саме: оповідь від імені інтрадієгетичного гомодієгетичного наратора, що присутній у художньому світі, внутрішня фокалізація оповіді, введення в текст додаткових нараторів (листи – принцип "текст у тексті"), інтелектуальна нарративна дистанція між основним наратором та молодим художником – виступає інструментом, що творить феномен самовідчуження в повісті.

Ключові слова: самовідчуження, нарративна стратегія, наратологічний аналіз, оповідач, наратор, фокалізація, дискурс, нарративна дистанція, іронія.

Introduction. The world is ruled by narratives. This means that the heard thought and word shape a person's thinking, determine his/her reactions and behavior in various life situations especially crisis ones. Ukraine did not have its own statehood for a long time and was a part of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires being in a state of inequality, exploitation and dictatorship. The main thing was a ban to express one's own will. The above mentioned was reflected in the worldview of Ukrainians forming the psychology of a colonized man. The years of independence have not brought liberation of the worldview of Ukrainians from mental slavery. Olena Yurchuk states in the monograph "In the Shadow of the Empire: Ukrainian Literature in the Light of Postcolonial Theory": "The modern Ukrainian space signals a change of movement from

postcolonialism to neocolonialism, a return to the imperial center as a significant unit. Such a value vector change was caused by the attitude of powerful forces in the Ukrainian political establishment to return a Ukrainian colonial status (a complex "Ukrainian – collaborationist"). The majority of the Ukrainian nation is affected by the malorossian indifference. It is manifested in a detached attitude to national issues" [10: 3]. The ideas of "Russian world" and Kyiv as a "common cradle for three fraternal peoples" continued to exist not only in Russia but also in the minds of Ukrainians leading to the annexation of Crimea in 2014, protracted hybrid war in Donbas and eventually resulted in the full-scale war between Russia and Ukraine that began in February 2022. Narratives infected with the virus of colonialism revived the war.

R. Moroz states in the article "Narratives in psychological theory and practice": "The nature of human interaction with one's own experience can be studied through narratives including messages or stories created by people to describe and arrange their own experience and way of life" [5: 719]. Speech itself creates our world and our beliefs. According to the researcher, "the term "narrative" was borrowed from historiography embracing the historical event that did not arise as a result of natural historical processes, but in the context of the story about these processes. It is inextricably linked with the interpretation of this event" [5: 720]. "By telling our story we do not only form a sequence of our lives, but also interpret it" [5: 720]. In the context of the conversation about colonial consciousness and reflection on such a traumatic experience, the figure of Taras Shevchenko and his history of liberation from serfdom are a striking example. According to Oksana Zabuzhko, "Shevchenko was redeemed but not bought." According to Olena Yurchuk in the novel "The Painter" Taras Shevchenko tries to get rid of the colonial self by transforming his own biography where the imperial source was higher and saving (there were the people of the empire who gave the poet liberation from serfdom) and the colonial source appeared lower and oppressed (dependent childhood in Ukraine)" [10: 95].

Analysis of basic researches and publications. The most famous contemporary researchers of Taras Shevchenko's work are Oksana Zabuzhko (philosophical analysis of Shevchenko's myth of Ukraine), Valeriia Smilianska (analysis of literary texts poetics, scientific interpretation of literary texts), Olena Yurchuk (analysis of work in terms of postcolonial theory), Roksana Kharchuk (study of the writer's work reception). We also note studies that use such a relatively new method in

Ukrainian literary criticism as narratological analysis. In the article "Narrative optics of Taras Shevchenko's poem "Kateryna" by Mykola Tkachuk the narrative strategy of the work is investigated. Narratology or narrative theory, according to Peter Barry, "is the science of how narratives create meaning and what the basic mechanisms and procedures are common to all of them" [1: 264]. Its task is "not to read and interpret separate stories but to explore the nature of the story itself as a phenomenon and a cultural practice" [1: 264]. Gerard Genette is the most prominent narratologist. He proposed a pattern to study the narrative strategy of the work: to determine the narration type (mimesis or diegesis) as a focal narrative, who tells the story, how time is expressed in the story, how words and thoughts are represented.

The purpose of the article is an attempt to apply the method of narratological analysis proposed by J. Genette in the work "Figures" (1972) to analyze a novel "The Painter" by Taras Shevchenko and trace how the narrative strategy contributes to the actualization of the self-alienation phenomenon in the text.

Presentation of the main research material. In the monograph "Shevchenko's Myth of Ukraine. An Attempt of Philosophical Analysis" Oksana Zabuzhko speaks of "the split of Shevchenko's life into visibility and essence" [3]. She notes that "Shevchenko's problem of reconciling "the external world "... and "the substantial one"... is a classic problem of Ukrainian dualism forced and unavoidable for any non-independent nation, a mismatch of its relevant historical existence mastered by the colonizer with being alone" [3: 74]. Then she continues: "At the individual level such a dichotomy serves as a drama of existential choice (not just between the legal 'stranger' and the disenfranchised 'one's own' but between two cultures within oneself, one of which overshadows

the other)" [3: 75]. "The existential dichotomy is that we are completely alone but we can't do without others. We realize that we are separated by insurmountable obstacles and at the same time we understand that human happiness depends on uniting with others like yourself" [4: 56]. But it is impossible to unite with the enemy who destroys a human as a person.

Moreover, the problem is exacerbated if this hostile nature is typical for the person as a part of identity or life experience. To alienate oneself means to end one's relationship with something, to distance oneself from someone or something, to isolate oneself from the enemy and unacceptable part in oneself. The problem of human alienation and self-alienation is often associated with the name of Karl Marx and his theory of social development. Existentialists of the twentieth century also dealt with this question. J. - P. Sartre was the first to notice the ambivalent attitude to the Other: the desire to unite is opposed to alienation, the desire to resist total subordination to the Other [4: 161]. According to Hegel, this is a form of alienation; the ability of the individual in some sense to be free from their desires; as a result, he reaches a higher level of awareness of his own self. Nadolnyi I. F. reveals the concept of "alienation" within Hegel's philosophical system: the German thinker points to the "principle of the identity of thought and being. According to his concept, true being is thinking and essential thinking is existing as an objective reality. Hegel denotes this objectively existing science as "spirit", "world spirit" which is invisible but it acts as a substance in every person going through different stages of formation. Initially the world spirit exists as a principle that must be realized through its own activities.

The activity of the spirit is a process of objectification and de-objectification of its essence. At the same time this process of actions is a process of cognition, transformation of the material

world into spiritual wealth, i.e. objectification. Hegel's process of objectification is at the same time a process of alienation of the spirit. Thus, the world according to Hegel is the result of the objectification and self-alienation of the world spirit [6].

In the novel "The Painter" Taras Shevchenko alienates himself from the colonial source telling the story of the redemption of a talented Russian serf. Then he shows the tragedy of the young man and his death, thus symbolically hiding colonial and dependent nature in the cemetery. One can trace Shevchenko's enactment of his desire to separate himself from the Empire.

In the monograph "The Holy Word of Fire... "Taras Shevchenko: Poetics" Valeriia Smilianska notes that "in his early works Shevchenko strongly deviates from the narrative style of his literary predecessors and contemporaries who rarely delved into the inner world of the character to tell a story from his position. It means to see the world through characters' eyes, experience their feelings and speak their language" [7: 203]. The scientist points out that "the very fabric of his story is subjectively heterogeneous, woven from voices expressed by different views of the characters" [7: 204]. We see these features in the story "The Painter". The story of a young talented guy sounds in three voices (narrator, letters from the guy himself, letters from a friend of the narrator Mykhailov). The reader delves into the inner world of the characters, the story is told in the first person. The analysis suggests the usage of the narratological method.

The intradiegetic and homodiegetic narrator being present in the literary world begins to tell the life story of one of his acquaintances, who he has a heartfelt affection to:

"It's only the third time I see my new acquaintance but I have already become close to him, I have already become attached to him, I have already fallen in love with him ... His physiognomy was

ugly at first but then became more attractive to me from hour to hour" [9: 3]. The narrator depicts him from the position "above" from the first lines:

"My hero, too, although not so brilliant, nevertheless, began his artistic career by grinding ocher and mummy in millstones and painting floors, roofs and fences.

"A joyless, hopeless undertaking. And how many of you, lucky genius artists who started differently?" [9: 1]. The narrator evaluates the activities of the ward. He seems older, more experienced and these are not empty words: the reader will see the care, concern for the fate of the young painter by the narrator:

"The boy (because it really was a boy of fourteen or fifteen)..." [10: 2], "the next day at ten o'clock in the morning I dressed him again and took him to Karl Pavlovych and as the father hands over his beloved son to the teacher" [9: 24]. But at the same time the narrator has an ambivalent attitude towards the young artist, he feels sympathy and resistance at the same time: "A rare quick rapprochement cost me nothing. Especially with crooked and oblique people: they made me know myself. No matter how many times I met them, at least one of them was a decent person. Pure rubbish" [9: 3]. Here the narrator indirectly comments the history of his relationship with the lad-serf.

The story is internally focal, we see events through the narrator's eyes; these are actually his memories. He records his thoughts in details: "Why, the question is, do these personified angels, these representatives of living virtue on earth, almost always have such a sad, such a bitter fate? Probably because they are angels in the flesh." [9: 1] (narrator's discourse), impressions of St. Petersburg: "The Neva is calm and like a gigantic mirror reflects in itself with all the details the majestic portico of the Rumiantsev Museum, the corner of the senate and the red curtains in the house of Countess Laval. In the long winter nights, this house was lit inside and the

red curtains burned like fire against a dark background" (a mimetic image method): "Once having fully enjoyed this miraculous picture, I went to the Summer Garden to rest.

When I happened to be in the Summer Garden, I did not stop in any alley decorated with marble statues" [9: 2] (a diegetic image method). He mentions the circle of people he communicates with: "The Old Man Venetsianov", V.A. Zhukovskiy. We also see the boy-painter through his eyes. The narrator subtly notices the peculiarities of his behavior and reaction (attributive discourse) and accurately conveys his words (quoted discourse). It indicates the extraordinary attention to the person of the boy:

"I don't do anything," he answered **shyly**. "I'm going to work but on the way I stopped by the garden " [9: 2], "... he took out a quarter of gray writing paper from his bosom and gave it to me timidly " [9: 2], "I took his trembling hand" [9: 2]. He also captures in details and meticulously all the peculiarities of interaction with him and his own feelings: "I greeted him and held out my hand to him; he rushed to the hand and wanted to kiss. I pulled back my hand: I was embarrassed by his servility" [9: 3] (internal focalization). Analyzing the poetics of the writer's works Valeriia Smilianska points to "the constant and comprehensive orientation of Shevchenko's style on the reader... Such a position of the observer seeing events in their own vortex enhances first of all the realism of the portrayed events and most importantly creates the effect of presence and involvement of the reader in the developed circumstances. The reader feels like a witness to the events unfolding right before his eyes" [7: 217]. The formation of such an impression is facilitated by the intradiegetic homodiegetic narrator and the story with internal focalization noticed in the text.

The narrator constructs his own storytelling. There is prolepsis in the text (the narrator runs ahead) hinting to the

reader at the end of the story supporting the intrigue and interest to it: "Why, then, the question is, these personified angels, these representatives of living virtue on earth almost always have such a sad, such a bitter fate? Probably because they are angels in the flesh" [9: 1], "[the master of the young serf - K. K.] although he agreed, he still perceived it as a prank absolutely leading to nothing but death. He almost guessed wrong" [9: 7].

Shevchenko uses the principle of "author's mask" in the work. Let us note that neither the narrator (Ukrainian by origin, a man of knowledge and well-mannered), nor his protégé (the Russian serf) have names. "The mask is a means of creating a qualitatively new image, a mediator between the "real" face (person, object, phenomenon, sign, information, etc.) and his image as a new entity (appearance, status). The author's mask is often associated with motives of duality, mirroring, mystification, ambiguity of the author's position, self-parody, self-reminiscences, self-allusions, travesty, stylization to other people's voices" [2]. Knowing the history of redemption of Taras Shevchenko himself from serfdom the reader can easily trace common features from the history of the young artist in the work: "Karl Briullov painted a portrait of Zhukovskiy and Zhukovskiy as well as Count Vilhorskyy offered this same portrait to the august family for 2,500 rubles in banknotes. They released my student for this money. And the old man Venetsianov as he himself put it played the role of a zealous and noble broker in this good deed" [9: 23]. Shevchenko himself mentions his ransom in his Autobiography: "In 1837 Soshenko introduced me to the conference secretary of the Academy of Arts V.I. Hryhorovych with a request to free me from my misfortune. Hryhorovych passed this request to V. A. Zhukovskiy. He previously bargained with my landlord and asked K. P. Briullov to draw a portrait of Zhukovskiy to place it in a private lottery. A great man Briullov

immediately agreed and soon he had a portrait of Zhukovskiy ready. Zhukovskiy with the participation of Count M. Y. Vilhorskyy arranged a lottery for 2,500 rubles in banknotes and this price was used to buy my will in 1838, April 22" [8]. We trace the same surnames, the same amount of money that was paid. Thus, the "author's mask" is used for self-parody in the story. As it was already stated above, Shevchenko creates a new story of his redemption in order to alienate himself from the traumatic experience.

The illusion of seriousness, reality of the depicted events is also strengthened by the author's application of the "text in text" principle. Having told the story of the boy's ransom, the narrator notes that he left St. Petersburg and never saw his "beloved" as he calls him. Then the reader can figure out the future fate of the young artist from the letters shared by the narrator: "I intend to finish his story with his own letters" [9: 25].

So, one more homodiegetic intradiegetic narrator is introduced into the text, his story is also internally focal. The artist tells the narrator about his life, the narrator shares letters with the reader: "my unforgettable benefactor" That's how I live today! I hang around masquerades, I dine in a tavern, I waste money. And you know what occupied me the most during this time? It's fair to say. But it is necessary, necessary because it would be a sin for me to hide any thought or feeling from you. I was a real child at that time. I was most interested then in my new waterproof raincoat. Isn't it strange? The festive outfit amuses me" [9: 44]. The letters reveal the intellectual narrative distance between the narrator and the boy (the reader can draw parallels and compare the way of life and their hobbies): "I'm not writing you anything else now - it's boring and I don't want to bore you with my monotonous message" [9: 46], "I bothered you with my neighbors. But what to do? According to the proverb: "what the heart thinks the tongue

speaks" [9: 54]. It indicates emotional intimacy in the relationship.

The narrator tells the final part of the story sharing the letters of another friend – Mykhailov (homodiegetic intradiegetic narrator, internal focalization): "Your friend, brother, a fool. And what a fool is. Since the creation of the world there has never been such an extraordinary fool. And who are you writing about? About the fool" [9: 67], "Is he worth thinking about and writing such hilarious letters as you write? Leave him alone, a lost man and nothing more" [9: 70]. In such a way the text has one more look at the former serf but the person who does not have any sympathy or friendly feelings to him.

The young artist failed to realize his talent and the reader sees him at the hospital for the insane in the last pages of the work: "My God, what a sad occurrence – a man disfigured by madness! I could not stay a spectator of this sad image for several minutes" [9: 71]. It is typical that after the death of the pupil the narrator notes that he left St. Petersburg forever (Shevchenko symbolically said goodbye to all the imperial things).

Madness and then the death of a former serf (a young Russian) metaphorically means the will of Shevchenko from his colonized "I", the escape from "I" and self-alienation.

Knowing that within the image of a boy-painter Shevchenko depicts the essence that he wants to alienate himself, that is, to get rid of the colonial nature in himself, the writer's ironic attitude to himself is understood in the words "my hero" at the beginning of the work, and then - "foundling", "beloved". The word "hero" is associated with something high, dramatic but the behavior, lifestyle, and a final part of the character's life are far from that. An even harsher description of the young artist sounds in Mykhailov's letters. Shevchenko destroys the essence of the Russian serf, exposes him in the worst light as weak, weak-willed, dependent,

useless and therefore as a part of the imperial nature that was typical for him.

Conclusions and research prospects. Thus, we can state that in the novel "The Painter" Taras Shevchenko symbolically creates two incarnations of his own "I" – the narrator – a well-mannered and intelligent Ukrainian and a former Russian serf, weak and reckless to rethink and reformat his own life experience. To create the protagonists the writer uses the principle of "author's mask": the story is led by an intradiegetic homodiegetic narrator (he is present in the literary world and plays an important role in the life of the young artist). The story is internally focal (the reader perceives the artistic world with the narrator).

The narrator structures the story, prolepsis is traced in the text. To create the illusion of the story authenticity the author introduces letters of the young artist to the narrator into the text of the story and the narrator presents them to readers. The presence of the letters enables us to trace the intellectual narrative distance between the narrator and his pupil. The difference in education and worldview of Ukrainians (strong) and Russians (weak) is emphasized involuntarily. The episode with the madness of the former serf and his death as well as the fact that the narrator leaves St. Petersburg forever testify to the writer's desire to alienate himself from his own colonized "I" and to consolidate Ukrainian nature as "high" and self-sufficient and Russian one as "low" and dependent. Shevchenko ironizes himself humiliating and then destroying the essence of the young Russian artist.

The story narrative strategy contributes to the creation of the self-alienation phenomenon. In the future it is possible to systematically apply the method of narratology within the works of Taras Shevchenko and study the narrative strategies of his texts.

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