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SVITLANA LUTSAK

*Doctor of Philology, Full Professor,
Ivano-Frankivsk National Medical University (Ukraine)
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6862-5838>*

NATALIIA VIVCHARYK

*PhD in Philology, Associate Professor,
Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University (Ukraine)
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8424-2397>*

MYTHOPOETIC FACTORS IN FORMATION OF EARLY MODERNIST DISCOURSE IN IVAN FRANKO'S LONG-FORM PROSE (1876–1884)

У статті проаналізовано велику прозу І. Франка 1876-1884 рр. з погляду міфопоетики, яка відіграла важливу роль у становленні ранньомодерністської естетики письменника. У різностильових текстах автора відзначено високий рівень рефлексійності, що відкривав шлях до освоєння міфологічних кодів колективної пам'яті і сприяв формуванню синтетизму індивідуального творчого методу, проявом якого була авторська ідея «цілого чоловіка».

Мета статті полягає в розкритті значення міфопоетичних структур (образів фольклорного чи архетипного типів, кодів культури, сюжетно-композиційних моделей тощо) у формуванні модерністського дискурсу ранньої великої прози І. Франка. З мети випливають такі *завдання*: проаналізувати вплив міфологічного начала як домінантного на процеси становлення ранньомодерністського художнього дискурсу роману «Петрії і Довбушуки», а також так званої «Бориславської діалогії» (роман «Борислав сміється» та повість «Воа constrictor»); визначити співвідношення модерністських пошуків письменника з синтетичними особливостями його індивідуального творчого методу; виявити вплив міфологічної семантики на представлення проблематики лідера; охарактеризувати взаємозв'язок міфопоетичних топосів з бінарністю художніх образів та прийомів сюжетотворення; окреслити міфологічні параметри хронотопу, їх вплив на сюжетно-композиційну структуру та жанрово-стильові особливості великої прози І. Франка 1876-1884 рр.

Реалізація поставлених завдань зумовила використання таких *методів*: міфопоетичного, рецептивно-інтерпретаційного, герменевтичного.

Здійснений аналіз великої прози І. Франка 1876-1884 рр. дає підстави стверджувати, що апелювання до різнотипних міфопоетичних структур (образів фольклорного чи архетипного типів, національних кодів культури тощо) та їх поетологічних проявів (художньої умовності, фантастики, ірреального, філософських ідей, циклічних і параболічних прийомів сюжетобудови) відіграють вирішальну роль у становленні модерністського дискурсу ранньої великої прози І. Франка.

Виявлено, що міфопоетичні чинники вплинули на новаторство стилетворення вже в першому романтичному романі «Петрії і Довбушуки», що виявлося на різних рівнях тексту, передусім через сюжетні прийоми ретроспекції, проспекції, формування детективної інтриги, відкритого фіналу, подолання фабульності, моделювання образу народного лідера як невмирущого першопредка. Іншим важливим структуротворчим чинником тексту є протиставлення добра/зла, світла/темряви, духовного/матеріального, які формують відчуття бінарності художнього світу. Схожий тип жанрової структури простежено в реалістичній великій прозі І. Франка на бориславську тематику (повість «Воа constrictor» та роман «Борислав сміється»). У натуралістичному дискурсі «бориславської діалогії» відзначено повторення жахаючих потворних смертельних образів (руїна, вогонь, підземна потвора, день розплати тощо), домінуючим серед яких є образ змія-полоза. Він сповнений біблійними

та міфологічними ремінісценціями, зокрема й уроборичними. Ідеологічний конфлікт творів набув міфологізованого натуралістичного контексту саме через зображення Борислава як живої істоти, котра балансує на межі полярних візій – від заголовкового образу сміху до фінального апокаліптичного реготу.

Ключові слова: міфопоетика, ранньомодерністський дискурс, синтетизм індивідуального творчого методу, велика проза, образи фольклорного й архетипного типів, жанрова структура, композиція, хронотоп.

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The term “mythopoetics” is increasingly used in contemporary literary studies not only to denote a creative system but also as a method for analyzing literary phenomena that are oriented toward mythopoetic models. Tracing the key approaches to defining this interdisciplinary term from a historical perspective, A. Kolisnychenko and S. Kharytska emphasize both the contemporary understanding of mythopoetic discourse and its components, which serve as tools for their research [Kolisnychenko, Kharytska, 2020, p. 87]. Literary scholar L. Skupeiko notes that the concept of mythopoetics originates from mythology and folklore studies [Skupeiko, 2006, p. 11]. Usually, a folklorist does not work directly with the myth itself, but with its fluid archetypal motifs. In her article *Mythopoetics as a Subject and Method of Literary Research*, O. Kobzar outlines the interrelation of the concepts “mytheme”, “mythologeme”, “archetype”, “poetic cosmos”, “mythic thinking”, etc., stating: “The use of mythopoetics as a toolkit for literary analysis is not only appropriate and justified but also productive, as it allows for identifying the presence and specific functions of mythological models, images, and motifs in literary works, where conscious authorial myth-making is often intertwined with the spontaneous assimilation and reproduction of mythological structures” [Kobzar, 2010, p. 132]. The researcher identifies three main “paths” of mythopoetics: 1) use of traditional mythological plots and images by the author through their interpretation and transformation (mythological elements directly shape the thematic concerns of the work); 2) creation of an authorial myth, where the structure of the literary text is governed by the laws of mythopoetic composition (the myth is used as a structural model upon which a new myth is built); 3) mythological stylization, where the author merely formally imitates the style of myth (the myth serves as a decorative element) [Ibid., p. 135].

Among the mentioned methods of artistic reception of mythological material in I. Franko's early prose, the dominant one is the first – something that has been sporadically pointed out by researchers of his long-form prose works from 1876–1884.

Scholars almost unanimously point to the need for further interpretation of the mythological projections in Franko's prose, particularly taking into account the folkloristic and psychological aspects connected with the predominance of certain stylistic features. M. Lehkyi notes that in I. Franko's first novel *Petrii i Dovbushchuk* there is a clear turn toward folklore and mysticism, especially in the episode of the unexpected appearance of the 119-year-old leader of the opryshky in “the most tense moments,” which “foretell misfortune or trials for other characters” [Lehkyi, 2021, p. 67]. The archetypal basis of the leader's image in Franko's early works is also emphasized by Ya. Polishchuk in his monograph *The Mythological Horizon of Ukrainian Modernism. Literary Studies*: “Ivan Franko's hero is a hero of pre-individualistic consciousness. The individualistic rebellion against society and social norms is alien to him. By an act of will, he restrains himself from such rebelliousness, channeling the energy of a strong personality into the stream of collectivism, the community; his ideals correspond to this collectivism” [Polishchuk, 1998, p. 137]. The romantic-gothic imagery of Franko's novel *Petrii i Dovbushchuk*, according to M. Lehkyi, “alternates with frank naturalistic descriptions, with their precision and attention to factual detail – heralds of Franko's future aesthetic concept” [Lehkyi, 2021, p. 71].

T. Hundorova, analyzing literary-critical works on I. Franko's early large-scale prose, emphasizes the peculiarities of the author's creative method evolving from romanticism, with

its characteristic elements of fantasy and mysticism, to realist works “about the workers of Boryslav’s oil industry” [Hundorova, 2006, p. 29]. She also identifies *Boa Constrictor* as the first genuinely naturalistic novel in Ukrainian literature: “The structure of the novel is defined by a distinctive naturalistic psychologism, based on elements of self-observation and autosuggestion” [Hundorova, 2006, p. 42]. In his monograph *The Aesthetic Conception of Reality in Ivan Franko’s Boryslav Cycle of Works* M. Tkachuk calls *Boryslav Laughs* the first “strike novel” in world literature, about the war between “labor and capital” [Tkachuk, 1992, p. 73]. In this novel, the psychologism of the naturalistic depiction of the destructive influence of private instinct on the human personality demonstrates that “social issues do not dominate over psychological ones” [Ibid., p. 63]. Researcher of Franko’s prose, R. Holod, in his monograph *Ivan Franko and the Literary Movements of the Late 19th – Early 20th Century*, pointed out the numerous modifications of the writer’s realist conception: “Ivan Franko’s aesthetic consciousness developed from “scientific realism” (related to naturalism) to “ideal realism” (which combines realism with romanticism and modernism on a common philosophical basis)” [Holod, 2005, p. 210].

Sporadic manifestations of modernism in I. Franko’s early aesthetic conception are also discussed in the collective monograph *Modernism in Ukrainian Literature of the 20th – Early 21st Century: Memory, Codes, Practices* (Lviv, 2023). For instance, R. Holyk notes: “Franko’s works of the Boryslav cycle, in particular *Boa Constrictor* and *Boryslav Laughs*, were also a modernization, a literary invention, in the Western European manner of the urban working class – constructing and emancipating the peasantry, which was also being recruited into the working class and the urban proletariat” [Holyk, 2023, p. 54]. The scholar also pays attention to Franko’s collection of civic poetry *From the Heights and the Depths*, interpreting its radical narodovtsi symbolism as a reflection in artistic language of the synthetic semantics of Ukrainian cultural codes, associated with the archetypal idea of the leader – often a rebel – who, with his revolutionary fervor, is able to “construct peasants and the intelligentsia as social realities, modernizing society and its imagination” [Pastukh, 2023, p. 54]. According to R. Holod, such a synthetic discourse of Franko constitutes the main feature of the writer’s creative method and consists of “combining elements of such literary movements as naturalism and modernism, romanticism and realism, impressionism, expressionism, symbolism, and others” [Holod, 2005, p. 5]. In our view, the synthetic nature of Franko’s creative method, on the one hand, reflected the multi-stylistic searches of European literature at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries; on the other hand, it embodied the universality of Franko’s creative personality itself, in which – according to the tendencies of the time – the talents of writer, critic, literary scholar, philosopher, and politician were organically united.

Revealing the peculiarities of the evolution of modernism as an artistic method, M. Moklytsia emphasizes the multi-stage nature of the process, which became a “turbulent awareness” of the challenges of the time, manifesting itself in the “replaying” of previous eras/styles and in “trying on” their dominant features [Moklytsia, 2002, p. 147]. The high level of reflexivity in modernist literature “opened the way not only to the awareness of the inner uniqueness of the individual, the discovery of the subconscious and the unconscious, but also to a multi-aspect perception,” as well as to the understanding of mythological experience as a living “phenomenon of our shared and individual psyche,” reflected in the codes of collective memory [Moklytsia, 2001, p. 35].

Characterizing the mythological horizons of Ukrainian modernism, Ya. Polishchuk outlined the specificity of the new paradigm as follows: “The dictates of reality, the dominance of mimeticism, and the pull of utilitarian tasks in the cultural development of the nation lost their power in it; instead, the cult of myth, illusion, and utopia was established. In this way, the new art opened before the person of its time windows into the Absolute” [Polishchuk, 1998, p. 18]. According to the scholar, the actualization of mythological codes and fictive worlds by modernism did not so much lead to a simplistic rejection of realist stereotypes, as it did to individualistic thinking and world perception: “In every national culture, in every human individuality, modern creativity was inclined to see not so much the manifestation of general, objective regularities as an unrepeatable ‘soul,’ a unique vision of the world” [Ibid., pp. 11-12]. This indicates the significant role of mythological codes in the transformation of aesthetic dominants in the formation of modernism.

In the broader context of characterizing the mythological projections of Ukrainian modernist literature, Ya. Polishchuk also draws attention to the so-called model of the “whole

man" in I. Franko [Polishchuk, 2002, p. 138], which reflects his "vision of the world" as an artistic search for a new modernist hero. It is well known that despite the "stamp of ideological engagement," conditioned by his fascination with radical political beliefs and his desire to serve the "development" of the community, I. Franko became the author of the poetry collections *From the Heights and the Depths* and *Withered Leaves*, where the use of folkloric reminiscences and the "imitation of folk songs" ensured the modernization of artistic discourse due to the fact that "the rational structures of thought in Franko's work fused with the mythological" [Hundorova, 2006, p. 50].

Characteristic of I. Franko is the combination of modern individualism and aestheticism with populist and revolutionary ideas, largely conditioned by the use of folkloric and mythological material – yet another testimony to the synthetic nature of the writer's creative method. According to M. Lehkyi, who studied Franko's short prose, the signs of synthesis in it "became a powerful philosophical current, a tendency to operate with global abstract categories (good – evil), to parabolize the artistic structure, to boldly employ devices of artistic conventionality, fantasy, the unreal," and so on, all of which "fit" into the canon of Ukrainian modernism [Lehkyi, 2022, p. 80].

The analysis of the problem of mythopoetics in the works of I. Franko demonstrates the expediency of using the mythopoetic method for interpreting the role of mythological factors in the processes of shaping the writer's early modernist discourse, and also correlates with the synthetic character of his individual creative method. This approach has not been applied to the analysis of the mythopoetic projections in Franko's major prose of 1876–1884, which determines *the novelty and relevance of our study*.

The aim of the article is to reveal the significance of mythopoetic structures (such as images of folkloric or archetypal types, cultural codes, plot-compositional models, etc.) in the formation of the modernist discourse of I. Franko's early long-form prose.

From this aim, the following objectives arise: to analyze the influence of the mythological element as a dominant factor on the processes of shaping the early modernist artistic discourse in the novel *Petrii i Dovbushchuks*, so-called *Boryslav Dilogy*¹; to determine the correlation between the writer's modernist explorations and the synthetic features of his individual creative method; to highlight the impact of mythological semantics on the representation of the leader motif; to characterize the interrelation of mythopoetic topoi with the binarity of artistic images and techniques of plot formation; to outline the mythological parameters of the chronotope and their influence on the plot-compositional structure and the genre-stylistic features of I. Franko's long-form prose from 1876–1884.

The implementation of the set objectives necessitated the use of the following *methods*: mythopoetic, receptive-interpretative, and hermeneutic.

In I. Franko's debut novel *Petrii i Dovbushchuks*, mythological reminiscences play an important role. The image of the main character, Oleksa Dovbush – a popular avenger, a renowned outlaw – as B. Tykholoz puts it, "transposes from the real, concrete-historical plane into the unreal, mythological-fantastical one, embodying all the paradigmatic traits of the immortal forefather and at the same time – the eternal wanderer" [Tykholoz, 2007, pp. 178-179]. The writer himself referred to the text as a prologue at the end of the novel, pointing to the parabolic nature of the statement and the connection between the mythological component of the plot and the everyday struggles of life: "Here ends my tale. But it doesn't end here. What has been until now is just a prologue to the actual story, just a fairy tale before the history, just a prelude to the song. The story of deeds and sacrifice may not be as romantic, but it is far more interesting and instructive than the story of suffering, since life is lived more arduously than a fairy tale is told" [Franko, 1978, vol. 14; p. 244]. This emphasizes the monumentality and panoramic nature of the text, highlighting the deep-rootedness of the writer's artistic thinking in the folk worldview, ancient oral literature, and particularly the heroic epic. In the mythical structure of the novel, the epic thought clearly stands out, connected to the problem of national

¹ The *Boryslav Dilogy* – a conventional name we use for the two works (the novels *Boryslav Laughs* and *Boa Constrictor*) – is justified by their shared characters and issues, which are revealed through similar plot devices.

evolution, the idea of building a nation through the achievements of a particular hero, in this case, Dovbush: "Not with Dovbush's money..., but with our own strength, our own sacrifice, and our own labor must we move this nation forward" [Franko, 1978, vol. 14, p. 242]. The author's reference to this idea at the end of the novel points to the writer's intent to express the problem of national self-determination and the role of the leader in this process, which would later be most fully realized in the image of Moses from the eponymous poem, with whom the modern reader associates I. Franko's public activity and his desire to contribute to national development.

As T. Pastukh aptly puts it, I. Franko's debut novel contains "the embryo that will later fully develop in the subsequent works" [Pastukh, 1998, p. 24]. In terms of the evolution of aesthetic consciousness and the writer's skill, *Petriis i Dovbushchuks* can be called a symbolic sign, a mythical structure that condensed within it the mentally colored ontological content of the period of national construction. I. Franko creates a unique blend of novelistic characteristics and mythological features. The plot conflict of the enmity between the grandsons and great-grandsons of Oleksa Dovbush through the treasure of Oleksa is intermittently supplemented by a semi-fantastical storyline involving the actions of a mysterious man (resembling an old sage or magician), who repeatedly saves Petriis' son, as the latter is destined to "serve the great cause of the movement of the people" [Franko, 1978, vol. 14, p. 44]. Ultimately, this semi-real old man, after nearly half a century of hiding in underground caves, reveals that he is Dovbush, who had long been considered dead, with the memory of him passed down to future generations as a sacred relic, a symbol of the nation's endurance and immortality. In the figure of this national hero, a remarkable intertwining of the real (epic) and the timeless (mythical) takes place. Therefore, the reception of the novel can be characterized as the experience of a myth. The horizon of expectation for this text provokes the reader to perceive the action as being identified with the content of rituals and tasks of a spiritual nature. The understanding of cyclical time, which implies "even a mental ascent to Eden (towards higher, true priorities)" [Pikhmanets, 2012, p. 258], in the discourse of texts correlates with the mythological possibility of restoring the holistic image of the universe. I. Franko's *Petriis i Dovbushchuks* became the first attempt in Ukrainian literature to overcome the tragedy of the individual consciousness of modernist man, caused by the sense of a rupture in existence. And although this predominantly romantic-style work of Franko does not represent a complete mythological structure, it reveals its embryonic forms, which later became achievements of psychological imagery in modernist literature. In this regard, the conclusion of M. Moklytsia is noteworthy: "The interest in myth initiated by the romantics reached its apogee in modernism. Thanks to the literature of modernism, there was a reorientation of the general attitude towards myth" [Моклиця, 2002, p. 43].

The first sign of the modernist mode of artistic generalization was the attempt to overcome the previously obligatory plot structure. This is reflected in the absence of a clear cause-and-effect relationship. For example, to capture the reader's interest and build intrigue, I. Franko uses techniques of retrospection (first, the enmity between the Petriis and Dovbushchuks is mentioned, the old Petriis' obsession with reconciling the two families, and then – through a confession scene – it is explained that this idea is the result of Dovbush's will) and foreshadowing the future (Olesia Batlanivna's dream predicts her death in the river, as well as the misfortune of Andriy, who will be tormented by Dovbush's descendants and saved from the "desert" by the national hero himself). These techniques are strengthened by fatal feelings, the influence of magical powers, and the dominance of the codes of blessing and curse. They function as an immediate given, often intertwined and unmotivated (in the first version of the novel, Dovbush curses his sons in his death scene, while in the second version, he blesses them instead). The impression arises that the writer views human life not as a linear segment (between birth and death), but as a constantly repeating Mythological cycle of rebirth for a new stage of existence. The violation of narrative structure with the aim of entering another – transcendental – world is also evident in the absence of clear categories of beginning and end. The narrative, being a manifestation of the infinite, the impersonal sacred idea of the "movement of the Ukrainian people", does not begin with a simple plot setup, but with an attempt to penetrate the inner world of the hero, whose family is meant to become the bearer of the aforementioned great idea: "...the conscious equilibrium of the spirit marked every step of his life" [Franko, vol. 14, p. 9]. Representations of continuous cyclical processes, which possess natural self-sufficiency

and completeness, are also subordinated to the technique of an open ending, characteristic mainly of modernist literature (under the influence of Isaac Blyayberg, Andriy emerges from the spiritual decline he fell into after marrying Kralinska, he reflects on his own enlightenment activity; but here, his path is once again crossed by Dozia (a woman), he forgives her betrayal, and the author raises the question: "Is she a burden for Andriy now or not?"). This innovative method of structuring the plot becomes a favorite technique of I. Franko, constantly appearing in almost every subsequent work ("Crossroads," "Khmelnyskyi and the Sorcerer," "The Wing of a Jay," etc.). The history of the hero's spiritual search becomes an allegorical depiction of the path that all humanity has passed. Therefore, the principle of openness and simultaneous self-sufficiency proves to be decisive in the construction of the work. The use of a cyclical form to explore the contradictory reality is also evident in the novel *Petrii i Dovbushchuk* through the tendency to unconditionally identify various characters. Time, people, and events in the overall context are considered as a cyclical chain. By blurring the line between the real and the fantastical world, I. Franko strings the plot components onto a single axis – the idea of unity and continuity of generations in fulfilling the mission of the Ukrainian people, a role entrusted to Petrii by the national hero and carefully guarded by Oleksa Dovbush at the crossroads of life's failures and tragedies. Like a good angel – the bearer of the transcendental world – Oleksa appears on Andriy's path at moments when the young man is in mortal danger. Interestingly, this "mysterious man against the bloody backdrop of the evening sky" appears in decisive, fateful moments and always symbolizes a new stage in Andriy's life. Carefree childhood, the illusory belief that one can "be the first to extend a hand of agreement to implacable opponents" [Franko, 1978, vol. 14, p. 75], and disappointment, spiritual decline, "the struggle with oneself, the most important for one who is dedicated to some high idea" [Ibid., p. 137] – this is the semantic load of the rings in the chain of spiritual evolution of Petrii's son, whose connecting marker is the appearance of Dovbush – "the mysterious old man with his arms crossed over his chest". This symbol-gesture is clearly not accidental, as it resembles a mandala, and thus symbolizes the transcendental unity and determinism of the aforementioned stages. However, the ontological purpose of the sacred image of the national hero – Dovbush – does not end here. As Oleksa is dying, he says: "My suffering ends now, your suffering begins now. Through suffering to deeds – that is your destiny!" [Ibid., p. 113]. Moreover, Dovbush believes that for his death "time has been written", for from that moment the work of enlightenment and unity of the Rusyns begins, to which he has dedicated his "sinful, bloody money."

Thus, Oleksa perceives his own death as a rebirth, the beginning of a new cyclical stage. The spirit of "Dovbush's deeds" continues its existence in the figure of Isaac Blyayberg – a Jewish foster child and at the same time the son of Oleksa and Emilia. By attributing Jewish origin to Isaac, I. Franko imbues this character with a messianic idea. Indeed, under Blyayberg's influence, Andriy is reborn and enters a new stage of awareness regarding the necessity of enlightenment and reformist activity for the spiritual awakening of the nation and its liberation from "Egyptian bondage": "Unfortunate land, unfortunate people!... Its leaders are like the rock weighing down on the People's House, but there is no Moses who could draw living, healing water from that rock!" [Ibid., p. 243]. In this way, the fantastical element – erasing temporal and even personal boundaries, the fiction of a universal, eternal, non-discrete continuum – allowed the writer to elevate the problem of the national hero, who seeks social justice by forcibly redistributing material values, to the level of the idea of a guide sent by God to fulfill the mission of the people's spiritual awakening. This mission involves the recognition of their identity, their national dignity, and uniqueness.

According to C.G. Jung, the mandala (from Sanskrit meaning "circle") is an archetype of wholeness that appears spontaneously in dreams, in certain conflict situations, and in schizophrenia as a psychological phenomenon; the strict order of such a circular design compensates for the disorder and confusion of the psychological state – either by constructing a center with which everything is interconnected, or through the concentric arrangement of the disordered, the multiple, the opposing, and the irreconcilable [Jung, 1972, pp. 3-4]. To embody this process within artistic discourse, I. Franko "chooses" a centripetal structure for the novel, organizing the material in a cyclical manner, thereby creating a deliberately syncretic genre framework. The writer's subconscious resorts to constructing an individual mandala within the

novel, meant to compensate for the disorder of the spiritual life of the characters, who represent two rivaling families. According to C.G. Jung, the subject of such a mandala becomes the Self, which “encompasses the totality of the psyche – both its conscious and unconscious parts,” and “often the individual mandala reveals a division into a light and dark half, with symbols typical for each” [Jung, 1972, p. 5].

I. Franko’s passion for using artistic images based on associations with the realms of good/evil, divine/diabolical, spiritual/material raises no doubts. The traditional opposition of binary components of the transcendental world in his works reveals a tendency toward merging them into a distinct, undivided binarity, whose archetypal source is the mythological image of the Trickster – a peculiar transformation of the twin myth, in which the identity of the character constantly shifts, relating alternately to the animalistic and the divine worlds [Turchyna, 2023, p. 6.].

The character of Nevelychkyi is endowed with romantic-baroque traits of a jester and at the same time a chameleon-like *kharakternyk* (a kind of folk sorcerer), qualities that are close to those of a trickster. The adventurous-detective storyline of his relationship with the Dovbushchuk gang reaches its climax in the scene of revenge and self-destruction of the Dovbush family (with Nevelychkyi as the main instigator of the fiery-bloody spectacle). As the plot develops, this line takes on a more philosophical and psychological dimension. From the moment of Dovbush’s death, Nevelychkyi’s emotionally charged actions are shifted by the author into the psychological and even transcendental realm, and the narrative thread tied to this character becomes intertwined with the figure of Isaac Blyayberg, the illegitimate son of Oleksa, who, together with Petrii, decides to engage in the enlightenment of the Jewish population, believing it to be an obstacle to the development of the Ukrainian nation. While searching for Dovbush’s treasures in Rozhirche, Nevelychkyi comes across Emilia’s corpse and, from a small, somewhat decayed note, learns the mystery of Isaac’s origins. From that point on, Nevelychkyi’s treasure hunt becomes merely a detective-style narrative device, a thread that maintains the reader’s interest right up to the moment of the enlightenment gathering of the Jews under Isaac’s leadership.

This plot element is the most infused in the novel with internally-formed images of archetypal origin. It serves as a study of the psychological moment of inner division within Isaac’s soul, in whose consciousness the impression arises that “the spirit almost simultaneously soars to divinity and descends into demonism” [Franko, 1978, vol. 14, p. 173]. Under the pressure of the Jewish community, Blyayberg performs an act of renouncing apostasy, standing “pale as death”, feeling that Nevelychkyi is watching him “with a demonic triumph” [Ibid., p. 173]. The ideological direction of the mentioned epithets, metaphors, and comparisons is reinforced by the repetition of synonymous imagery in other parts of the plot. For example, the “bloodied face” of the dying Andriy in the “wilderness” was “pale as a corpse..., and the veins stood out on his body like thick blue snakes” [Ibid., p. 85]. The image of the satanic serpent is also presented through an internal metonymic shift in the description of Emilia’s corpse. At that moment, the frightened Nevelychkyi “felt as if a demonic smile of mockery and scorn occasionally flitted across that bony face” [Ibid., p. 135].

In terms of constructing a literary work, its subtext is interpreted by literary scholars as a component of the plot that is not always formally explicit, yet remains a significant element. To a certain extent, its hidden meaning is revealed through the logic of the figurative structure, the specific nature of the interaction between artistic components, and, above all, through their accumulation, repetition, and associative chains. The leitmotif serves as an important method of organizing the content of a literary work, since, as T. Bovsunivska notes, it “reflects the image of the character as the bearer of an idea in the full richness of their functions”, and the recurrence or modification of imagery is subordinated to the goal of preserving a centralizing meaning [Bovsunivska, 1998, p. 25].

In I. Franko’s novel *Petrii i Dovbushchuks*, distant repetitions primarily concern four characters: Andriy, Isaac, Emilia, and Nevelychkyi. Paying attention to the anthroponym Isaac (the biblical “son of promise”), we observe a certain pattern: he is the child of true love between the sanctified national hero Dovbush and Emilia – just as Isaac is the son of Abraham (the forefather of the Jewish people) and his beloved wife. Both Isaacs were born to elderly parents and are therefore seen as the fruits of mature spiritual love as well as divine providence.

Through the biblical Isaac came Jacob, the progenitor of the tribes of Israel. Thanks to Isaac Blyayberg, as mentioned earlier, Andriy awakens to spiritual work in the name of building a nation. Moreover, the image of Isaac is directly connected with the figure of Nevelytskyi: under the influence of this *kharakternyk* (a kind of mystic warrior), Blyayberg first renounces his reformist plans, experiences a stage of worldview duality, and confronts his own spiritual baseness (the negative aspect of the “I”). From this realization of cosmic identity, a new image of the self is born – one ready to serve through personal experience for the restoration of the spiritual value of national self-awareness. Expanding on Jacques Lacan’s theory, Viktor Kytastyi notes that the “mirror stage” is essential for a person to construct an image of their own “self” [Kytastyi, 1999, p. 9]. Thus, the encounter with the Other – the all-knowing, opposing “I” – is an ontologically necessary stage of death and rebirth. I. Franko arrives at this idea in the binary titular image of the Petriis and Dovbushchuks unconsciously, guided by the “binary code of symbolic compositions in Ukrainian culture,” which, according to I. Moiseiv, “emerged as a result of the contamination of autochthonous pantheism and Christian mysticism”. Therefore, “the main principle of mental thinking became not ‘God’ or ‘the tsar’, but the ‘dove-spirit’, the eternal flow of ‘metamorphoses’” [Moiseiv, 1999, p. 315].

Thus, the described binarity of the main conflicts in the novel *Petriis i Dovbushchuks* testifies not only to its mythological foundation but also to a shift in worldview toward modernist consciousness, when collective experience is “tried on” by the psyche of the individual, contributing to the restoration of the lost integrity of being. Therefore, the principle of binarity can be considered a structuring factor of the genre of the analyzed novel, which is perceived as a grand parable-mandala that ensured, in the words of T. Pastukh, “the movement of the character along one evolutionary turn with an exit to the beginning of another such turn,” that is, “the passage of a stage of worldview and psychological evolution and the possibility of entering another, higher stage” [Pastukh, 1998, p. 21].

And although due to this ontological orientation *Petriis i Dovbushchuks* can be classified as a novel, the parabolic method of organizing the artistic material introduces a wave of lyricism in the exploration of the character’s inner world, an emphasized conflict, and the novelistic and dramatic quality of psychological states, characteristic mainly of modernist aesthetics. At times, I. Franko even artificially interrupts the narrative with “author’s remarks”, melodramatic insertions (“Do you know what it means for a weak woman, with a child, to wander through the Carpathian forests in the sharp winter?” [Franko, 1978, vol. 14, p. 127]), or stylizations after a duma – the heroic epic of Ukrainians (“It wasn’t a startled doe, nor a wounded deer fleeing on anxious legs – it was our unfortunate Olena running breathless... At last, she burst into an open, empty field, leapt over the sharp stones, leaving bloody traces from her small feet, lowering her face, seemingly unable to look at the world, at the beauty of nature, at the shine of the golden sun!” [Ibid., p. 98]). These efforts testify to the writer’s awareness of the need to shift focus from external events to the “I”, to the emotions and reflections of the subject of action.

A somewhat different type of artistic subject is present in I. Franko’s so-called *Boryslav Dilogy* – the novels *Boryslav Laughs* and *Boa Constrictor*. The leader-hero in these works, united by revolutionary pathos and a “strike” plot, is also partly imbued with subjectivist intentions related to the formation of political discourse in Boryslav aimed at the liberation / emancipation of workers and peasants. Therefore, it is no coincidence that R. Holyk calls Franko’s mentioned works a “modernization, a literary invention of the urban working class in the Western European fashion,” which contributed to the shaping of a new social reality, the modernization of society, and its worldview [Pastukh, 2023, p. 54].

The state of apathy, despair, and inability to achieve a better life is the general characteristic of the Galician working class, which is visible even through the mask of romantic idealization, phantasmagoria, and artificiality, even in the image of the people’s leader, the organizer of the rebellion, Benedio Synitsia.

The young I. Franko is troubled by a provocative problem: should the destruction of social injustice be pursued by a truthful, peaceful, reformist path (the position of Benedio), or by the road of revenge, by angrily branding the crimes of the exploiters with the goal of revolutionary-bloody retribution (the convictions of the Basarab brothers and Prydevolia)? At first, the reader may think that the author’s sympathies lie with Benedio, but when the story of the murder of

Itsyk Baukh by Sen and Pryidevolia is woven into the plot, I. Franko, through dialogue, models the conflicts between two ideological positions: we stole because “this is our labor, our blood,” and we did it not for ourselves but “for the community” – versus the idea that it should not have been done because “a pure cause requires pure hands”. In the resolution, the previously ideal hero Benedio agrees with Pryidevolia that “manure is not cleared away with silk, but with dung forks” [Franko, 1978, vol. 15, p. 429], and accepts the “bloody money” into the workers’ fund to start a “righteous war.” In this way, the novel’s plot prompts the reader to search for the reasons behind such ambiguity and inconsistency in the artistic subject.

The ideologically vivid conflict in Benedo Synytsia’s consciousness is directly linked to the titular image of laughter in Boryslav. As a rule, the author provides the title of the work as a key for interpretation. By using it, the recipient anticipates the content of the text, which affects the emotional and evaluative side of perception, while simultaneously activating subconscious factors. The concept of laughter is played out in Franko’s novel through the plot collision of the workers’ cash box being stolen by Jewish capitalists, which is vital for the strikers to continue their protest. In the dialogue-persuasion, Herman Goldkremer argues with the workers about what Boryslav is, who makes it up, and consequently – who will laugh at whom. “Boryslav – that’s us! And we are now laughing at you!” – both conflicting sides believe [Ibid., p. 463]. Such a naturalistic comparison of the city, the industrial center, to a living being, and the people’s feeling of their own undifferentiation from it, reveals the process of mythologizing Boryslav itself and the entire social order. Therefore, in this grotesque image, one can trace archetypal semantics. It is, in itself, an amazing combination of the principle of duality (laughter as joy from victory and ridicule from realizing hopelessness) and demonic laughter, the premonition of which even more fully grips the reader when he learns about the strike’s collapse, the Basarabs’ intention to “set fire to this damned nest at all four corners” [Ibid, p. 474]. The ruin of the industrial center burned by the workers, as a possible resolution of the unfinished novel, would be horrifying. This prompts the consideration of the concept of laughter in the title of the work as a profoundly absurd grotesque image. T. Hundorova interprets the metaphor “the laughter of Boryslav” from the perspective of the eschatological myth, “where the center is the Last Judgment, personified by the worker Boryslav” [Hundorova, 2006, p. 66]. The analysis conducted demonstrates the impact of the “title – key words” complex on the reader’s subconscious. The signs-concepts concentrate the information that is important both in the ontological and psychological aspects for the author, the hero, and the reader. Key images create an inseparable unity with the title, which manifests itself in the structure of the artistic text, its compositional and stylistic features.

As is known, the most important details of a work are usually combined with the key moments of the plot, while the beginning and the ending create its distinctive plot framework. The events that fill this outline from within constitute the composition of the work. If we consider the peculiarities of the plot-compositional structure of the novel *Boa Constrictor*, we notice the principle of concentric circles. The axis of the entire plot is the titular archetypal image of the boa constrictor. It, combined with the character of the capitalist Herman Goldkremer, who loved to “stare into the terrifying, satanically fire-lit eyes of the snake” in the picture and feel “some kind of dark, superstitious fear of those eyes” [Franko, 1978, vol. 14, p. 372], forms the “contour of the plot,” enclosing the lives of all the characters within the “circle of its flexible body.” The inner world, the deep psychological experiences of any character in this text, represent yet another, although smaller, circle of influence of the peculiar demon-creator. Its action is all-encompassing, eternal, self-sufficient, and infallible, much like the influence of the archetype on the human subconscious.

The snake is the internal-formative image that, with its own energetic force, attracts all other signs-concepts, fills semantic gaps, and permeates both external and internal actions. Any of its victims resembles the doe from that terrifying yet beloved drawing by Herman: “Large eyes, driven upward by the agony of death, shine as if in tears”, the head “twists in its final convulsions” [Ibid., p. 371]. In a state of such panic-fear before the face of inevitable “death,” Goldkremer lives constantly. It seems that Herman senses the collapse of his business, but for him, obsessed with the pursuit of wealth, this turn of events is perhaps worse than death itself. The approach of this catastrophe is anticipated by the sick consciousness of the protagonist, primarily through confrontations with the workers. From their mouths, he hears words of a curse

that has fallen upon Goldkremer for his mistreatment of the workers – manifested in the form of his idiot son. The fatal impact of the words: “God’s curse is upon me,” Herman perceives in everything: at his feet rolls the head (skull) of Ivan Pivtorak, pulled from the pit – and he “feels a cold, tremor, weakness” in his body, notices the persistent idiocy of his wife and son – and feels as though he were “in a butcher’s stall, filled with the smell of fresh meat” [Ibid., p. 405]. Finally, poisoned by fatal, devilish wine, in an erotic dream-hallucination, he converses with the goddess of love and happiness, catches the illusion, and feels how it slips away. This is a very interesting moment of the protagonist’s psychoanalytic outpouring, the release of unsatisfied desires from the subconscious, which was brilliantly anticipated by I. Franko in the artistic discourse.

The archetypal image of the snake so intensely concentrates the protagonist’s subconscious that, at the moment of his apogee of happiness-illusion, the images of the snake and his own son merge. In such a transcendental moment, a foreboding of a future apocalyptic ending arises. The image of the snake’s mouth, which “opens widens, like a bloody abyss,” swallowing Herman, is linked through a remarkable chain of associations with the eyes of the snake, which play “with malicious pleasure” [Ibid., p. 431].

In most mythologies, the snake coiled in a ring was a kind of embodiment of the ontological beginning. The origins of this image can be traced to the uroboric semantics, which are part of the archetypal series of primary elements of being, alongside fire, air, water, the world tree, the maternal womb, the earth-mother, etc. According to V. Zavadska, the snake is one of the main images in world mythology: “It is both the creator of the world, the embodiment of the elements, the spirit of the locality, the protector, the sexual symbol, the embodiment of the evil spirits, the ruler of water and underground fire, and the constant fairy-tale antagonist of the knight” [Zavadska, 2002, p. 144].

The actualization of the uroboric symbolism by I. Franko in the *Boryslav Dilogy* leaves no doubt. The most convincing argument for this thought is the analysis of the internal-formal titular image of the snake, which is both a coiled serpent and its bloody all-devouring mouth, which not only forms the “contour of the plot” but also absorbs, with its semantics, the entire real, conscious, or unconscious chronotope. Just like in *Petriis i Dovbushchuks*, in the story *Boa Constrictor*, I. Franko uses the technique of organizing events by creating a vision of cyclically-continuous time. This time, the structuring device is no longer the image of the national hero, but the mythological idea of the primal deity, the seed of creation – the Uroboros, which conceals within itself the mystery of the unity of opposites – divine and diabolical, masculine and feminine, as well as the impulse of creation. B. Tykholoz notes that the complex, ambivalent image of the snake as a “metamorphosis of Franko’s spirit” can be traced repeatedly throughout his work, “starting from his earliest poetic attempts and continuing through the texts of his final period of creativity” [Tykholoz, 2007, p. 253].

The long-form prose of I. Franko on the Boryslav theme is not just a forecast of a future social war, but a naturalistic study of the pathological type of person and the society that consists of such individuals. This idea is especially emphasized by the synonymy of the final images in the story and the novel. Clearly, the “red rooster” on the Boryslav oil field and the bloody abyss – the snake’s mouth – are metonymic substitutes for the idea of the spiritual decline of Ukrainian society in the time of I. Franko. Perhaps this is a symbol-forecast of a future revolution that will utterly destroy the gene pool and cultural consciousness of the people by turning the individual into a small, helpless cog in the social process.

The naturalistic manifestation in the plot fabric of the novel is the allegorical image-forecast of Boryslav’s apocalyptic end. Within it, two parabolic branches can be distinguished. The first, fairy-tale side, consists of the rumors among the people that soon (“when the time comes”) the corpses of those who perished in the struggle with the Tatars, the bones of those upon whom the village was founded, “will break through the earth, demolish all of Boryslav, and set out into the world to wage war”. The other, mythological layer of the narrative predicts a swift apocalyptic finale: “a dreadful underground monster... will break through the earthly veil, destroy the poor peaceful village, and annihilate them and their children to the last,” but this monster will not be “the corpses of ancient knights, but this vile, black, stinking slime that was now scorching their meadows, and was soon to spread throughout the world as refined oil—bringing profit to thousands, loss to thousands, and to them only misery and ruin!” [Franko, 1979, vol. 22, p. 135].

By the way, this plot element is also linked to Herman Goldkremer's youth, when he simply "sipped boiling water", not even thinking about great ventures. But even then, his moral being had already been undermined by the miserable, beggarly childhood, which "numbed his nerves, dulled his mind to the point where the misfortune and crying of others could not move him, that the sight of need only aroused disgust, but not mercy" [Ibid., p. 114]. Later, this moral deformity becomes one of the greatest businessmen in Boryslav, and the fate of every Galician worker depends on his sick, often despotic whims. To Herman, blinded by the fever of gold, it seems that the whole world should assist him in becoming rich, regardless of any moral or humane transgressions by the owner. Returning from Vienna, where he concluded a criminal deal with Van-Ghecht for the purchase of a project to process oil wax into "beeswax", so-called ceresine, he looks at the impoverished, sun-scorched Galician villages and thinks: "The sun is my faithful ataman. By drying these fields, sucking out all the living juices from the land, it works for me, it drives cheap and submissive workers to my pits, to my factories!" [Franko, 1978, vol. 15, p. 344]. Together with other "like-minded" people (for example, Leon Hammerchlag, who, according to tradition, "confirmed the future happiness of his house" with bloody sacrifices – birds whose blood was to "unite the spirits of the place", and the supposedly accidental injury of Benedo Synytisia, but subconsciously feeling that those "great" black drops of blood, like living iron nails, pierced and ruined the happiness of the businessman [Ibid., pp. 267-268].

Herman unintentionally approaches that mythologically-sacred day of reckoning, which inevitably "must come" to radically change existing social relations. As we see, this image-forecast with its dominant semantics is directly connected to the previously analyzed sacred moment of the death of Oleksa Dovbush (from the novel *Petriis i Dovbushchuks*), after which the "beginning of the work" of the revival of the Rusyns begins. This synonymy of inner-form images in two of Franko's novels suggests that the strike and future fire in Boryslav are a transformation of the archetypal idea of "being swallowed", in order to bring about the uroboric restoration of lost wholeness, that is, the transpersonal return to the maternal womb, the image of the Great and Good Mother. Intuitively sensing the loss of our people's sense of national dignity, which is based on high moral and humane principles, the awareness of the role of the individual in state-building processes, I. Franko, guided by the need for a change in social circumstances, resorts to the creation of such artistic structures that would condense the national issues and, through the impression of their own wholeness (mandalas), restore the people's faith in the sacred idea of national evolution.

The artistic discourse of the *Boryslav Dilogy* testifies to the process of diminishing the phantom revolutionary idea, an almost scientific study of the influence of Marxism-socialism on the human personality. By adapting socialist teachings to the real needs of the Galician peasantry, I. Franko defended the necessity of raising the level of national consciousness and the formation of the Ukrainian people's worldview – through the actualization of national priorities. Such persistent educational work (scientific, economic-political), in the artist's understanding, was meant to lead to a consolidation of spiritual and intellectual forces, where the people, from an amorphous mass, would transform into an active force.

The populist sympathies of I. Franko, combined with modern individualism and aestheticism, in the context of Ya. Polishchuk's reflections on the "vulnerable feature" of the initial modernist discourse in Ukrainian literature [Polishchuk, 1998, pp. 15-16], testify to the gravitation of the author's consciousness toward a distinctly modernist discourse, despite his declaration of the principles of service to the community and the like. Moreover, the analyzed elements of modernist poetics in the stylistically diverse samples of Franko's long-form prose of 1876–1884, which are often marked by a high level of reflexivity and open the way to mastering the mythological codes of collective memory, demonstrate the inclination of Franko's individual creative method toward syncretism – one of the manifestations of which was the author's idea of the "whole man."

The analysis of I. Franko's long-form prose from 1876–1884 allows us to assert that the appeal to diverse mythopoetic structures (such as folkloric or archetypal images, national cultural codes, etc.) and their poetological manifestations (artistic conventionality, fantasy, the unreal, philosophical ideas, as well as cyclical and parabolic techniques of plot construction) play a decisive role in the formation of the modernist discourse of Franko's early long-form prose.

To the greatest extent, the mythological element is inherent in the first romantic novel *Petriis i Dovbushchuks*, which is connected with the reflection on the problem of the leader's influence on the processes of shaping the national idea. The image of Dovbush is presented in a mythological sense as an immortal primordial ancestor, an eternal traveler, whose timeless presence in the Carpathian region of that time guarantees the unity of the descendants of two warring families. In the description of the moment when the 119-year-old Dovbush appears to his heirs, there is a mythological gesture, essentially sacred in nature, which resembles the sacred symbolism of the mandala and encourages the confused descendants to cease fighting for "bloody money." In this episode, the real and the timeless interact in such a way that in the chronotope of the novel, cyclical mythopoetic factors become decisive. This is manifested primarily through such plot devices as retrospection, prospection, the creation of a detective intrigue, an open ending, the overcoming of conventional plot structure, and so on.

Overall, the novel *Petriis i Dovbushchuks* does not represent a complete mythological structure, but it reveals its beginnings, characterized by a cyclical method of organizing the material and actualizing the symbolism of nation-building, which is typical of heroic epic. The genre structure of the novel also contains sporadic signs of the genres of the parable (parabolic techniques), folk songs (elements of stylization), and fairy tales (allegory, binary imagery). The mentioned syncretism of the novel's genre framework, combined with the centripetal structure of the text, creates the impression of constructing an individual mandala within the plot, designed to compensate for the disorder of the characters' spiritual lives. Another additional structural factor in the work is the use of artistic images formed on the basis of mythological oppositions such as good/evil, light/darkness, divine/devilish, spiritual/material. These create a sense of binary opposition in the world overall, actualizing associative parallels with biblical and mythological images of Moses, Abraham's son Isaac, the serpent-devil, and the Trickster as a transformation of the twin myth. In these narrative moves, the binary code of symbolic cultural compositions often emerges, which, in the psychoanalytic tradition, is associated with the so-called "mirror stage," activating the "death-rebirth" phase for the sake of the national idea.

In the large prose of I. Franko on the Boryslav theme, there is a similar type of genre structure aimed at revealing the important idea of a people's leader, but through the lens of a social rather than folkloric-mythological approach. The "righteous war" in Boryslav for the social and national awakening of workers is led by Benedo Synytsia, who initially holds reformist positions, not supporting the idea of bloody retribution. However, over time, the ideal hero accepts "bloody money," as a result of which the high idea contrasts with the real methods of its implementation. In the open ending of the unfinished naturalistic novel *Boryslav Laughs*, this ideological conflict also takes on the mythologized context typical of I. Franko's artistic thinking: a threat arises that the Boryslav land, as a living entity, will swallow its inhabitants, as some of the rebels consider the possibility of setting the oil fields on fire. The vision of such an apocalyptic ending arises through the principle of the hermeneutic circle, uniting the titular image of the laughter of the awakened Boryslav and the final premonition of the city's demonic laughter on the brink of destruction. In the mentioned dominant concept of laughter, the traits of an absurd grotesque image vividly manifest, built on the intertwining of binary oppositions (good/evil, real/irrational, laughter/guffaw, etc.).

The naturalistic discourse of the *Boryslav Dilogy* is characterized by a marked passion for repeating horrifying, grotesque, fatal images (ruin, fire, subterranean monster, day of reckoning, etc.), the most striking of which is the titular leitmotif image of the snake-boa. It is artistically charged with biblical and mythological reminiscences, including uroboric ones. The images of the snake-boa and the bloodthirsty, all-consuming maw form the "outline of the plot" in the works of the *Boryslav Dilogy*, combining their semantics of the real and the unreal, the conscious and the unconscious. This method of organizing artistic material creates a vision of cyclically-continuous time, which is generally characteristic of I. Franko's large prose of 1876-1884, particularly in *Petriis i Dovbushchuks*.

The structure of all the analyzed works reveals the author's tendency to model various parameters of the artistic world in the plot through the lens of subconscious factors, often rooted in mythological topoi. The most expressive example of the artistic embodiment of these intentions is the representation of the problem of the folk leader (his formation, influence on

the surroundings, the immortality of ideas, or the testing of their endurance), which is linked to biblical-mythological images of Moses, the Wise Elder, the Trickster, and the Serpent-Tempter. These are most often aligned with the poetics of dreams, binary artistic images that delve into the transcendental, as well as the techniques of psychoanalytic speech of the characters and the repetition of horrifying, grotesque, fatal images. These plot-compositional features create the impression of cyclicity in the chronotope, mythologizing it and modifying the genre and stylistic features of the works.

Considering the frequent interconnections between the mythological and the unconscious in I. Franko's synthetic creative method of 1876–1884 – which significantly anticipated both the development of theories of the unconscious and the formation of early modernist discourse in Ukrainian literature – we see promise in a comprehensive study of the parameters of the psychoanalytic discourse within Franko's creative legacy and their influence on the shaping of Ukrainian modernism as a mature phenomenon.

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MYTHOPOETIC FACTORS IN FORMATION OF EARLY MODERNIST DISCOURSE IN IVAN FRANKO'S LONG-FORM PROSE (1876–1884)

Svitlana M. Lutsak, Ivano-Frankivsk National Medical University (Ukraine).

e-mail: slucak@ifnmu.edu.ua

Nataliia M. Vivcharyk, Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University (Ukraine).

e-mail: nataliia.vivcharyk@cnu.edu.ua

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Key words: *mythopoeitics, early modernist discourse, synthesis of the individual creative method, long prose, folkloric and archetypal images, genre structure, composition, chronotope.*

The article analyzes Ivan Franko's long-form prose of 1876–1884 from the perspective of mythopoeitics, which played an important role in shaping the writer's early modernist aesthetics. In the author's stylistically diverse texts, a high degree of reflexivity is observed, which opened the way to mastering the mythological codes of collective memory and contributed to the formation of a synthetic individual creative method, one manifestation of which was Franko's concept of the "whole man."

The aim of the article is to reveal the significance of mythopoeitic structures (images of folkloric or archetypal types, cultural codes, plot-compositional models, etc.) in the formation of the modernist discourse of Franko's early long prose. From this aim arise the following *objectives*: to analyze the influence of mythology as a dominant factor on the processes of shaping the early modernist artistic discourse in the novel *Petriis i Dovbushchuks*, as well as in the so-called *Boryslav Dilogy* (the novels *Boryslav Laughs* and *Boa Constrictor*); to determine the relationship between the writer's modernist experiments and the synthetic features of his individual creative method; to highlight the impact of mythological semantics on the representation of the theme of the leader; to characterize the interaction of mythopoeitic topoi with the binarity of artistic images and techniques of plot construction; to outline the mythological parameters of the chronotope and their influence on the plot-compositional structure and the genre-stylistic features of Franko's long-form prose of 1876–1884.

The implementation of these objectives required the use of the following *methods*: mythopoeitic, receptive-interpretive, and hermeneutic.

The analysis of Franko's long-form prose of 1876–1884 provides grounds to claim that the appeal to diverse mythopoeitic structures (images of folkloric or archetypal types, national cultural codes, etc.) and their poetological manifestations (artistic conventionality, fantasy, the unreal, philosophical ideas, cyclical and parabolic techniques of plot construction) played a decisive role in the formation of the modernist discourse of Ivan Franko's early long prose.

It has been revealed that mythopoeitic factors influenced the innovative style-shaping already in his first romantic novel *Petriis i Dovbushchuks*, which manifested itself at various levels of the text.

The image of Dovbush is represented as an immortal forefather, an eternal wanderer, whose timeless presence in the Carpathian region ensures unity among the descendants of two feuding families. In the scene where the 119-year-old Dovbush appears to his heirs, there is a mythological gesture reminiscent of the sacred symbolism of a mandala, which urges the bewildered descendants to cease their struggle over "bloody money." In this episode, the real and the timeless interact to such a degree that cyclical mythopoeitic factors become decisive in the chronotope of the novel. This is evident on multiple levels of the artistic structure of the text, particularly through plot techniques such as retrospection, prospection, the creation of a detective intrigue, an open ending, and the overcoming of conventional plot structures. Mythological syncretism is also observed in the genre structure of the novel, which partially includes elements of heroic epic, historical ballad (duma), parable, and fairy tale. Among the important structure-forming elements of the text is the type of imagery based on oppositions such as good/evil, light/darkness, divine/demonic, spiritual/material, which establish a sense of binarity in the fictional world.

In Franko's realist major prose dealing with the Boryslav theme (*Boa Constrictor* and *Boryslav Laughs*), a similar type of genre structure is observed, where the author's idea of the people's guide is revealed more strongly through a social lens. In the description of the "just war" in Boryslav, a lofty ideal contrasts with the real methods of its implementation, resulting in the ideological conflict in *Boryslav Laughs* acquiring a mythologized context characteristic of naturalism. The image of the Boryslav land combines opposing ideas: the joy of Boryslav's social awakening and the foreboding demonic laughter of a city on the verge of collapse. In analyzing the concept of laughter, its grotesque nature is characterized as being based on a web of binary oppositions (good/evil, real/unreal, laughter/snickering, etc.). In the naturalistic discourse of the *Boryslav Dilogy*, the repetition of horrifying grotesque death images is noted (ruin, fire, an underground monster, day of reckoning, etc.), the dominant one being the image of the boa constrictor. This image is rich in biblical and mythological reminiscences, including ouroboric ones.

The ideological conflict of the works acquired a mythologized naturalistic context precisely through the depiction of Boryslav as a living organism that balances on the boundary of polar visions – from the titular image of laughter to the final apocalyptic guffaw.

The analysis of Ivan Franko's prose of 1876–1884 revealed the writer's artistic tendency toward the implementation of mythological topoi, the most striking example of which is the representation of the problem of the popular leader, associated with biblical and mythological figures such as Moses, the Wise Old Man, the Trickster, and the Serpent-Temptor. The artistic structure of these texts is dominated by a poetics of binary images immersed in the transcendent, as well as elements of psychoanalytic confession of the characters and the repetition of terrifying, grotesque, deathly images. The identified plot-compositional features create an impression of a cyclical chronotope, mythologizing it and modifying the generic and stylistic characteristics of the works.

Given the frequent intersections of the mythological and the unconscious in Franko's synthetic creative method of 1876–1884 – which significantly anticipated both the development of theories of the unconscious and the formation of early modernist discourse in Ukrainian literature – we see promising prospects in a comprehensive study of the psychoanalytic dimensions of Franko's artistic legacy and their influence on the emergence of Ukrainian modernism as a mature phenomenon.

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