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**ОБРАЗ МИТЦЯ В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ КУЛЬТУРНОМУ ПРОСТОРИ**

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**The image of male / female artist  
in Ukrainian literature at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries  
in the gender aspect**

*The study examines gender issues in the works of Ukrainian writers on the border of the 19th and 20th centuries, whose main heroes and heroines are representatives of art. In the dramaturgical works of this time, due to the departure from the social issues, the problems of gender equality and the possibility of choosing their life path by women actresses are intensified. This topic today remains an almost unexplored in scientific works, which determines the relevance and scientific novelty of our article. The purpose of the study is to consider the processes of modernization of Ukrainian literature in the context of gender and feminist issues, as well as to analyze the peculiarities of writers' interpretation of images of artists in prose and drama using general scientific approaches and comparative typological method. The research results allows to state that such writers as O. Konisky and H. Khotkevych seek to reveal the peculiarities of the*

*worldview of their characters. At the same time, the attitude of the heroes towards the female gender is traditional, the chosen ones of the musicians – main literary personages – should be female associates who fully support the lofty thoughts and deeds of their husbands. Actors and actresses in the plays by M. Starytsky and I. Karpenko-Kary raise the most difficult issues of family life, fidelity and betrayal of wives and husbands in marriage, life in a civil marriage and others that continue to be relevant in our time. L. Starytska-Cherniakhivska, Lesia Ukrainka and O. Kobylanska, going beyond gender issues in the direction of feminist views, transfer the emphasis in their plays and short prose to the tragedy of a talented woman who devoted herself to art. Thus, Ukrainian writers of the studied period considered in sufficient detail the problem of gender relations in their modern society, in particular, the issue of family betrayal in its interpretation by representatives of the opposite sexes, and built a kind of hierarchy of relations between women and men.*

**Keywords:** *Ukrainian drama; artists; modernism; issues of gender and feminism; sex; marriage; short prose.*

### **Statement of the problem.**

One of the peculiarities of renewal of the thematic range of Ukrainian literature at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries there was a mass appeal of poets, novelists and dramatists to the theme of the life and work of artists, both male and female ones, their connections with society, and the specifics of perception of them by the usual, non-artistic, environment. The difference of presenting this spectrum of topics in Ukrainian literature was that the problems of artists, compared to Western European literature (J.-B. Molière's "Versailles Impromptu", V. Sardou's "Tosca", A. Dumas's "Kean, or disorder and genius", H. Murger's "Scènes de la vie de bohème" ("Scenes of Bohemian Life"), É. Zola's "The creation", etc.) were formulated more late. So, the gender issues, the themes of emancipation and maximalism of the female artist entered into Ukrainian literature almost simultaneously with the theme of the difficult lot of the male artist. The trend of feminization of Ukrainian literature was manifested in the fact that women, Lesia Ukrainka, L. Starytska-Cherniakhivska, L. Yanovska, O. Kobylanska and others, for the first time in a century entered in the circle of leading writers:

“...advanced women of that time were looking for space for activity, an opportunity to realize internal, spiritual needs. They had to break patriarchal traditions both in everyday life and in the economic and spiritual spheres of activity. And men were not always ready to accept this female expression of will, they often perceived it hostilely” (Chernova, 2021).

It is quite logical that this cohort of women writers, as well as the male writers most sensitive to this trend of the time, presented the type of “new woman” in their works.

We will remind that at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, researchers began to study the issue of gender in the works of Ukrainian modernist writers (Aheieva, 2003; Hundorova, 2002; Zabuzhko, 2007; Zborovska, 1998; Pavlychko, 2002; Taran, 2005; Chukhym, 2000), as well as the concepts of feminism and masculinity, which come out in the worldview of the sexes and the formation of stereotypes related to social roles and social expectations (Oksamytna, 2004; Omelchuk, 2005). But even after these works, some literary critics, turning to the image of the artist, for example, in the work of M. Kotsiubynsky (Bohuslavska, 2018) and V. Vynnychenko (Matvieieva, 2022), bypassed gender issues in their research. Along with this, two dissertations were defended in recent years, in which the attention of literary critics is directly focused on the gender aspect, but in Ukrainian literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Bashkyrova, 2019, Shaf, 2019).

As for the explorations of Western European and American researchers, their interests have recently ranged from the Mahabharata (Brodbeck, & Black, 2007) to modern English (Sacido-Romero, & Lojo-Rodriguez, 2018) and Latin American literature (Staniland, 2016).

Returning to the topic of our article, it should be noted that literary critics go in their research in two directions: (1) gender analysis of works of Ukrainian literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and (2) the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. At the same time, none of the researchers has yet turned to the understanding of the image of the artist in Ukrainian literature on the border of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in the gender aspect. This determines the *relevance and scientific novelty* of our article.

***The purpose of the study*** is to examine the processes of modernization of Ukrainian literature in the context of gender and feminist issues on the example of works of art, as well as to analyze the peculiarities of writers' interpreting the images of artists, in prose and drama.

***Methods of the research.*** When writing the article, general scientific approaches and comparative typological method were used.

### **Research results.**

In O. Konysky's novel "Music by Pavlo Drantus" (1883), the hero, Pavlo Drantus, is a teacher who gives music lessons on the piano, plays the piano well and even better the violin, because he received a good musical education. From individual details scattered throughout the work, it becomes clear to the reader that the hero not only works, but, sharing the views of the populists, also does something to spread their ideas among young people. It is to such a hero that the author entrusts his assessment of his contemporary society, which "darker than the dark night; <...> neither light nor air; breathe nothing The best time for bankers and all kinds of demoralizers" (Konysky, 1899: 152). At the same time, the violinist looks ahead confidently, because he believes in the young generation of his time: "I breathe for the best, with hope for the best, with hope for our youth, whom we have raised..." (Konysky, 1899: 152).

Drantus also believed in the musical talent of the young girl Zoya, who had just graduated from the gymnasium and became his student. Under the musician's guidance, Zoya improves her violin playing, because "she has a spark of God's fire", she understands music and can play well" (Konysky, 1899: 149). It is clear that music quickly unites two talented violinists, and then their souls, because the real game makes one "completely forget the environment, people and be transferred to another environment, to an ideal environment, to the environment of poetry and beauty" (Konysky, 1899: 150).

Over time, Drantus is forced to leave the town, because otherwise he would be arrested for public activity. At first, Zoya intends to go with her lover, but then stays at home.

The hero-narrator does not explain what changes took place in the soul of the heroine during the time that Drantus was away. But from

especial hints it becomes clear that the girl had several ways of her future life in separation from her lover. The first path was marked by her brother, teacher Kushch, with whom Drantus rented a room: "...Zoya has hands and a head: she will earn her own money: we will teach you; we will learn the violin; she plays well!.." (Konysky, 1899: 149). That is, it is the way of hard work, which can provide not only the means to live, but also bring joy through its benefit to society.

The second way is related to the fact that Kush eventually becomes the head of the bank. His house begins to smell of big money and luxury. And the girl could not resist this temptation. For four years, while Drantus was away, the girl's spiritual degradation was going on, during this time she was captured by "rich brothers", "she was enveloped in the atmosphere of marriage, rich, luxurious", she "could not resist the desire to live on her own, lavish with their fortunes, her own life without brother's care" (Konysky, 1899: 158, 161). But it is clear that a girl will be able to become rich when she marries, that is, sells herself for a large profit. Indeed, although Zoya's husband was "old, gray-haired, yellow-eyed", at the same time he had many shares of various "banks, railroads and sugar factories" (Konysky, 1899: 162).

As we can see, Konysky, perhaps for the first time in Ukrainian literature, turns to a new, contemporary image of a woman who can build her own path in life, be independent and exempt, but who acts according to old stereotypes, choosing, for big money, dependence on unloved husband.

The news of Zoya's marriage on the eve of Drantus' return home at the event level of the novel leads to unexpected results: after playing the violin for the last time in front of the Kushch family, the musician breaks it in front of witnesses, and then he himself dies under the wheels of the train. At the psychological level, such an act of the hero is understandable. The beloved girl betrayed the hero's ideas, his high hopes, by which he lived, because she was captivated by the greatness of money, his faith in happiness with Zoya was lost. In addition, Drantus consistently implements his life principles, which he spoke about earlier: "God forbid, if I don't see difference among our generation, and those that we brought up! God forbid, if I lose hope in our youth, in their selfless love and work

for the people!..I would immediately put a bullet <...> or a noose around my neck” (Konysky, 1899: 152).

Let’s pay attention to one more point. The hero-narrator of Konysky’s novel, talking about his friend, remarks that Drantus “felt lonely, solitary; he heard that beside his soul there is no other soul, close to it, such as his soul; he heard that there is no other heart beside his heart that would burn him with the fire of pure love...” (Konysky, 1899: 147). That is, obviously, the writer followed by male heroes, see only one possible path for young inquisitive talented girls: to become courageous girlfriends and wives who fully share the views of their husbands supporting them in difficult life conflicts and carrying fire of pure undisturbed love for his chosen ones through the all their lives.

In the center of H. Khotkevych’s story “‘Caprice’ by Schubert” (1898) is also a talented musician, cellist N. He is an intellectual who has become disappointed in his ideals and hopes, who is looking for the meaning of life, who has realized his detachment from the people. The hero tells a random listener that he was never able to put populist ideas into practice in his life, that he understood that life is not lived as it should be, and that his work is far from the people’s requests, for the benefit of which the intelligentsia should work, but which he does not know at all. Like Drantus, the hero admits that “this situation is suffocating, oppressive, you want movement, intelligent conversation – but where to get it?” (Khotkevych, 1929: 52). But the world view of the cellist is more tragic than that of Drantus: “Or maybe I know someone like that? <...>Somehow they are all <...> worthless, timid. They have nothing to do with anything, nor with the foundations of any struggle there. Try to start a conversation with him not on a completely everyday topic – he will either answer you with some idiotic-indifferent phrase, or yawn, or offer to send better for half a quart (Khotkevych, 1929: 52).

At the same time, the hero, the mouthpiece of the writer’s ideas, makes a kind of gender cross-section of possible relations between a man and a woman on the border of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The lowest level of relations is the “debauchery of ‘cesspools’” offered by shantans or “shacks of the lowest order”, where courtesans are “smeared with sucked faces” and “often naked bodies” are “barely

covered with silk robes” (Khotkevych, 1929: 59). These are the so-called “cultural centers” of “the naked dance of drunken torn women, the daughters of Babylon, Sodom and Gomorrah” (Khotkevych, 1929: 67).

Another variant of debauchery is some kind of surrogate, when a man lives “with one... housekeeper” (Khotkevych, 1929: 60). The cellist honestly exposes the immorality and indecency of such a situation: “So we get up in the morning; she brews tea with a businesslike air, and at this time it occurs to me: but I do not really demand that from you, your functions begin at night. And so I will be ashamed that I hide my eyes down, and she catches this hidden look and smiles, you know, in such a feminine way. And then he will also ask in a woman’s licentious voice: ‘What are you ashamed of?’ And I want to fall through the ground, because I feel like a slave owner, a buyer of a living commodity, which is actually being prepared for me in the life market” (Khotkevych, 1929: 60).

The highest step in the system of gender relations is marriage, but there are several serious problems associated with this phenomenon of social life, because from the point of view of the hero, “it is the most impudent form of the lottery, where the number of winners is a million times less than the number of losers” (Khotkevych, 1929: 60). First of all, the hero talks about legalized lies in family relations between a woman and a man, “in order to support the family hearth in proper clarity!” (Khotkevych, 1929: 60). Along with this, a purely male view of a woman is also manifested. Thus, the cellist declares that as soon as his wife “feels, if not supremacy, then at least equality”, she will begin to show her despotic tendencies. The hero’s further explanation of his point of view allows us to understand that a selfish man in family life cares, first of all, about his freedom, and not about his obligations to the family: “Under the cover of taking care of your health, you will not be allowed to go where you want, do what you want; they will make you go to bed when you want to work, you will be allowed to work only when it does not interfere with anyone. And the violence of love – isn’t it the worst abomination? And so, day after day, hour after hour, you make disgusting sacrifices, you sink lower and lower, until the time comes when, looking at yourself, you do not recognize that it is you, the same one who so joyfully went to marriage” (Khotkevych, 1929: 61).

Further, the cellist rightly observes that in family life one cannot do without sacrifices. But he gives examples that reveal in him first of all a narcissistic, egoistic person who cares only about his own interests: if “you want to rely on at least one of your most legitimate desires”, “you will be called a despot, a bloodsucker, tears, sobs. ‘I’m sick!.. I have nerves...’ <...> Nerves flutter, the body shakes” (Khotkevych, 1929: 62).

And one more thing: spouses who want to live in peace must constantly “groom” and “coddle” so that marital relations “do not creak”, because “the opinion is that it is a temporary malfunction of the mechanism. Poured in lard, compromised a little – for a few days everything goes as if nothing happened. But only for a few days, and then, look, something hurts again. Get the hell out of here!.. Is this to be coaxed, smeared again? And there’s more, more – and so the whole age to sign up for a grill? And where is life? And hopes? And dreams?.. And the man will be angry that the cursed fortune did not take him ...” (Khotkevych, 1929: 62–63).

Following this, the hero goes on to thinking the feeling of a man’s admiration for a young woman in the period of “second youth”. In his opinion, this is the most terrible thing that can happen in a man’s life: “...When you love to the point of self-oblivion, when you tremble at the thought that someone can come and just like that, without any right, with only the right of youth, to snatch your last happiness from your heart. To follow every male figure with a jealous eye, to accept youth with fear, to die a thousand times a day, to believe in nothing and no one. Fake a laugh when you want to whine like a dog; to joke when iron claws are scraping in the heart, to listen to the friendly jokes of acquaintances and to pretend to be good when every word hurts you like a poisoned stiletto...” (Khotkevych, 1929: 67).

At the same time, the hero assumes that there are also happy spouses, “but even there the work does not go without sacrifices, only their sacrifices cease to be sacrifices, but appear as if a reflection of mutual love; there, happiness is not considered to be mastery over another being, but the desire for happiness itself. <...> And there they do not die morally, they do not curse the fruitlessly lived day – there they regret that it is over, they are happy. There, a man and a woman complement each other,

create an atmosphere of happiness around them, and everyone who comes can breathe easily in that atmosphere. But such marriages are one in a million, and the rest are abominations, ugliness, lies and meanness” (Khotkevych, 1929: 62). But the hero immediately explains that if you take a good look, all those happy couples “ Either some monomaniacs, or old-world landlords, or something already there. Of course, whoever asks for little will soon be satisfied” (Khotkevych, 1929: 63).

From general thoughts about modern family life, the hero turns to his own experience: “I have never felt anything like it. When I saw her for the first time, I was somehow shaken inside. It was something new, something unfathomable. Do you know the legend about soul mates? So, apparently, I felt as if I had found my soul mate” (Khotkevych, 1929: 64).

Then the hero tells that, being in the status of a groom, he did not notice many things, and this led to a tragedy: “When I confessed, she somehow seemed to shake all over... I interpreted it in my own way – we are always willing to interpret events the way we want. She asked for some time to think. I agreed, because this is really such a serious step. <...> ...It all ended too prosaically. <...> She read <...> “Kreutzer’s Sonata” and returned the book to me. We chatted about this thing all evening... I came home and wanted to read some places myself. I took the book, it unfolded itself and a letter fell out... With the color of shame, I began to read... and read <...> that getting married will not change anything in their relationship... that... on the contrary... it will be easier to see each other and... get along more freely... <...> That’s the end of you” (Khotkevych, 1929: 64–65).

After his tragic experience, the hero began to observe, on the one hand, asceticism in his sexual life, but, at the same time, he admits: “Life passed somewhere around me, maybe bright, maybe singing. Somewhere right there, on the other side, women were walking behind the trees and called me: ‘Come to us! Tear us down!... Give us our joy and our pain’ – and I was afraid... I didn’t dare... And they, women, continued to walk. And they found a response in other souls, loved other men and were grateful to those who gave them joy and tears, because that is what life is made of. And I did not know that, I was still proud of the fact that not a single tear in the world was shed because of me” (Khotkevych, 1929: 66).

At the end of the story, the hero moves on to the apotheosis of a woman: “Without a woman, you can have pleasure, moments of comfort, but there is no happiness without a woman. Happiness is only around her. With her, everything can be happiness, without her, nothing will become happiness” (Khotkevych, 1929: 69–70). At the same time, for Khotkevych, the most important thing in family life is those relationships when a woman meets her husband after a hard day with a smile on his face, when “these flowers smile, and the same joy, the same purity blow from her”, and all the problems recede: “small and insignificant <...> the inequalities of the environment seemed” (Khotkevych, 1929: 50). That is, as we can see, this is a marriage where a man and a woman live with the same thoughts, hopes, and beliefs.

According to V. Aheieva, “patriarchal consciousness claims that a woman cannot create, transcendence and world-changing activity are not available to her (and therefore the creative fate of prominent women artists is always incredibly difficult), but she inspires the creator, and her passive external perfection serves as a reminder of the secret, not subject to rational cognition. Both in the role of a submissive wife, a housewife, and as a Beautiful Lady (in the latter case, perhaps even more so), she is only a given, an idol, sometimes an object of worship, but completely devoid of activity, the ability to assert herself” (Aheieva, 1994: 12).

If this remark “works” on the example of Hotkevich’s story, then the analysis of Konytsky’s novel showed that there is a third approach to the possibilities of a woman in modern society, when she becomes a public figure, joining public interests.

I. Karpenko-Kary also addresses the problems of marriage and extramarital relations between a woman and a man in the play “Sea of Life” (1904). But in his work, the playwright chooses not a musician as the main character, but the talented actor Ivan Barylchenko, who constantly feels attention to himself from familiar and unfamiliar ordinary citizens, bathes in glory, and is admired by women who constantly glorify him: “...Here, at Ivan Makarovich’s dacha, we lived in the company of a great artist, whose spirit greets us above all! I had fun in such company, I will never forget those moments of high spirits that I had, thanking Ivan Makarovych! My day passed like one hour: Ivan Makarovich’s

gaiety, his deep humor, his songs will echo in my heart for a long time!” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 486).

All this leads to the fact that Barilchenko loses his understanding of the real life circumstances and plunges into the world of illusions. The public adoration makes him forget, what is good and what is bad. Ivan tries to be a good husband to his devoted Marusia and an exemplary father to his children, but time and time again his desire is shattered due to physical attraction to his stage colleague, Vanina. The hero, in fact, bustles between Mary, who is the personification of holiness, and a woman-theater, a young beautiful actress.

At the same time, the playwright exposes the possessive psychology of a man in the person of Barylchenko in relation to his wife and even to his mistress. First, the actor asks his wife what she would do if he cheated on her: “Listen, Marusechko! If I cheated on you, by accident, without a shred of love for the other... and so, stupidly, always leaving your bright, noble being in my soul and in my heart, would you not forgive me?” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 498).

And when Marusia asks a counter question on the topic of treason, but to husband, Ivan answers: “That’s another thing. This is an abomination: a formal deliberate life alone women with two – phi!” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 498). Concluding the conversation on this topic, Marusia remarks: “And as much as I haven’t heard conversations about this issue, all men lead to the fact that everything is possible for them, but a woman cannot! No, my dear, what I can’t do without losing honor, you can’t either! Know: I will never betray you in the world – I swear! And when you cheat, I will break up with you forever!” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 498). Such “Puritanism” does not please Barylchenko very much, because he understands that his wife, a “fanatic of unconditional purity”, as his friend Khvyliia said, is undoubtedly right.

It is necessary to note one more aspect of extramarital love, which Karpenko-Kary reveals in his play.

Actress Vanina, talking about her love for Ivan, does not deceive him. Her admiration is so serious that she is ready to come to his house during vacation (“Couldn’t stand it – sorry!”), and also sacrifice her name for the sake of a loved one. But at the same time, at the level of subtext in the

playwright's work, the following questions arise: While Vanina is young and attractive, everyone admires her as a woman, she lives with Barylchenko, but what will happen next with her life? What should a woman do if she loves a married man? Is it possible to compromise with your conscience and social morality even when you are unconsciously in love? Karpenko-Kary does not give answers to these questions, but the main thing is that he asks them in his play.

At the same time, the playwright shows the complex atmosphere of artistic life, when over time the line between real life and theater, between real feelings and the play of feelings begins to blur.

Already in the title of the work, Karpenko-Kary contrasted a peaceful, honest life with the stage, with its vanity, role masks and addiction to various kind of doping. Being the outstanding actor himself, I. Tobilevych (Karpenko-Kary is his literary pseudonym) on the edge of his life depicted the scene as the quintessence of the "sea of life", often shaking by storms: "...Tomorrow each of us will be picked up by the sea of life and carried away on its menacing waves!.. Who will be planted on a moth, who will be smashed against a stone, and who will drown in the water themselves..." (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 480). Barylchenko confesses to his brother, a villager: "I, brother, now often regret that I did not stay with you to cultivate the holy land, but it is already too late!..Fifteen years of artistic activity made me an artificial person with broken nerves" (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 480).

It should be noted that "Sea of Life" is the first play on the Ukrainian stage, in which a professional psychoanalysis of the actor was performed, all the pros and cons of stage activity were weighed. In addition, in the "Sea of Life", stagecraft becomes the subject of reflections, sometimes quite self-ironic.

After Barylchenko learns that Vanina rode horses with the count, that is, as he believes, she betrayed him, the hero falls into a state of pathos, lamenting his own sinfulness: "I have been suffering unspeakably for a long time! Indeed, what right do I have to expect loyalty from you, when I myself am a traitor to my wife? Madness of passion took my mind away from me, and I could not stop myself! The mind whispered one thing, and the blood conquered everything, and I bathed in vices:

I became a hypocrite, deceived myself, deceived everyone and defiled my Marusechka, pure as a cherub, and my children, hugging them to my vicious bosom, kissing them with lips that left traces your kisses... Ah!.. For whom do I torment my soul so much?.. There is peace, love and purity, and here – vicious passion! Come on! Fume passed, I tear everything...” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 519–520).

Vanina, after listening to this pathetic monologue-self-flagellation, comments on it on a theatrical level: “By God, it seems to me that you are playing a role from some sweet-and-sour melodrama, still unknown to me” (Karpenko-Kary, 1898: 520). She testifies ironically about herself: “I am a woman and an artist: illusions easily find a path to our hearts” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 492).

In this testament work, Karpenko-Kary touched on the problems of the repertoire, the public, critics, separately focusing on the interesting topic of the artist’s evaluation by others. Prompter Kramaryuk mercilessly turns Barylchenko’s eyes to himself: “You speak the truth only from the stage – and then someone else’s truth – and with good words you catch the soul of the listener, so that you can gain fame for yourself, but you even do not feel the poppy seed of what that pours so sweetly from your divine throat! You preach love, justice, all-forgiveness, and you yourselves are painted graves, full of all sorts of unclean things...” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 532–533). Khvyliia, who is in love with Marusia, emphasizes the actors’ immorality: “Ivan is an honest man; but as an artist, he lives on nerves and betrays you every day, and nowadays no one considers this dishonorable” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 485).

Paradoxically, but the author put almost the most principled argument in defense of the actor into the mouth of the sometimes frivolous Vanina: “... Everyday life will extinguish the holy fire of creativity! A great artist does not dare to sleep peacefully in the family room... You are the chosen one, called by life to ignite the hearts of the sleepy public, and for this the artist needs strong, fresh impressions that make him feel the joy of being and give him powerful energy!..” (Karpenko-Kary, 1989: 520).

Karpenko-Kary ends his play with an open finale, because he understands how difficult it is for an actor in the prime of his talent to

leave the stage, exchange fame and success for everyday family life, moral discipline and hard work.

In the play “Talan” (1893), M. Starytsky outlines another aspect of the depiction of the relationship between a man and a woman. The main character in his work is a young woman, a somewhat exalted actress Maria Luchytska, the first intellectual on the national stage, and it is her dramatic fate that captures the attention of viewers / listeners. On the one hand, Starytsky reveals the difficult relations between the actors behind the scene, the suffering of a thoughtful, cultured actress-girl from the envy of colleagues who are less gifted, but ambitious and active in behind-the-scenes intrigues. On the other hand, her high understanding of the stage and theater as a vocation and self-sacrifice becomes clear from the heroine’s individual lines. For Luchytska, the work of an actor consists in the fact that it is necessary to “serve the people, to give oneself completely to peace, to the community”, because the theater “...instructs the minds of people, carries out high thoughts...” (Starytsky, 1989: 468, 472).

For herself, as an actress, the heroine sets a very high bar: “Luchytska (with excitement and even tears in her voice): ‘Enough! What kind of genius am I? A genius is a force, powerful, influential, a genius believes in himself and finds satisfaction in life in himself; for him, all other torments of passion are insignificant, he is higher than all of them! And I <...> I, it may be, even not a talent’...” (Starytsky, 1989: 476). At the same time, there is some contradiction in the character of the heroine. As an actress, Luchytska perceives the world around her with “nerves” (feelings and sensations), but at the same time, she does not understand human characters well, because, living according to Christian laws, the heroine is constantly mistaken about people, because she sees only their outer shell, and does not understand the real movements of their souls at all. This leads to many problems in her life.

In his play, Starytsky addresses the main question in the life of a woman artist: should she devote her life only to art, or should she follow the call of female nature, which pushes her to love, create a family, and give birth to children? Having already had a negative experience in love once, Luchytska is very cautious about Kvitka’s declaration of love. In addition, the young woman understands that she will have to

leave the theater: "...The family cannot put up with the scene, because they will harm each other: either you will betray the children, or you will betray the public order..." (Starytsky, 1989: 468).

Her nanny, who convinces Maria that "marriage is a world thing; the holy wedding is from God... So your *kiatras* are from the devil, yes! Look at yourself, what happened to you because of them? Where is the beauty, where is the health? Everything in this hell burned!" (Starytsky, 1989: 472).

The old woman expresses the traditional view of marriage, which was dreamed of by representatives of the poorer strata of the population: "...Marry a respectable, loving man <...> ...You will bloom again in luxury and in God's love; you will be comforted by little angel children... But what other paradise do you have?" (Starytsky, 1989: 472).

But heaven did not work out with Anton Kvitka. His mother, Olena Mykolaiivna, quite aptly described her son's desire to marry Luchytska. "Antoine: 'maybe I fell in love with you for your talent, that here and there, everything falls on its face before it, and I pick it up!' And such ardor took over him that he spat on his mother... Well, as it was necessary to pass the time without a scene with a young wife, it turned out that it is more fun with hares..." (Starytsky, 1989: 484–485).

Let's pay attention to the fact that both Marko Zhalivnytsky and Anton Kvitka professed their love for Maria Luchytska in the play. Marko behaves in a reserved manner towards Maria, but from the text of the dramatic work it becomes clear that he has done a lot for his beloved: "...I look at you like a mountain: you are my most sincere, dearest person... <...>. If it weren't for you, I don't know what would have happened to me. I will never forget until the day I die that first meeting, when I, a madman, almost killed himself in despair. You noticed my terrible thought, you warmed my broken heart with warm advice, you evoked charitable tears; you showed me a new path that can heal wounds... and I fell with delight at the feet of the new god..." (Starytsky, 1989: 453).

An attentive viewer already at the beginning of the first act sees that Zhalivnytsky acts consistently, does not mince words, he boldly expresses his thoughts to those around him.

At the same time, Luchytska sees Mark only as a friend. Anton, outside the theatrical action, perceives Maria as a “flower of the field”, therefore he does not pay attention to her, and only when Luchytska becomes an outstanding actress, he begins to promise her a “second paradise”: “...My wife, my faithful wife, run away with me. I will surround you with luxuries, I will wrap you in love, I will intoxicate you with caresses...” (Starytsky, 1989: 474).

Anton Kvitka, in the eyes of Maria who is in love with him, is a man “very educated and talented, with honest, humane principles”, therefore “in our district darkness there is no shelter for a leading man...” (Starytsky, 1989: 454). But in reality this is a very weak, spoiled, weak-willed person who promises one thing and does something completely different, who lives at the expense of his mother and constantly avoids difficult problems in his life, so it is easy for them to manipulate, which his mother will do over time, because for her a bright star of the Ukrainian scene is only a “bad actress”.

Luchytska’s return to the stage after a period of languishing in the family estate of Kvitka and Anton’s petty revenge for her fantasized betrayal (a public scandal in the middle of Luchytska’s performance) leads to the actress’ complete disappointment in life and her gradual fading. In this part, M. Starytsky’s drama somewhat resonates with O. Dumas’ “Lady with Camellias”, with the significant difference that the Ukrainian playwright do not puts off the sin on Mary. And her misfortune is the result of the activity of the middle-class environment, which condemns the artist to death, and the consequence of the talented actress’s misconception on the possibility of happiness in a misalliance.

L. Starytska-Cherniakhivska turns to the theme of the tragic fate of the artist who made a mistake in love, following M. Starytsky, in her play “Sappho” (1897). The focus of the playwright is the injustice of fate in relation to the brilliant ancient poetess, called a goddess by contemporaries. Her beloved Phaon chose a woman for his partner, not worthy of any comparison with Sappho – a simple and devoid of any charms, a friend of the poetess, Erinna. In the drama created by the young author, one is struck by the psychologism of the gradations of Sappho’s feelings, the dramatic temperament that shines through in her image.

Internal drama, fissure lead to the heroine's rejection of life. However, the conflict in Sappho is much deeper than a love triangle. Poetry as a tool of communication with the Gods, the Divine beginning (because it is embedded in rhymes) of her love for Phaon – all this turns out to be unnecessary for her beloved, for Erinna, and, ultimately, for humanity. And in this sense, the desolation and despondency of the ancient Greek woman Sappho of Starytska-Cherniakhivska is of the same nature as the disappointment in the life of Maria Luchytska in the modern drama of M. Starytsky.

This drama also has an autobiographical shade of tragedy characteristic of all modernist works. Sappho is perfect, but future Hellenes will not be born from her, but from simple Erinna. If fate fatally denies the poetess the happiness of having a family, a home, children, then even Erinna's words of recognition cannot serve as compensation for this: "...It is not for you to complain about fate – it has elevated you above all women!" (Starytska-Cherniakhivska, 2000: 45).

In contrast to F. Grillparzer's tragedy "Sappho" (1817), which was popular in the Russian Empire at the time, Starytska-Cherniakhivska's work is more lyrical and intimate. Her heroine does not have pride for self-own life of a recognized genius. Unlike the Austrian Sappho, the Ukrainian Sappho realizes that her heavenly talent is a difficult lot for an earthly person, and it cruelly demands for sacrifices: of human happiness and women's feelings. I. Chernova (2021) notes: "The writer is not talking about some mythical image, but about her contemporary woman who challenged the male literary tradition, taking a place worthy of her talent".

Another shade of this theme, when a beautiful, talented pianist has a physical defect (a hump) that prevents her from living a full life, is highlighted in the essay "Voiced Strings" (1897) by Lesia Ukrainka.

Working on R. Schuman's song "Ich grolle nicht" with the singer Bohdan captivated Nastia, she thinks that happiness is close, but very quickly she begins to understand that Bohdan loves another girl. All attempts to somehow draw the boy's attention to her end in nothing for the heroine. Bohdan perceives Nastia as a friend, he has never disappointed the girl from the very beginning of their relationship, so he constantly writes her letters about his life in the province. It is one of this

evening that Nastia receives a letter from her boyfriend. During several evening hours, the girl recalls her meetings with Bohdan, and the writer inscribes her heroine in the world around her, actively using the intertext, the basis of which is poetry, as well as prose and dramatic works of world literature of the 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (G. E. Lessing's "Emilia Galotti", F. Schiller's "Cunning and Love", A. de Musset's "No Trifling with Love", etc.), in which the heroes and heroines experience complex feelings and emotions, and the plots of these works are tragic. Constantly relating herself to the heroines of classical works, in a few evening hours the girl "plays" in her imagination the role of heroines suffering from gossip or misunderstandings. Therefore, Nastia finally comes to the conclusion that she will no longer answer Bohdan's letters.

It is important that Lesia Ukrainka reveals "here and now" a whole range of tragic feelings to her heroine, which was, for example, characteristic of the French pre-symbolists and symbolists – Ch. Baudelaire, P. Verlaine and others. At the same time, thanks to allusions, quotes and reminiscences, the writer emphasizes the rich spiritual world of her heroine.

According to N. Zborovska, "the patriarchal Ukrainian structure <...> retains clear signs of matriarchy. ...The Western European family model <...> centers the strong father and marginalizes the weak mother. The traditional Eastern European (Slavic) family model is based on a strong (patrilineal) mother and a weak or completely absent father figure" (Zborovska, 1998). Next, N. Zborovska, analyzing modernist literature at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, comes to the conclusion that the "active destruction of the populist canon", that is, the canon of male power, "was started by Ukrainian modernistic women-writers" (Zborovska, 1998). But, as the analysis showed, in Starytsky, Starytska-Cherniakhivska, and Lesia Ukrainka, the accents in the works are placed in a completely different way than according to the researcher's concept. It is women artists who are the most vulnerable in the society of that time, they are the weakest in confrontation with the world around them. As for the portrayal of male heroes, writers offer various options, primarily related either to the exposure of noble idleness or to autobiographical allusions.

“Valse Melancolique” (1897) by O. Kobyljanska has already been well analyzed by researchers. It has already been stated that the heroines of this work are three friends, “each of whom represents a distinct female type”: Marta – “woman”, Hannusia – “artist”, Sofia – “musician” (Hundorova, 2002). Further the researcher, characterizing the common life of the heroines under one roof, notes that “the women’s colony, like the very idea of an artistic dwelling-community, is a typical bohemian, modern idea” (Hundorova, 2002). In our opinion, the bohemian modern idea nevertheless has a flavor of frivolous carelessness; on the contrary, Kobyljanska in her story emphasizes that all artists must be “educated and brought up, starting from the sense to the order” and have “harmony in relationships” (Kobyljanska, 1988: 436). As for the “friendship” of the three, here one can rather talk about a utopian girls’ commune, where they talk about music, literature, art, love, and everything else recedes into the background. In addition, all the heroines of the story work hard, “honestly share homework” and have specific goals in front of themselves: Marta – to pass the teacher’s exams, Hannusia – to go to Italy to improve her artistic skills, and Sofia – to go to Vienna to attend the conservatory for the third year.

At the same time, it can be assumed that the fate of the girls was affected by their future professions. Thus, I. Franko noted in one of his works that a real teacher should “live the common life of the whole class during lessons, forget about yourself, your own worries, joys and anxieties” (Franko, 1960: 207), because “teaching... a great work of love, patience...”. This is exactly what Marta is like, who says about herself: “It’s good that I have so much warmth that I can warm others with it. God gave me a heart for that...”. By giving love to others, the girl herself becomes happy. Marta also knows “how and when to curb” Hannusia’s artistic nature, and when to “increase her desire to fly and support her in good faith for the future” (Kobyljanska, 1988: 455, 437).

Among the girls, Hannusia is the most proud, headstrong, decisive, quick “in her decisions” and “consistent”. At the same time, she feels a great artistic talent in herself, which “lives in us and fills our soul; which is taken from somewhere in us, grows up, dominates us, does not give us peace and makes our beings only listeners and extras! This is

something so big, strong that personal happiness pales in comparison to it, it is not possible to maintain balance with it in the being! <...> To muffle that world in yourself in order to live only for one man and for the children themselves? This is impossible...” (Kobylianska, 1988: 448).

As we can see, the artist’s thoughts certainly echo the position of Maria Luchytska, who clearly sets out the requirements for a female actress on the stage, who must give all of herself to her beloved work, and for a mother, who, above all, takes care of her family and children. Hannusia knows in advance that her heart will be open to many “living images” of men, the main thing is that they should be “good enough, exciting enough and worthy <...> of love and being! ...Full of great, winning, original motives” (Kobylianska, 1988: 448). Such an idea about the relationship between women and men was evidently first voiced in Ukrainian literature in this work of Kobylianska, but, as we understand, it was connected with Western European feminist views of that time. It is clear that supporting this point of view, the girl is ready to violate traditional moral beliefs in her life.

The most vulnerable person in Kobylianska’s story is Sofia, because she is a pianist. On the one hand, her portrait (“a haggard face with big sad eyes”) and the black clothes she constantly wears are signs not only of the girl’s tragic love, but also the features of a romantic heroine. So, for example, the heroine is unrestrained in her feelings, it is not for nothing that Sofia admits to Marta that she is “not one of those who love in moderation”, so she would “destroy everyone”, both her children and her husband.

On the other hand, E. T. A. Hoffman once wrote that “music is the most romantic of all arts, even, one might say, the only truly romantic, because its subject is only infinity” (Hoffman, 1987: 157). Penetration into the deep essence of music is reflected in the character of the girl, who remains a mystery to her friends, and “the nature of subtle style, care for beauty and art in the full sense” (Kobylianska, 1988: 454).

Sofia has her own, very original, view on the performance of musical works, which emphasizes her unique approach to music: “This seems to me like <...> if a man read several authors at once, and while reading did not delve into any of them. Playing the composer, one must guess his

essence in order to understand the motive of the composition itself. Otherwise, the face becomes characterless. One case – it is without the soul of the composer, and the second one – it is without the soul of the player, who does not find connecting strings between the composition and himself and plays by touch. What is called a good game in the usual sense of the word is only a harmony of sounds nuanced by a pure exercise” (Kobylianska, 1988: 453).

As Marta notes, this “way of feeling the girl, it seems, struck that unusually finely organized nature...” (Kobylianska, 1988: 457).

In “Kreislerian”, Hoffman emphasizes that “talent, or <...> musical genius, burns <...> in the chests of people who have devoted themselves to art and cherish it in their hearts; it burns them with an unquenchable flame when some more practical principle tries to extinguish or deliberately deflect that spark” (Hoffman, 1987: 155).

This is exactly what happened to Sofia, when she realized that the love she gave to her beloved is such, “which a man never understands. It is too wide for him to understand on it. I gave him such a wide love that was supposed to fully develop me, no, to give blossom me. Not from today to tomorrow, but forever” (Kobylianska, 1988: 461–462). This was the first test for “music”. A series of tragic circumstances after that led to the girl’s untimely death.

### **Conclusions.**

As the analysis showed, at the same time as establishing the image of the male artist, in Ukrainian literature at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the type of woman artist is presented. Their appearance companions were the themes of the artist’s protest against social suffocation; the artist’s struggle with fate that personified in social indifference and deafness to genius; flair of Divine as a heavy lot for earthly man. At the same time, male and female writers considered the problem of gender relations in their contemporary Ukrainian society in sufficient detail, built a kind of hierarchy of connections between women and men, considered the issue of betrayal and its interpretation by representatives of opposite sexes.

In their works, male writers bring to the fore the heroes of musicians who despaired of the progressive movement of society and expect from

their beloved women spiritual and moral support, courage in overcoming life's problems, but also gentleness, benevolence, loyalty, etc. Male playwrights, turning to the more vital problems of our time, expose in their plays moral troubles behind the scenes of the theater stage and male narcissism and selfishness. Also, writers take a closer look at the lives of actresses on and off the stage, their different states of mind, their difficult position in society and the ambiguous attitude of various sections of the population towards them.

Playwrights and writers, portraying their heroines, emphasize their spiritual independence, high intellectualism, but at the same time their weakness and helplessness in front of the traditional view of men on women. Only the violation of moral norms, as the writers prove, can preserve their identity as women and as artists.

**Research perspectives.** In future studies, expanding the range of dramatic works, it is important to find answers to the series of questions: does the attitude we discovered towards women persist in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century among writers who came to literature at that time; are gender accents in the theater changing at this time; why, even now, gender issues are not of interest to Ukrainian female directors, unlike Western European ones.

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**Образ митця / мисткині в українській літературі  
на межі XIX – XX століть у гендерному аспекті**

*На межі XIX–XX століть українські письменники й письменниці починають активно звертатися до образу митця / мисткині у своїх драматичних творах та оповіданнях. Прочитання цих творів з погляду гендерної проблематики дозволяє більш уважно придивитися до підходів авторів до своїх героїв, до розуміння авторських ідейно-художніх концепцій.*

*Наприкінці XX – у перші десятиліття XXI століття В. Агеєва, О. Башкирова, Т. Гундорова, О. Забужко, Н. Зборовська, О. Шаф та інші почали вивчати питання гендеру у творах українських письменників-модерністів. Водночас, поки ніхто з дослідників не звернувся до осмислення образу митця / мисткині в українській літературі на межі XIX–XX століть у гендерному аспекті. Цим і визначаються актуальність і наукова новизна нашої статті.*

**Мета дослідження** – розглянути на прикладі художніх творів процеси модернізації української літератури в контексті гендерної та феміністичної проблематики, а також проаналізувати особливості осмислення письменниками образів митців та мисткинь у прозі та драматургії. При написанні статті використовувалися загальнонаукові та порівняльно-типологічний методи.

#### **Результати дослідження.**

О. Кониський і Г. Хоткевич, створюючи образи своїх героїв-музикантів, насамперед, звертають увагу на їхнє ставлення до політичних і соціальних проблем, які існували в тогочасному суспільстві. Крім того, письменники прагнуть розкрити особливості світосприйняття своїх героїв. Водночас, ставлення героїв до жіночої статі є традиційним, обрацями музикантів мають бути соратниці, які повністю підтримують високі помисли та вчинки своїх чоловіків.

У драматургічних творах цього часу завдяки відходу від соціальної проблематики загострюються проблеми гендерної рівності й можливості вибору актрисами свого життєвого шляху. Актори й актриси М. Старицького та І. Карпенка-Карого у часовому перебігу не піднімають найскладніші проблеми сімейного життя, вірності і зради дружин та чоловіків у шлюбі, життя в цивільному шлюбі та інші, які продовжують залишатися актуальними і в наш час.

Письменниці (Л. Старицька-Черняхівська, Леся Українка та О. Кобилянська), виходячи за межі гендерної проблематики в бік феміністичних поглядів, переносять у своїх несах і оповіданнях акцент на трагедію талановитої жінки, яка віддалася мистецтву. Суспільство, і, насамперед, його чоловіча половина, не готове бачити в поетесах, музикантках і художницях їхній багатий духовний світ, їхню моральну красу, оскільки наближає до них традиційні мірки, основані лише на зовнішніх даних. Водночас, у своєму «Фрагменті» Кобилянська окреслює нові, модерністські варіанти стосунків між жінкою чи чоловіком і жінкою.

#### **Висновок і перспективи дослідження.**

Таким чином, українська література на межі XIX–XX століть презентувала як тип чоловіка-митця, так і тип жінки-митця. Завдяки цьому письменники і письменниці досить детально розглянули проблему взаємин статей у сучасному їм українському суспільстві, побудували свого роду ієрархію відносин між жінками і чоловіками, розглянули питання сім'ї та сімейної зради в її інтерпретації представниками протилежних статей.

*Подальші дослідження у цьому руслі повинні допомогти зрозуміти, чи змінюються у драматургії на початку ХХ століття гендерні акценти, і як це впливає на розвиток українського театру.*

**Ключові слова:** *гендер; фемінізм; українська драматургія; мала проза; стаття; митці і мисткині.*

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