

**The Interaction Between Secular and Sacral Conceits
in Contemporary Ukrainian Poetry**

Confession becomes the main composition and genre factor in lyrical works with a religious coloration. Works with the religious content are typical for the Ukrainian literature of the last decade of the 20th century. These works, with their plain-text form and fancy style of the expression, certify the renewal of syncretism in poetry and sacral rite. Among such works there are – *A Supplication to the Mother of God, Near the Crib* by Vira Vovk, *Acathistus to the Virgin Mary from Krasov* by I. Kalynets, *Ecclesiast* by V. Kordun, etc.

Modern theorists of literature determined the regularity of expression of the confessional word in culture, first of all in poetry: confession as an appeal to God; confession as an appeal to oneself; confession as an appeal to the other oneself; confession as an appeal to oneself in the other; confession as an appeal to the other person; confession as a form of artistic (aesthetic) self-expression.

The prayer had specific features during the Paganism and Christian era. From the very beginning it was an appeal to the deity, which was accompanied by ritual actions (songs, dances). Later, during the Christian era, it obtained the form of blessing, unity of the every believer with the God by means of pronouncing special sacral verbal formulas. These formulas determined a significant branching of the “prayers” verse, raising it to the level of the separate liturgical meta-genre.

Talking about prayer in its primitive meaning it is important to mention that the primitive rite was a prototype of poetry, especially of the free verse. Variety of the content of prayers such as demand, order, agreement, act of faith, confession, request, and praise caused their genre diversity.

According to the evangelical commandments believer in his prayer should not “keep on babbling like pagans” (Matthew 6:7). The same idea was mentioned by the

churchmen, they encouraged conciseness and richness of the prayer text content. In spite of the fact that *The Prayer Requests* by Ye. Sverstiuk is a small lyrical poem, it does not only contain “unnecessary” words, but also shows the reader the whole macrocosm of the Ukrainian history and culture.

The sacral content of the prayer text to a great extent depends on acoustic vibrations. That is why a modern prayer contains verbal game as an interpretation of the evangelic “In the beginning was the Word” – showing the creation and the transformation of the world through the prayer.

At first sight, *The Prayer* by V. Drozd appears as a meditative text. At the same time it is a demonstration of the syncretism of thought, word and image as baroque verbalized icon – simultaneous combining the motives of The Old and The New Testament in one chronotope.

Any prayer written in verse, irrespective of the time of appearance, has “Lord’s Prayer” as archetype. Some separate intensions from “Lord’s Prayer” occur as inlay (Ye. Sverstiuk), and sometimes occur with the opposite meaning: “Our Father, who creates on the earth” (V. Drozd) in modern “prayer” verse.

Another conceptual line can be detached during the development of the Ukrainian religious poetry of the 20th century. It includes separate works, cycles and collections, which are devoted to the church holidays: *To the Cathedral, Easter* by P. Tychna, *Christmas Alogiine, Opening of the Crib, Ladi and Mareni* by I. Kalynets, *Snowball tree about Christmas* by V. Holoborodko, *Guiding Dawn* by V. Vovk, etc. The change of seasons can be clearly noticed in calendar-rite lyrics which does not only symbolize the stages of people’s life, but also has some influence on the formation of literary, in particular, religious genres.

All the works mentioned above can be also interpreted as the verbalized plots of icon-painting. Sacral motives of the plants are often used in the modern Ukrainian verbal “icons” and “iconostasis”, namely – bunch of grapes, vine (are the components of the Eucharist), different flowers and herbs (for example, verbal icon by V. Kordun *Dahlia*

Christ; poetic “iconostasis” free verse *The Search of Garden* by Yu. Andrukhovych). The motive of verbal icon determines “the horizon of expectations” for suitable chronotope – cathedral, church (*Icons* and *Stained-glass Windows* by I. Kalynets).

In lyrics, as in sincere and refined appeal to the deity, every author describes his transcendent vision of the real world and works at the improvement of his soul. Thanks to the special nature of the word that is expressed in “prayer” verse, poets resume the connection between the poetry and religious rite.