

An attempt at an ideological and aesthetic compromise in the satirical story «Automat» by K. Gordienko

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Paper received 03.04.20; Accepted for publication 24.04.20.

<https://doi.org/10.31174/SEND-Ph2020-226VIII68-10>

Abstract. The article focuses on the presentation of the ideological and aesthetic compromise in K. Gordienko's satirical work «Automat». It is emphasized that exposing the behavior, moral defects and negative character traits of the bureaucrat leader, the author uses colloquial and expressively colored words, linguistic clichés; widely used by folklore – roverbs, constant epithets, comparisons, folk-poetic metaphors. The article concludes that Kostya Gordienko's creativity came from an era of dramatic political transformations and national liberation contests of the twentieth century.

Keywords: *ideology, satirical mode, compromise, conservatism, irony, sarcasm.*

Introduction. The brief period of artistic world-modeling in a pathos and major tone gave way to the Ukrainian literature of the first post-revolutionary years with revelatory-satirical motives. The conflict between the real situation and moral imperatives determines the exposition of individual human defects (superstition, drunkenness, idleness, etc.), interpersonal relationships and domestic problems, acute condemnation of negative phenomena in the dimension of society.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. Humorous and satirical flow of domestic writing (V. Aleshko, I. Andrienko, O. Vishny, Y. Vukhnal, P. Kapelgorodsky, O. Kovinka, K. Kotka, S. Pylypenko, I. Senchenko, M. Khvylovy, V. Chechvyanskiy etc.) is directed against the pressing problems of the contemporary realities of the time: conservatism and cultural backwardness, bribery and burglary, adaptation, careerism and bureaucracy that were fully manifested in the Soviet system, the dominance of political stamps, etc.

The genre range of Ukrainian laugh culture of the 1920s is extremely wide: from cartoons and parodies, humorous articles, smiles to pamphlets and feuilletons, stories, short stories, and stories. Humor as «a kind of reflection of the funny, the funny in life phenomena and human characters» [11, p. 246] was realized in the works of Yu. Vukhnal (the collection «On malice», 1927; «The life and activity of Fedko Goose», 1928; «Humoreski», «The sincere Ukrainian», 1929 and others), P. Kapelgorodsky (coll. «Distribute to the Sea», 1927), Ostap Cherries (the collection «The Works of Heaven», 1923; «To whom is merry and to whom sad», 1924; «Cherry Smiles of Crimea», 1925; «Ukrainize», 1926, etc.), V. Chechvyans'kyi (collection «The Kings of Nature», 1928; «Eh, Comrades ...», 1928; «Kadilo», 1929, etc.). In humorous works the paradoxes of Soviet everyday life were revealed by means of irony (rarely – sarcasm): the «new» morality and life, the discrepancy between the declared and the real, the realities of ecclesiastical and round-church life, graphomaniac and «striking» in literature, etc.

The edge of the 1920s Ukrainian satire was directed against gadgets and political demagogues, careerists, and bureaucrats of the Soviet era, against the Ukrainian kholiya, which became the basis of the socio-political system («Khuliy Khurina» (1926), «Zone» (1926), «Mina Mazaylo» (1929) by M. Kulish, «From the Notes of the Hall» by I. Senchenko (1927), «Ivan Ivanovich» (1929) by M. Khvylov and others). The writers of problems of national development, adaptation, national nihilism did not pay attention. Not regretting the techniques of sarcasm, satirical hy-

perbolization, grotesque, they conceived of the Bolshevik-initiated Ukrainianization, which was formally implemented, with a clear ideological implication.

The purpose of the article is to evaluate the ideological and aesthetic compromise in the satirical story «Avtomat» by K. Gordienko.

Results. The satirical mode of art (V. Tupa) is characterized by Kostya Gordienko's short stories «Automat» (1928) and «Slavgorod» (1929). Ideologically oriented critics rarely mentioned these works and hardly discussed them, interpreting as evidence of K. Gordienko's unsuccessful searches for «his» topic, a model of «writer involvement in all kinds of isms». The genre specificity of the satirical stories «Automat» and «Slavgorod» was determined on the basis of thematic orientation.

For a long time, one of the striking shortcomings of the creative style of writing in the early period of criticism was the lack of deep social motivation of the processes of Soviet reality, «distortion of life's truth», «reassessment of the power of the old and not clear vision of the new in reality in the mid 20's» [6, p. 29]. The main drawbacks are the «contradiction and immaturity» of the artistic method and style, in particular, some simplification of the means and techniques of typing.

Both in life and on the death of the writer, the satirical stories «Automat» and «Slavgorod» were not discussed in literary studies. Removed from the literary process, they did not become the subject of professional analysis. Kost Gordienko himself did not return to this stage of creative development. Moreover, in the face of strict ideological regulation of literary and artistic practice, the intervention of the party-state leadership in the creative process is compelled to justify itself: «... In my difficult literary efforts, which lasted for almost a decade, why did I focus on negative figures? Why is the immature pen attracted by distorted everyday, social phenomena? Although it was justified by the satire genre. And I come to the disappointing conclusion that a beginner (about me) with a still immature social and artistic outlook, with ignorance of life, shadows are easier to give than light colors (this should not be considered a satire «light genre» [5, p. 3–4].

Moreover, political accusations similar to sentences and public self-justification of word artists are a common practice in Ukrainian literary and artistic life of the late 1920s and early 1930s. What are the conclusions about the writings of B. Antonenko-Davidovich, E. Pluzhnik, V. Podmogilny, which are marked by vigilant reviewers undeniable testimo-

ny, «as red art, increasingly breaking away from industrial and social life, uses all questionable bourgeois theories and theories» [12, p. 50]. Did instances of self-denial, as was the case with Mykola Khvylov, forced after the crushing speeches of party functionaries (A Khvili, M. Skrypnyk, O. Shumsky) to write a letter to the newspaper «Communist», where they would agree that in «Valdshnepe» he was past his will reflected the fascist ideology and «abandon their mistakes» [9, p. 32]. Similar steps had to be taken by Nikolai Kulish, who, in a penitent letter to the Literary Gazette explaining the «ideological» flaws of the People's Malachi, wrote: «The ideological ambiguity, the play's fuzziness, the mysteriousness of Malachi in the first edition are the result of that duplicity. What I was experiencing then on my consciousness, on my personal moods, on the whole world perception» [10, p. 111] The process of marginalization inevitably envisaged «fitting the creator to the ranks, the ranks, the masses» [1] in order to survive in reality, as Mykola Khvylovy wrote in the novel «I (Romance)», «predatory and cruel as a flock of hungry wolves (...) Hopeless, inevitable as death itself» [13, p. 217].

The satirical-humorous novella «Automat» opened the eponymous edition of prose works by Kostya Gordienko, published in 1928. In addition to this story, the book also includes other works of the writer, which were published in separate editions («Food» Friends' Entertainment») or were written specifically for this collection («Children», «Night»). In 1930, the book was published in the second edition and was never published again. The story of «The Automatic Machine» has a traditional structure for early Gordienko prose (especially for the essay form): it consists of separate sections, which are not closely related at the plot level. Each of the sections has its own name («Anywhere Angry», «Anywhere with a Lady with Flowers», «Anywhere in the Capital», «Where to study the history of culture», etc.), each epigraphs from the works of Nicholas Gogol (mainly from «The Story» about how Ivan Ivanovich quarreled with Ivan Nikiforovich «and the stories» Old World Landowners) that determine the mood.

By the way, there are many stylistic echoes with Gogol's works in Gordienko's story: this is the use of the poetics of «local» names, and the Gogol linguistic-stylistic palette of the image of the place and time of the event.

In the story of The Machine, K. Gordienko succeeded in creating a satirical image of the Ukrainian hinterland, a province that was fenced off from the world primarily by his complacency, hermetic arrogance. Yu. Sherekh (Shevelyov) later expressed the opinion that: «the cartagena of our province should be destroyed» [14, p. 574], considering provinciality as one of the major threats to the development of Ukrainianness. This is the image of the Ukrainian heartland, poor in news and notable events, at the heart of the author's satirical analysis. The writer uses a rather popular technique of the surname anthroponym and place-name. The large village with eight churches (more precisely, the district center), in which the events take place, is called Rotten Pecheritsa. However, it was renamed Pervomayskoye, although «the new name does not stick, and the head of the district is known everywhere as the Rot-Pechersk» [4, p. 7]. Little has changed here since the revolution, and perhaps, since the time of Nicholas Gogol, people live their small lives and small interests.

K. Gordienko paid a lot of attention to the depiction of the images of rotten man and girls, their hubris, their manner of

walking, talking, and behaving. There are a lot of expressive comic details here (though the expressiveness is mostly external). For example, the attribute of the man should be sunflower seeds. For what? «To get grains into your mouth». It is full of people, mostly young people, in the rain for the village construction, «which you won't shake with a stick». What they did not do here was read newspapers, browse magazines, «and some, with disdain for bourgeois art, stomped on the piano» [4, p. 12]. The most well-known guys «even stuck a bookshelf, asked for a book from a young beautiful librarian» [4, p. 12–13]. Accordingly, the author told why he suddenly became conscious readers after the appearance in the village of this librarian, and the head of the cooperative Kud's, and in the village of Petro Lushnia, and the head of the district council.

A chance meeting with two artists, who came to the village at the invitation of the Gnylopecharychansky Club, makes some adjustments to the work schedule of the head of the cooperative. Artists at this time put on display portraits of Soviet leaders (Budenny, Stalin, Rykov) and the head of the cooperative considers it his duty to submit an «authoritative» assessment. The author ironically says that Kudya's greatest disappointment was not the quality of the work, but the simple, unpretentious frames to the portraits. The low cultural level of the head of the cooperative emphasizes another case, which is described in the section «Where to study the history of culture». Everywhere he had to read a cultural history report for his staff. Preliminary reading of the text showed that the speaker was not ready to accept even elementary knowledge. The comments given by the character of the story to each of the abstracts create a comical effect of landing scientific knowledge and translating it into the plane of everyday perception.

Drawing the image of Kudya, the writer emphasizes his external individual, sometimes minor features, prefers situations of a comic nature. The grotesque situation is modeled in the work with the help of skillfully written biographical moments, portrait details, everyday situations in the official's life. About the Past Where we read that he presided over farms, was the chairman of the Reiselhospozyla, the deputy director at the state mill, familiar with Dzerzhinsky («they were revolutionizing together»). At every place of work, he used to carry out illegal equipment, be sure to grab something for himself («he got his hamstrings») or for his mistress Tamara Mefodiivna (fuel intended for schools and institutions, «drive half of her yard»). His wife had an educated and intelligent one who played the piano to comfort her husband, «by the way, even better than cooking jam ...» [4, p. 71].

Exposing the behavior, moral defects and negative character traits of the bureaucrat leader, the author uses colloquial and expressively colored words, language clichés; widely used by folklore – proverbs, constant epithets, comparisons, folk-poetic metaphors.

The rapid unfolding of subsequent events leads to an unexpected result: «died Kud's. After the death of the woman he long, long thought and died» [4, p. 79]. However, the author achieves the most satirical effect from the image of the Soviet bureaucrat in the episode of saying goodbye to the cooperative's head. The raivik chairman gave a fervent speech that, in the author's interpretation, he exemplifies the party verbiage, moral misery and primitive thinking of the newest «masters of life»: «Comrades! He died where. Death did not sneak up on him. He had long gathered with new strength to get to work. He stood bravely in office. He was

an honest, energetic worker and a citizen. Fighter. He stood boldly at the guard of the revolution [4, p. 79–80]. In general, it reveals a system of values in the utterly false world of the latest officials from the authorities and with bitter irony summarizes the typicality of the shameful phenomenon. In the artistic space, «types are simply very detailed and very meticulous characteristics of people. This type of portrait becomes «type» only because it carries the «suit» of the era» [8, p. 395], – M. Jogansen rightly remarked.

The image of the head of the cooperative, depicted by Kostya Gordienko in the story «Machine gun», is typologically similar to the image of the head of the village council of Ostap Cherry humorous «On cleaning the machine in the countryside»: a similar manner of communication with people, similar methods of work and leadership style («When some counter-revolutionary and the bastard declares that I am drunk every day, that I have requisitioned a couple of piglets for the office of the village council in Ivanenchy, let him know that there is a counter-revolutionary who is still a strong proletarian power, which will wipe away all his enemies in the dust, and he is a son of a bitch will lie in the bright with a shot through the head with fellow of the devil: and pony show» [2, p. 112]). Language and Behavior Where many features in common with the stylistics of Komsomol Fedko Guski from the series of humorous «Life and Activity of Fedko Goose» by Y. Uhnal: there are intertwining of conversational style with official business, Russism, jargon, the use of actual lexical cliches (There are no conditions for

work, they are rubbing us, every one tries to set you up with malice, scares the bureau, calls the bully. «They don't give you peace and quiet, «Fedya said. I woke up yesterday morning and my mother did not cook breakfast. I told her only two words va: they say, mother, it is time for you to increase labor productivity, you will consult at the oven for thirty years, and no qualifications...» [3, p. 5]).

In general, in the stories «Automat» and «Slavgorod» by means of irony and sarcasm, Kost Gordienko reveals the most urgent tendencies that are more clearly manifested in society: adaptation, the dominance of the party-bureaucratic system of governance, aboriginal and bourgeoisie, double standards of behavior. At the same time, he shows his critical attitude to the social atmosphere, that of «incomprehensible weathering of the spirit of the revolution and its replacement by the dead government: the talmudization of ideology and the bitter-sarcastic motive of» all-federative bourgeoisie» [7, p. 236].

Conclusions. Kostya Gordienko's creativity came during an era of sharp political transformations and national liberation contests of the twentieth century. Like most Ukrainian writers, he began his literary and artistic activities in journalism and did not stay away from ideological and artistic competitions of that time. The mid-1920s was a time of active creative work, the search for new ways of creative expression, which resulted in the emergence of multi-genre small-format prose, a little later satirical story.

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