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**John Wright,**  
PhD Assistant Professor, Slavic Department,  
Barnard College, New York, USA**THE READER'S PARTICIPATION IN THE POETIC ART OF VOLODYMYR SVIDZINSKY**

In Antonina Tymchenko's monograph on Ukrainian poet Volodymyr Svidzinsky, she uses the term *distant cycle* to denote instances of related lyrics separated physically within a collection or across collections, or even separated by a great span of time. The author of this article seeks to continue that work by attending to certain unusual features of three lyrics from the 1930s. The first two share a certain metrical peculiarity that suggests that the two lyrics be read together, although their themes are superficially unrelated. These two lyrics may be seen to constitute one of Tymchenko's distant cycles when read with a lyric from several years later. This later lyric shares nothing superficially with the first two, even metrically, but like them it invites the reader into the creative process. The present study explores the possibility that in Svidzinsky's lyrics, the reader is included in the creative process not only in some abstract manner, but also in a perfectly practical and observable way. While the study begins with observations apparently of a purely technical nature, it will be seen that these technical matters are an important part of Svidzinsky's creative process and of his relationship to the reader. In this way, the study contributes to a broad understanding of Svidzinsky's work: his technical interests and abilities, his inclusion of same in his conscious conception of his work (perhaps in the earliest stages), and his expectations of future readers.

**Keywords:** Svidzinsky, metrics, biography, letters, lyrics, analysis, process, cycle.

**Райт Джон,**  
кандидат філологічних наук,  
Барнард-коледж, Нью-Йорк, США**УЧАСТЬ ЧИТАЧА В ПОЕТИЧНІЙ ТВОРЧОСТІ ВОЛОДИМИРА СВІДЗІНСЬКОГО**

У монографії Антоніни Тимченко, присвяченій вивченню творчості українського поета Володимира Свідзінського, використано термін «дистантний цикл» на позначення споріднених текстів, фізично розділених у збірці чи збірках, або навіть написаних через великий проміжок часу. У нашій статті продовжуємо розгляд цього питання, звертаючи увагу на незвичайні риси трьох поезій В. Свідзінського 1930-х років. Перші два вірші об'єднані метричними особливостями, що дає підстави прочитувати обидва тексти разом, хоча їхні теми, на перший погляд, не пов'язані. Ці поезії можна вважати одним із дистантних циклів митця (за А. Тимченко), якщо їх розглядати поряд із лірикою, написаною кількома роками пізніше: пізніша лірика зовні не має нічого спільного з першими двома віршами, навіть метрично, але, як і вони, запрошує читача до творчого процесу. У нашій студії звертаємо увагу на можливість включення читача у творчий процес постання лірики В. Свідзінського – не лише абстрактно, але й у цілком практичний і видимий спосіб. Хоча дослідження починається зі спостережень, очевидно, суто технічного характеру, далі виявляємо, що ці технічні питання є важливою частиною творчого процесу В. Свідзінського та його стосунків із читачем. Отже, наша студія сприяє широкому розумінню літературної спадщини митця: його технічних прийомів і можливостей та очікування від майбутніх читачів.

**Ключові слова:** В. Свідзінський, метрика, біографія, листи, лірика, аналіз, процес, цикл.

Volodymyr Svidzinsky is one of the most remarkable poets of the 20th century. Many articles, several dissertations, and research monographs have analyzed his place in the context of the time: among the authors are such scholars as Emanuil Rais, Nabor Kerner, Ivan Dzyuba, Vasyl Stus, Eleonora Solovei. Iryna Smetana writes that "...більшість учених визнає, що художній твір – це мистецьке явище, у якому реалізовано естетичні цінності та який створено з метою вплинути засобами художнього слова на розум, почуття читачів і викликати в них певні переживання й роздуми" (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p. 11-12). We will argue that certain features in three of Svidzinsky's poems conjure the reader into the creative process itself, and that among the "переживання й роздуми" called up in the reader are the author's own experiences during the composition of these works. Thanks to this similarity, the poems may be taken as a "дистантний цикл" in the terminology of Antonina Tymchenko: "дистантні [цикли] вказують на інтертекстові єдності творів, віддалених один від одного часто й за часом написання, і за місцем розташування в художньому цілому тієї чи тієї книги" (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p. 337). Or, in different words, one might say that these poems require the reader's presence, not for interpretation or understanding, but merely so that their technical features come into full existence. Strange as this claim may sound, we will try to justify it throughout this paper. The **goal** is, using only basic knowledge of syllabotonic versification and the very texts in front of us, to demonstrate that the poet includes the reader's consciousness in the very conception of the work.

At the time of this writing, "Холодна тиша. Місяцю надламаний" ["Cold silence. O fractured moon"] may be found easily online, while "Огонь" ["The Fire"] may be elusive to the casual reader who lacks access to the recent two-volume collection edited by Eleonora Solovey<sup>1</sup>. The two poems, however, are found next to each other within the reconstruction of the collection *Медобір* [*The Medobir Forest*] in that edition. Further, Solovey's notes for the two poems show they are found together in two of the sources for this edition: on pages 111 and 112 of М-ЧМК (the notebook containing the handwritten manuscript of *Медобір*), and as

<sup>1</sup> Solovey's 2004 edition of Svidzinsky's works, obviously a labor of many years, is astounding. All who can work with its texts and editorial apparatus are quite lucky.

items 81 and 82 in М-ХІМ (the authorized typescript of *Медобір*)<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, we may call them a small *контактний цикл*, again using Tymchenko's terminology (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p. 328).

"Холодна тиша" appears first and should be taken as the reader's foundation for understanding "Огонь." Therefore, we shall approach it first.

Merely glancing at the number of syllables, and getting an idea of the arrangement of stresses, one might classify the line of "Холодна тиша. Місяцю надламаний" as blank verse, unrhymed iambic pentameter. Or one might guess that it is a kind of Ukrainian senarius. Paying closer attention to the details of the versification will reveal, however, that despite the uniform appearance of the printed lines, the meter of the poem is chimeric or metrically macaronic.

1. Холодна тиша. Місяцю надламаний,
2. Зо мною будь і освяти печаль мою.
3. Вона, як сніг на вітах, умиралася,
4. Вона, як сніг на вітах, і осиплеться.
5. Три радості у мене неодіймані:
6. Самотність, труд, мовчання. Туги злобної
7. Немає більше. Місяцю надламаний,
8. Я виноград відновлення у ніч несучу.
9. На мертвім полі стану помолитися,
10. І будуть зорі біля мене падати (Svidzins'kyj & Solovei, 2004, 213).

Each line contains twelve syllables, and eight of the lines have dactylic clausulae. That is, the final two syllables of most lines do not form sixth feet, and so these lines may be scanned as iambic pentameter (for these purposes, I count only primary stresses). Lines 2 and 8, however, are exceptional: their final syllables do carry primary stresses. Therefore, these two lines do not have dactylic clausulae and should be said to contain six feet, rather than the five that are usual in blank verse.

Both these feet consist of one full lexeme each, and both those lexemes belong to the first grammatical person: *мою* and *несу*. Eight of the poem's ten lines are iambic pentameter, so these "bonus" feet may be considered extrametrical. They have some other, additional nature, unlike that of the other metrical feet in the poem. We might call these feet *стону першої особи*, or *first-person feet*. These two first-person feet may represent the first-person speaker's own (anatomical) feet on which he will stand in the field.

Following this line of thought, we might note that the poem associates *печаль* with *сніг*, and both, less directly, with *зорі*. Standing still while snow falls down from tree branches may cause one's feet to be covered over by the snow. Snow is white, like the standard, five-foot *білий віри* environment that surrounds and hides these "first-person" extrametrical feet. And so, the extrametrical feet are the poet's own feet, but those feet are hidden by the "snow" all around them. We may fail to see his feet because they are obscured by the snow, as the metrical feet may be hidden among the more numerous dactylic clausulae.

One might restate the steps of thought in this way:

1. Attend to the metrical qualities of the poem.
2. Note the difference between the eight lines with dactylic clausulae and the two lines that have extra primary stresses on the final syllable, and so have not five feet, but six.
3. Make the connection between those two "extra" feet and the anatomical feet of the lyrical speaker on which he will stand in the field.
4. See that the speaker's feet might be covered and hidden by falling snow, just as the two "extrametrical" feet are obscured by the dactylic clausulae around them.
5. If the dactylic clausulae are like snow in this way, they are also white, like snow, in that they are the clausulae of lines of unrhymed iambic pentameter – *білий віри*.

We see that the paraphrasable content and metrical form are one whole. Their unity can be fulfilled and perceived only within the reader's attention, and its central image is the speaker's feet (perhaps covered with snow) as the speaker stands in prayer. Seeing how the speaker's feet are represented in the verse itself, the reader activates or realizes the speaker's prayer, or perhaps even the poet's resurrection<sup>3</sup>.

Note that the future-tense verbs in the poem, *осиплеться*, *стану*, and *будуть падати* are all part of this same scene or pair of scenes: the snow that will fall (completely), the stars that will rain down. Relative to the speaker's present, all this is in the future when the reader sees the relationship between the dactylic clausulae and the two feet that they surround and obscure.

"Холодна тиша" supposes that outside the lyric persona there is another mind that perceives the verse as verse and sees the relationship between its metrical qualities and the paraphrasable content. The reader is not addressed formally, but a mind viewing the text from the outside is included in the conception and content of the poem. The content itself is not complete until the reader enters into and finishes the creative act.

Now we may turn our attention to the second poem, "Огонь," with the experience of "Холодна тиша" still in memory.

- 1 Поклав на стіни крила нашорошені
- 2 І, наче бабка на листку водокрасу,
- 3 Завмер. Я в тихій самоті пишу, а він
- 4 Наставив вухко зрізане та й слухає.
- 5 Як друг, як вірний спільник, труд мій любить він.
- 6 Зо мною дише і зо мною думає
- 7 І, тільки захвилююсь я, здригається.
- 8 Давно минула північ. Дика темрява
- 9 Скребе одвірок зажерущим пазурем.

<sup>2</sup> Both poems are found also in М-НБУВ.

<sup>3</sup> We hope that the suggestions made here about the relationship between the author and the reader will contribute somehow to readers' understanding of Svidzinsky's theme of *самотність* (see Smetana's discussion, 34-42).

- 10 Я знемагаю, але друг не стомлений.  
 11 Я наближаюсь. Добрий і довірливий,  
 12 Він смерті не сподіється. Я дихаю.  
 13 Земля стенулась. Пітьма раптом грянула,  
 14 Звалилася, як кам'яна обрушина.  
 15 Загинув він чи бистрі крила виволік  
 16 З-під тяготи – і увалився в безвісті? (Svidzins'kyj & Solovei, 2004, 214).

We find again the same chimeric meter: iambic pentameter with dactylic clausulae in all but two lines, 3 and 5. In those two lines, we *may* read a final full speech stress on the pronoun *він* and so may scan those lines as having six feet.

Of course, the metrical observations above are meaningless without at least the general context of the poem: *він* is the fire, the friend of the speaker. We understand that the fire here is a candle-flame. In the final two lines of the poem, the speaker asks whether the fire has perished in being blown out or has only flown away, continuing to exist. In this context, then, we may say that the question of the fire's existence or nonexistence at the end of the poem was quietly proposed metrically (especially with "Холодна тиша. Місяцю надламаний" in the background) in the first half of the poem: *він* in line 3 probably bears a stress, while *він* in line 5 does not.

We know that fire flickers and appears to dance about. Although a candle-flame is restricted to the end of the candle (absent any mishaps that allow it to spread), its movements within that small area look lively and unpredictable. In a similar way, the fire's pronoun *він* in lines 3 and 5 has an uncertain status, a kind of in-between metrical existence: does it fall on an ictus or not?<sup>4</sup> Further, the non-ictic *він* in line 12 has a similarly uncertain status, although this uncertainty does not affect our understanding of the clausula: should we take it as an extrametrical stress or not? Finally, the last instance of *він* in line 15, on the ictus in the second foot, is the only occurrence of this pronoun on a syllable that *must* be scanned as an ictus; regardless of performance choices and readers' internal ears, the instances of *він* in lines 3 and 5 only *may* be taken as ictuses of sixth iambic feet, and the instance in line 12 is certainly not on an ictus. Therefore, the final *він*, spoken after the speaker has blown out the candle, is the one with the most "ictic weight."

The question of the flame's "ictic existence" is answered, metrically at least, most positively *only once the flame is no longer visible on the end of the candle, and the speaker questions its continued existence*. One might easily see a connection between the flame and the product of creative activity: once the speaker puts an end to its local existence (completes the session of creative activity / blows out the candle), he can no longer feel its presence. Yet he accepts the possibility that it continues to live somewhere out there, unknown to him.

The metrical qualities of *він* in this poem answer the speaker's question definitively: **yes, the flame is still alive, more alive now that it is no longer subject to the senses locally**. Similarly, the special state of creative activity, hard to pin down even as it is experienced (like the *він* in lines 3 and 5), appears to be utterly gone once it ends, but the speaker allows that it may continue elsewhere, unknown to the poet, when the reader reads the work and takes part in the creative activity, which must still have existence if it is again experienced. Again, as in "Холодна тиша," the poem predicts and requires the reader's participation in the poetic act. Only the physical composition of the text can be attributed to the historical author alone; the creative act requires the reader, too.

In "Холодна тиша" we saw that the conception of the poem included another mind outside the lyric persona. In "Огонь," we have the experience of "Холодна тиша" within us already. Seeing the same technique of meter and clausulae here, with the outstanding lines pointing to the third person instead of the first, we experience the suggestion that the creative activity that originated with the author and his "internal reader" moves on to an extrametrical "third person," a third party entirely unknown to the author, just as the flame (*він*) vanishes to places unknown.

"Огонь" is a kind of reflection on the conception of "Холодна тиша." In "Холодна тиша," the creative process requires the reader's participation and so is understood to be separate from the historical author, taking place in his presence and also in the future when the reader perceives it. Time is folded upon itself so as to unite the historical author and the reader. But in "Огонь," the creative process becomes material, the candle-flame that is the friend of the speaker and his companion in creation, somewhat like the reader. We may note that the physical writer is tired, but the flame is not ("Я знемагаю, але друг не стомлений"): it is the inexhaustible source of creative activity and has greater stamina than the speaker / author. The author blows out the flame so he can attend to the necessity of sleep, but then wonders whether the flame has been extinguished or has escaped from the onrushing darkness to live elsewhere. Although the text itself leaves the matter as a question ("Загинув він чи бистрі крила виволік / З-під тяготи – і увалився в безвісті?"), we find that the metrical use of the pronoun *він*, here seen in an expansion of the clausula-technique from "Холодна тиша," suggests that the flame does live on, despite its apparent local death. The author's part in the creative process is done, but he may hope, and his work suggests, that the process continues, now localized not to him, but to the reader.

As I. Smetana writes, «Ідіюстиль письменника на тлі загальнонаціональної мови відображає його індивідуальне світобачення і світосприйняття через окремі специфічні мовні засоби, оригінальне авторське використання лексем чи синтаксичні одиниці» (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p. 16).

It is plausible to consider Svidzinsky's "Холодна тиша" and "Огонь" (1932), discussed above, as sources for the topics and techniques of "Круг мене знов давно забутий світ" ["Again, the long-forgotten world is all around me"] (1936). This consideration is in harmony with Tymchenko's statements that "[увесь] корпус творів В. Свідзінського уявляється сіттю, павутинням із численною кількістю внутрішніх зв'язків та переплетень" and "[в]иявлені зв'язки між віршами В. Свідзінського здатні стати у пригоді під час подальших досліджень творів поета, оскільки демонструють розмаїту внутрішню інтертекстуальність його лірики" (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p.348, 350).

Круг мене знов давно забутий світ:  
 Картопля, бур'яни, сніпчана стріха,  
 Між полем і городом легкий пліт;  
 За вітряком заходить сонце стиха.

<sup>4</sup> In our usage here, an ictus is a position on a metrical beat, regardless of whether the syllable bears a speech stress: "сильна частка (місце) у стопі незалежно від того, чи акцентована вона" (Kovaliv, 2007, p. 410).

Як мертвий лист, німує пережите.  
Подуманої пісні не зберу.  
Встаю до світа, удочку беру,  
Іду на Лош краснопірку ловити.

І глухо так мої минають дні,  
Неначе я живу на дні морському.  
Ось, бачиться, виходячи із дому,  
Морський король загадує мені:

«Ти до труда привчай себе поволі,  
І ось тобі сьогодні мій наказ:  
За вітряком холодне сонце в полі –  
Візьми його та й принеси до нас» (Svidzins'kyj & Solovei, 2004, 277).

Obviously, this topic has a biographical basis: «Щоліта у відпустку приїздив до нас батько. Ми з ним ходили далеко на прогулянку, батько дуже любив ловити рибу» (M. Svidzinska in Svidzins'kyj & Ryl's'kyj, 2003).

I will begin with the notable *dni*-homographs on lines 9 and 10. These homographs may be called interlexical, as they are separate lexemes: the first *dni* is the nominative plural of *день*, while the second is the locative singular of *дно*<sup>5</sup>. Found in consecutive lines, they catch the reader's attention at a shift in the poem: they mark the distinction between the everyday world of familiar objects and the other, dreamlike world in which the sea-king gives the speaker an unusual task<sup>6</sup>.

A first observation about the two *dni* might be that they symbolically and iconically embody these two worlds: although they have the same appearance, they have different meanings. Note that the speaker does not formally enter a new world: *неначе* and *бачиться* in lines 10 and 11 suggest that the final section is a kind of new interpretation of the daylight world, not a separate physical place. The worlds 'are' the same...as long as their nature and meaning are disregarded. Any attention to the meaning of these worlds shows that they are different. This is similar to the relationship between the *dni* homographs: regarding them without context would not allow them to be distinguished, although a perceiving mind immediately sees the nature of both upon seeing them within the text.

Having understood that the *dni* homographs somehow represent the speaker's two ways of seeing, or two modes of consciousness, we will do well to broaden our understanding of their immediate context. We see a cycle implied in the relationship between the consciousness-change that straddles the *dni*-pair, and the word *знов* in the first line. Consider the cycle:

- speaker sees the daylight world [again] (*Круг мене знов давно забутий світ*)
- completion of creative activity is impossible (*Подуманої пісні не зберу*)
- speaker attends to everyday activities (*Іду на Лош краснопірку ловити*)
- days pass in a linear manner (*І глухо так мої минають дні*)
- the 'vision' begins (*неначе я живу на дні морському, бачиться*)
- the sea-king gives the order to retrieve the sun (*Візьми його та й принеси до нас*)
- the speaker 'awakens' and sees the daylight world [again] (*Круг мене знов давно забутий світ*), the cycle continues.

When the reader sees this implicit cycle, the poem changes in non-trivial ways. For example, the word *пережите* on a first, linear reading may be taken to mean 'what is past.' On a cyclical reading, it means 'what has been experienced,' the underwater dream-world found at the end of the poem before the return to the beginning. The interpretation of these two lines, then, likely changes:

Як мертвий лист, німує пережите.  
Подуманої пісні не зберу.

Upon a linear reading, they may be understood as 'The past is silent, like a dead leaf [in the fall]; [therefore,] we shall not be able to complete the song that has been conceived.' Upon a cyclical reading, the lines may mean 'What has been experienced [the other world, the order to perform a task that is only mythically possible] is silent; therefore, we cannot complete the song, the creative task.'<sup>7</sup>

We may note also that the two worlds contain two different tasks: fishing and sun-fetching.<sup>8</sup> The features of these tasks and how they are embodied in the text are worth listing:

<sup>5</sup> A deeper investigation of Svidzinsky's use of these homographs would include readings of the poems "Ледве позначені сонця сліди" and "Ключами кличуть журавлі," both from March 1930.

<sup>6</sup> See the conclusion to Smetana and Tymchenko: "Навіть властиве для межі століть та часу катаклізмів розколення людської свідомості, відбиття якого можна вбачати в зображенні поетом двох констант – дійсності й казки, – насправді не притаманне ліриці В. Свідзінського як цілісному явищу" (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p.367).

<sup>7</sup> Regarding the poet's perception of time, see Smetana's paraphrase of Lavrunovych: "Світобачення митця завжди пов'язане з його часовідчуттям, бо час є одним із ключових атрибутів існування людини, джерелом її досвіду, об'єктом свідомого чи позасвідомого «переживання»" (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p.133). See also Smetana's own statement: "У поетичній мові В. Свідзінського репрезентовано циклічний час – добовий і пір року – та біографічний." (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p.134) Finally, in the same volume, see the authors' concluding remarks: "Час сприймається то циклічним [...] то скінченним; такий розподіл пов'язаний переважно з існуванням двох окреслених вище світів" (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p.375).

<sup>8</sup> Smetana's discussion of the image of the sun across Svidzinsky's work does not explicitly mention this poem, but it would be worthwhile to try to integrate the present reading with her understanding. We note with interest that she states that "[з]дебільшого його вжито в контекстах, пов'язаних з утіленням художнього часу – частин доби та пір року." (Smetana & Tymchenko, 2021, p. 126).

| <b>fishing</b>   | <b>sun-fetching</b>   |
|--|---|
| object in water  | object on land  |
| task initiated on land   | task initiated underwater   |
| task directed by speaker   | task directed by other  |
| task represented by 1st-person verb ( <i>Іду на Лош краснопірку ловити</i> ) | task represented by 2nd-person imperatives ( <i>Візьми його та й принеси до нас</i> ) |
| task is familiar, performable in the usual world                             | task is unusual, possible only in a magical folktale or dream                         |

The tasks of each world have obviously opposite features. Yet their worlds lead into each other without end. Like a Möbius strip (стрічка Мебіуса) made of paper, the speaker's experience appears to have two sides, but upon examination, we see that the sides are continuous with each other. The separation between them is seen at a glance, but tracing a path along them shows that they are one.

As noted at the beginning of these remarks, however, this apparent separation is marked by the attention-grabbing *дні* homographs which have the same appearance but different meaning. A similar situation, almost as obvious, arises from the similarity of lines 4 and 15:

...За вітряком заходить сонце стиха...

...

...За вітряком холоне сонце в полі...

These homographs here look trivial: *за вітряком / за вітряком* and *сонце / сонце* are simply the same words, repeated. Despite their lexical identity, however, their meaning in context is different and shows the difference in the speaker's consciousness in the two worlds.

In *За вітряком заходить сонце стиха*, we understand that the text refers to the everyday appearance of sunset, that appearance seeming to be located beyond the mill. In the context of the everyday objects listed in the first stanza, we imagine that the sunset is effectively understood as an appearance, like a rainbow, and not a location at which one can arrive.

In *За вітряком холоне сонце в полі*, we must understand that the sun has settled in the soil of the field and lies there, cooling. The location of sunset is a place at which one can arrive, and the sun itself is an object that can be found and retrieved. There are no phenomena that are "only" phenomena: each phenomenon can, in principle, be relied upon to "be" as it appears, and the objects involved can be touched and manipulated, as in the world-view of a very young child or in the perceptual field of some dreams, fond hopes, and ancient myths<sup>9</sup>.

The lines with *за вітряком* and *сонце* show clearly the two kinds of consciousness that are represented in the poem. We may say that the two *за вітряком* stanzas, read in a cyclical manner (4, then 1) represent the sudden "switch" back to everyday consciousness after immersion in the dream-world<sup>10</sup>. The *дні* lines represent the relatively slow sinking from everyday consciousness into that dream-world: some appearances remain the same, but their interiority changes.

It is intriguing to note that there is an unusual kind of similarity between the two sets of homographs here examined (*дні, за вітряком / сонце*). With *дні*, the first instance is about days passing in a sequence (an understood series of sunsets). The second *дні* then represents a 'drop' to the bottom of the sea, where sunsets are invisible and without meaning. With *за вітряком*, the first such line describes a sunset, the usual end to each day in a sequence. The second *за вітряком* line has the sun resting in the field, having come to the 'bottom' of its path. Both sets go from a notion of *sunset / sequence* to *end of sunset / bottom*<sup>11</sup>.

We may consider this conceit more easily by seeing the pairs of homographs in the order in which they occur in the text.

За вітряком заходить сонце стиха

І глухо так мої минають дні

Неначе я живу на дні морському

За вітряком холоне сонце в полі...

|                         |              |                       |
|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| за вітряком / сонце (1) | waking world | sequence (understood) |
| дні (1)                 | waking world | sequence              |
| дні (2)                 | dream        | bottom                |
| за вітряком / сонце (2) | dream        | bottom (understood)   |

*за вітряком* (1) is linked to *дні* (1) in that both are in the waking world of sequence. *дні* (1) is linked to *дні* (2) in that they are homographs and mark the apparent transition from one world to the other. *дні* (2) is linked to *за вітряком / сонце* (2) in that both are in the dream world. *за вітряком / сонце* (2) is then linked to *за вітряком / сонце* (1) in that they are homographs and mark the transition back to the waking world<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> "Love is the manna youth's fond heart esteems / The fairy music of life's summer dreams." This fragment-couplet by John Clare comes to the mind of the author of this article in connection with this matter. Note that *fairy* must be read as trisyllabic with its stress on the first syllable.

<sup>10</sup> Considering the cyclicity of the poem with its fishing-attempt, we may recall the note by Olena Chilinharova, addressee of the letter that contains the early draft: "Володимир Юхимович запевняв нас, що настане день, коли за одну рыболовлю у нього буде сто бичків" (Svidzins'kyj & Ryl's'kyj, 2003, p. 306).

<sup>11</sup> See Tymchenko's discussion of "Утомлений, склонившись на горби" (Smetana and Tymchenko, 2021, p. 241-242).

<sup>12</sup> The similarities and differences between these two pairs of homographs may become clearer if we turn to an unlikely source: film editor Walter Murch's book *In the Blink of an Eye: a perspective on film editing*. In the chapter "Why Do Cuts Work?" Murch mentions in a footnote that in US usage, film is said to be *cut* when edited together with another piece of film, "which puts the emphasis on *separation*," while in Australian and British usage, the term is *joined*, "with the emphasis on *bringing together*" (Murch, 2001, p. 5). The consecutive *дні* lines may be called a *join*, while the non-consecutive *за вітряком* lines may be called a *cut*. Following this thought, we might imagine that the reader is in a role like that of a savvy film viewer, semi-consciously doing the opposite of what the author (film editor) has done: seeing the original separation of worlds necessary for the join, while mentally healing the separation at the cut.

Much of Murch's book may be of interest to students of poetic vision in general and of this poem in particular.

The relationships between all the homographic lines support the notion, already implied in the paraphrasable content of the text, that the poem may be understood as a cycle that repeats without end. The worlds are clearly split across the consecutive *дні* lines, and are clearly linked by the *за вітряком* stanzas which do not touch each other within the text. Where we see continuity in the text, the sense suggests a break or change. Where we see a certain stopping point (the end of the poem), the sense and the sequence of homographs suggest continuation from the beginning. And so the speaker's experience is made up of two worlds, each of which leads into the other.

Neither of the two opposite-seeming tasks, fishing and sun-fetching, is seen to be completed within the text of the poem. There are no captured fish swimming in a bucket, and the sun is never delivered to the sea-king. But another task is mentioned: the *подумана пісня* that the speaker will not be able to assemble. Within the text, that *подумана пісня* is a failed project mentioned only in one line. Yet the very existence of the poem itself shows that a song (lyrical work) has been completed. Neither the everyday nor purely mythical tasks are fully performed, but the task the speaker says he will not be able to complete has in fact been completed. The union of the (apparently) separate worlds of waking and dreaming is the finished poetic work.

In the "Observations" section above, we resisted the temptation to identify the underwater experience with the source of poetry. **In our understanding, the union of two worlds (land / waking, underwater / dreaming), or the union of possible and impossible tasks, is the poetic act itself.**

We may note in connection with this interpretation that the speaker within the text cannot see the cycle or the "loop" back to the beginning of the poem. Only the reader can see and complete the cycle by looking back to the beginning upon sensing the connection between the two *за вітряком* stanzas. It is the reader who truly completes the poetic act—and makes it unending<sup>13</sup>.

In the interpretation offered above, the speaker does not really write the poem "Круг мене знов давно забутий світ." Rather, the poem is made from the speaker's cyclical travel between the world of waking consciousness and the dream-world, and the reader's participation is a necessary part of the ongoing creative process. Despite this remarkable conception and the entrancing effect of the poem, we may wonder about the historical composition of the text.

We are fortunate to have, in Eleonora Solovey's edition of Svidzinsky's works, the poet's letter to Olena Chilinarova, dated July 21, 1936. (Svidzins'kyj & Solovei, 2004, v. 2, 432-433) In this letter, he describes the circumstances under which the poem "came to him," and includes an early but complete version of the text.<sup>14</sup> The letter is in general similar to the sense of the poem, and in the account of the author's own doings, the two parts of the poem are roughly represented in prose.

First, we read an extended description of the daily activities surrounding the author's fishing trips. In the prose account of the letter, we read "Цілий день ми з Павлом проводимо на Десні, ловлячи рибу, або ближче, коло села, на озері Лош." This corresponds to the verse line "Іду на Лош ловити краснопірку." Then we see a fairly abrupt change of topic to the unusual activities associated with the end of day and onset of sleep. In the letter, "Тільки одна поезія якось сама собою прийшла мені до голови, коли я пробував заснути в саду на спаленій сонцем траві." In the draft of the poem, the sea-king says "Хоча тобі давно спочити час," as if referring to the historical poet's attempt to sleep at the time of mental composition.

In addition to this similarity of structure, there are fairly obvious lexical similarities between the prose account and the poem (Лош / Лош, ловлячи рибу / ловити краснопірку, глушина / глухо, на сонці / сонце). We may note also a hint in the prose that suggests the repeated, cyclical quality of the poem: "купаюся по кілька разів на день [...] хожу без кінця".

At the very least, we can observe that the poem and the prose portion of the letter to Chilinarova are broadly similar. But there is another minor detail in the letter that may inform our understanding of the origins of the poem, and so may further aid us in our readerly task of merging with the poet. In the letter, Svidzinsky names the times of his rising and going to bed: "О десятій годині вечора лягаю спати, а о п'ятій ранку вже на ногах." The former Konotop Region, in the summer, is in the time zone now designated as UTC+3. The village of Bondarivka is located at 51.425278°, 32.411667°. According to the table available at the Astronomical Calculations Department of the United States Naval Observatory, at these coordinates on July 21, 1936, the sun rose at 04:58 and set at 20:54, just before 5 o'clock in the morning and shortly before 9 o'clock in the evening. Judging by the times given in his own account, Svidzinsky rose with the sun (or woke at sunrise and then was truly on his feet minutes later at 5 o'clock), but went to bed a little over an hour after sunset.

This information is relevant to our understanding of the biographical basis of the poem, as well as its creative genesis. In the draft of the poem included with the letter, the speaker rises early: "Встаю раненько, вудочку беру". There is no explicit depiction of the time of his going to sleep, but in the underwater dream-world, the sea-king says:

«Не думай, що дримаєш ти, не сон це,  
Хоча тобі давно спочити час.  
За вітряком холоне в полі сонце,  
Візьми його і принеси до нас».

An hour is plenty of time to feel the temperature drop once the sun is below the horizon after it sets. This everyday reality, experienced by the poet during his stay in Bondarivka, may be the biographical source for the poetic notion that the sun itself is cooling (холоне в полі). And a 17-hour day of walking and fishing in intense heat ("а спека шалена," as Svidzinsky writes in the letter) is more than enough to justify the sea-king's words "Хоча тобі давно спочити час," as if spoken during the time of fatigue and lower ambient temperature between sunset and the writer's bedtime.

That is, relying only on Svidzinsky's own words and a table of sunrise / sunset times at his location, we can without difficulty imagine that the author experienced sleepy fatigue after sundown. This fatigue is associated with the notion that it is past time to

<sup>13</sup> There are, of course, other works that contain an implicit loop, a pointer from the end of the text back to its beginning: Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* comes to mind. But in this poem the final line looks conspicuously end-stopped (end-quote, period), despite its unforced loop back to the beginning of the work. Read in a linear manner, the poem seems to begin and end in the middle of the action, implying something before the first line and open-ended dream-action after the end. We can see with a flick of the eye, however, that the poem is its own past and future: the end comes before the beginning and the beginning follows the end.

<sup>14</sup> The homograph-material is substantially unchanged between the draft in the letter and the later redaction given in Solovey's edition and used above for analysis. We may understand that this material was part of the original conception. A fuller examination of the differences between these two redactions is outside the scope of this paper.

go to bed, and also with an awareness of decreased heat, attributed to the process of cooling that the sun, not only the atmosphere, is mythically or dreamily understood to be undergoing at this time. The sea-king's words in the draft are likely motivated by the experience of a 50-year-old man who has been up since dawn, was physically active all day, and is still awake for a while after sunset.

As a final note in this section, we may note that the prose letter is similar to the poem also in that both affirm and deny poetic creation. In the letter, we see the following negative remarks about writing:

- Я живу як перше: нічогосінько не роблю, не пишу, не перекладаю й навіть на читаю. (negative)
- Писати тут неможливо: незвична обстановка, тисячі невідгод, спека, задуха. (negative)

Yet the letter itself contains a new poem, evidence of writing (we assume that "writing" here means poetry, not the letter itself).

On either side of the poem, we read these apologetic remarks that allow the author to present the poem while also denying that he wrote it:

- Тільки одна поезія якось сама собою прийшла мені до голови, коли я пробував заснути в саду на спаленій сонцем траві (тут усе вигоріло і земля жовта, як буває тільки в кінці серпня).

- Це не написано, а подумано.

He didn't write the poem, but it came to him. It hasn't been written, but only *подумано*. And yet, here it is. The letter denies that the poet has written anything (any new poetry), but contains evidence of just that.

In a similar way, the draft of "Круг мене знов давно забутий світ" denies the possibility of completing a creative work after its conception, although it itself is such a work: "Задуманої мрії не зберу." The changes in that line between the draft and the later redaction are particularly noteworthy, as they allow us to propose a plausible set of steps in the creative process that led to the later redaction:

- 1) Задуманої мрії не зберу (**original line composed**);
- 2) first part of letter composed, in some ways borrowing the structure and topics of the poem (**structure of poem enters letter**);
- 3) poem copied into letter (**structure of poem enters letter**);
- 4) after step 3, Svidzinsky writes "Це не написано, а подумано" below the text of the poem;
- 5) when revising the poem, Svidzinsky alters that line, changing *задуманої мрії* to *подуманої пісні*, borrowing the *по-* prefix from his own prose (**lexical content of letter enters poem**) and swapping in the word *нічні* to make more explicit the notion that the thing to be completed is a lyric poem.

If one accepts the suggestions written above, then this is another instance of the "reader's" participation in the completion of the poem. Here, Svidzinsky himself functions as a reader and editor of his own draft, influenced by its theme and structure even in his epistolary prose, and brings an element of that prose into a later redaction of the poem.

This letter to Olena Chilinarova (she is also a reader, of course) is valuable not only as a fine example of the author's prose, but also for the insight it offers into the biographical circumstances and experiences that served as sources for "Круг мене знов давно забутий світ."

We may **conclude**, on the basis of the analyses above, that "Холодна тиша," "Огонь," and "Круг мене знов давно забутий світ" have fairly obvious features that straddle the worlds internal to and external to the texts themselves. These features act as "bridges" that allow the reader into the creative process itself, and key features of the poems cannot be seen on the page, but must have their existence in the reader's mind. The reader becomes joined to the author by entering and completing the unending creative process, and the author functions as a reader during the creative act itself, viewing the work as a reader during the extended process of composition (this is most clearly visible in "Круг мене знов").

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