

**Implementation of the Opposition (Sacral/Secular)  
in the Vira Vovk's Novella Series *Carnival* and *Sevens Stamp***

Sacral and secular are two extreme modes of existence which global content of human existence is based on. There is an inseparable connection of dialectical unity between these poles. Concepts "sacral" and "secular" function in different displays at the levels of nature, history and culture. It is M. S. Uvarov's opinion that the opposition of sacral and secular is expressed in numerous minute structural binary oppositions and polysemantic structures of historic and cultural being.

Owing to binarity, which has its roots in mythological sphere, universal symbolic systems are formed to help in recognizing the world in different aspects.

In Vira Vovk's creative work a traditional mythological opposition of sacral and secular shows its stability. Marked by gravitating to archetypical structures of artistic imagery the writer's creative thinking displays its potential in the sphere of small prose, especially in novelistic series *The Carnival* and *The Seventh stamp*. In the centre of each there is philosophical understanding of human existence in the modern world presented in polytypical cultural contexts and analyzed through the prism of religious and mythological opposition of sacral/secular. In Vira Vovk's novelistic prose this opposition is realized mainly as confrontation of subjective "I" to external, hostile reality.

The writer's artistic opinion analyzes logically different modes of human existence in the world developing primordial mental and ethical (truth/lies) and existential (life/death) dilemmas. Being the invariants of central oppositions of sacral/secular, these binary contradictions become capacitors of significative field of collections and are realized in them through an orderly system of interconnected motifs.

Vira Vovk's philosophical contemplation on the duality of the modern world and human nature, changeability of life and changelessness of true values are represented by the cycle of novellas *The Carnival*.

In Vira Vovk's creative work images of the carnival and the mask are reinterpreted essentially and are given negative semantics of reality profanation, hypocrisy, delusion. In novella *The Old Ladies* the author describes a carnival as an instant for which many people pay by their life. This meaning is also developed in the novelistic cycle *The Carnival* in which the mask acquires the connotation of concealing or distorting the truth.

Novellas *The Man Who Falls*, *The Crucifix* interpret gospel conflict of a prophet and crowd reinterpreted and projected to modern times through a prism of binary opposition of the face/mask. Combining the category of time and space of a Latin American carnival and biblical intertextuality Vira Vovk emphasizes the tragedy of a modern human being who strives more "to seem" than "to be" and changing masks one after another loses himself, his real face.

Revealing dialectics of internal and external, existence and non-existence in value perspective, the author accentuates weighty significance of calling in spiritual and creative formation of a personality. At the same time the way of creative formation becomes inseparable from the idea of sacrifice, death that exposes ontological ability of human nature to transcendentalism and is an original form of religious and philosophical understanding by the author of existential dialectics of existence and non-existence through a prism of the category of sacral.

Being concentrated in the sphere of philosophical problem of existence duality, the writer's artistic opinion shows organic gravitation towards mythological binary logics which is realized through leitmotifs of novelistic cycles. In *The Carnival* it is the confrontation of the face and the mask (symbolically: the truth and delusion), (in *The Seventh Stamp*) it is life and death (displayed in the context of understanding the problem of calling). At the same time each pair of contradictions preserves "the most specific symbolization of one main opposition" – sacral and secular. Thus, using a mythological principle of binary oppositions in a masterly way Vira Vovk models the original vision of the world in which fragmentariness arranged in a successful way creates voluminous integrity and completeness of artistic vision.