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## Private Worlds: The Psychological Dimension of Les' Martovych's Prose

OLEH S. ILNYTZKYJ

Він щось багато в своїй голові міркує. . .  
(„Не-читальник”)

Я себе фурт обсервую. . .  
(„Народна ноша”)

Amidst the critical and scholarly literature devoted to Martovych—a body of work which aptly but rather monotonously rehearses his stature as a satirist and humorist—there appears an intermittent leitmotif that for all its conspicuousness has remained neglected. I am referring to what has been variably described as Martovych's psychologism. Impressed by his “psychological accuracy,”<sup>1</sup> critics have remarked—mostly in passing—that he is “capable of conveying the smallest characteristic of the peasant soul,”<sup>2</sup> that he has “a wonderful knowledge of peasant psychology.”<sup>3</sup> “In the novel *Zabobon* [Superstition],” says a Soviet critic, “Martovych's talent as a satirist comes through first of all in his ability to create personalities, to ridicule his characters' warped (*potvorne*) behavior and psychology.”<sup>4</sup> A “psychological reportage”<sup>5</sup> is how another critic qualifies this novel. Elsewhere, it has been noted that “each word [in the story “Hrishnytsia” (The Sinner)] is premeditated, carrying a sure psychological charge.”<sup>6</sup> Phrases like “psychologically refined” and “the psyche of his heroes” find their way into studies.<sup>7</sup> The “psychological depth” of Martovych's prose has even been deemed more profound than Ivan Franko's.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mykhailo Mohylians'kyi, “Les' Martovych” in Les' Martovych, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, (Kiev, n.d.), p. xl.

<sup>2</sup> *Materialy do vyvchennia istorii ukrains'koi literatury*, vol. 4 (Kiev, 1962), p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> Iu. Hamorak [Iu. Stefanyk], “Talent bez seredovyshcha,” in Les' Martovych, *Tvory* (Cracow and Lviv, 1943), 1: xxxii.

<sup>4</sup> Semen Shakhovs'kyi, “Muza polum'ianoi satyry,” in Les' Martovych, *Tvory* (Kiev, 1963), p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Hamorak [Stefanyk], “Talent bez seredovyshcha,” p. li.

<sup>6</sup> Fedir Pohrebennyk, *Les' Martovych: Zhyttia i tvorchist'* (Kiev, 1971), p. 117.

<sup>7</sup> Mohylians'kyi, “Les' Martovych,” pp. xxxix, xl.

<sup>8</sup> Hamorak [Stefanyk], “Talent bez seredovyshcha,” p. lii.

Unfortunately, these sporadic statements have never led to a careful investigation of the subject. If any clarification was tendered, it amounted to little more than a tribute to the author's astuteness and powers of observation. Moreover, since the textual and formal manifestations have not been discussed, the mystery remains of how Martovych achieves this "psychological" effect and what place it holds in the prose as a whole.

For starters, an objection can be raised that many of his works do not conform to this description. Clearly, stories like "Ivan Rylo," "Vynaidena rukopsys' pro rus'kyi krai," "Strybozhyi darunok," "Zhyrafa ta lado," "Smertel'na sprava," "Zle dilo," and "Ian" are social satires that bear no trace of "psychology," regardless of how one defines the word. Although excellent in many respects, these works sooner resemble didactic fables or political parables than psychological studies. Defining what is "psychological" in his prose is made complex also by the fact that this attribute has been espied in such vastly different works as "Hrishnytsia" and *Zabobon*—one a dramatic dialogue, the other a full-blown novel. The term, in short, has little substance; it has been used loosely and impressionistically to suggest an important but hitherto only vaguely understood feature of Martovych's work.

In this paper "psychological" will denote a narrative tendency that draws attention to the internal world of fictional characters, i.e., to their mental life (broadly understood to encompass sensations, feelings, attitudes, etc.) normally at the expense of external, physical, behavioristic description. While, admittedly, this is not a characteristic generic to all of Martovych's work, it is, nevertheless, a major element warranting systematic consideration.

The most obvious instance of Martovych's psychological propensity is found in *Zabobon*. Despite its satiric thrust, frequent episodes of sincere humor, and a political side-plot (i.e., construction of a reading hall), this novel comes across first as being concerned with mind and consciousness. One sign of this is that *Zabobon* resists easy synopsis. Short on action, it lingers protractedly on mental or introspective activities. The author is obviously interested in the dynamics of the human mind. Slavko, the main character, is a virtual catalogue of emotional disabilities: phobic, superstitious, and guilt-ridden, he is a chronic malingerer, who also suffers from an inferiority complex. The object of his stunted sexuality, Pani Kran'tsovs'ka, is a sharp portrait of coquetry and reserve, loneliness and desire, vanity and desperation. Slavko's father, the reverend priest, is an absurd case of arrested development, a compulsive, self-centered neurotic. Page after page of *Zabobon* is devoted solely to rendering the mental ruminations of these beings. The opening lines set the predominant tone by plunging the reader unceremoniously into the priest's mind:

Якби зломилося колесо, то панотець уже би дав добру науку Йванові, як шанувати прикази господаря! Уже навіть прилагодив собі цілу промову на той випадок. Упирав би в Івана, що він їхав через ліс навмисне на те, аби поломити віз. . .<sup>9</sup>

Various mental and emotional experiences also lie at the core of Martovych's many stories. "Bulka" (The Roll) shows a trivial event triggering a character's paranoid concern for his reputation. "Nichnyi hist'" (Night Visitor) deals with a paranormal state (an encounter with the dead). "Prashchal'nyi vechir" (The Farewell Party) succeeds in communicating the anguish that awkward social situations produce in frightened and obsequious individuals. "Hrishnytsia" (The Sinner)—a dying woman's confession to her husband—reveals the peasant's mind-set and values. "Vidmina" (The Deviate) is a strange tale about a masochistic boy who provokes and willingly acquiesces to a vicious thrashing as means of revenge. "Persha svarka" (First Quarrel) is a snapshot of a coddled wife harboring spiteful thoughts against her husband because he has frustrated her frivolous desires.

One of Martovych's more exotic tales is "Kadryl'" (Quadrille). Written without a trace of humor, it infers that beneath an idealistic social veneer, man is little more than a sexual beast. The plot revolves around Volodymyr, a young theology student, who comes to a ball with the intention of finding a bride who would "comprehend his spiritual impulses," but settles for a woman with overwhelming sexual magnetism. Volodymyr's growing self-awareness of his inexorable moral capitulation forms the crux of the story.

"Na torzi" (At the Market) shows Martovych's psychological bent obliquely. Like a good number of his stories, this one is "episodic," given over almost entirely to chronicling an impecunious peasant's frustrating experience in buying nails. The climactic moment, however, has little to do with the main plot; rather, it concerns the peasant's wife whose role in the tale is otherwise negligible. At the very end, the narrative switches its focus to the woman, abandoning an essentially panoramic, external point of view in favor of an internal one which is identified entirely with her. Thanks to this dramatic reversal, Martovych establishes a sudden and unusual psychological intimacy with this woman, which simultaneously recasts the preceding events in terms of her relationship to the husband:

Проциха плакала: жаль їй було за дітьми, але жаль їй було й на діти, що через них та не має життя з чоловіком.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Martovych, *Tvory* (Cracow and Lviv, 1943), 2: 5 (subsequent references to Martovych's *Tvory* are to this edition, unless otherwise noted). The opening was lost, so it is not known exactly how Martovych began the novel. Nonetheless, the general tendency is clear enough.

<sup>10</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 89.

The “psychological” moment in “Na torzi” is limited to this single sentence, but it illustrates an important point about Martovych: a tendency to project the subjective, deeply private world of his characters as an autonomous reality. While nearly all his work implies a not-so-subtle social message, the psyches he portrays are curiously asocial. They are most often emotionally disengaged from the “real” world, yet entangled by psychological forces. If they engage the social world, it is done in a highly peculiar, subjective manner that is impractical, incompetent, and unrealistic. Martovych’s beings are not a “social species” (Balzac). Unlike Ivan Franko’s, Panas Myrnyi’s or Ivan Nechui-Levyts’kyi’s heroes—most of whom are stirred by injustice or the experience of economic deprivation—Martovych’s characters betray little social awareness and rarely have any civic goals. Their mind is not an instrument for reforming the world, but a snare from which they cannot escape. Typically, they struggle with their own selves or they do the bidding of their flawed psyches. Slavko and the priest are the most dramatic examples of this: one is a slave to superstition, the other to a compulsion; neither can transcend his own self to engage in useful social action. The priest’s life, in fact, could be characterized as a continuous mental game, as he seeks out one individual after another with whom to pursue pointless arguments. Others in *Zabobon* are also circumscribed by deep-seated, subliminal impulses. The personality of Kran’tsovs’ka can be traced to the emotional vacuum left by her wandering alcoholic husband. Slavko’s mother (Imost’) is an altogether withdrawn person, living a life of quiet desperation that is relieved slightly through recollections of a stranger and a blind devotion to her son.

Peasants, too, whether in *Zabobon* or in the stories, are most frequently presented to the reader as sentient beings rather than a social class with a grievance. They, as a rule, lead an elaborate mental life, but are socially ineffectual and dim-witted (the refrain “temnyi narid” is heard frequently in the prose). Their activism, as portrayed in various “election” stories, is nearly always a joke. As social entities, the peasants are petty, selfish, and spiteful (cf. “Strybozhyi darunok”); the commonweal rarely preoccupies their consciousness. Martovych suggests that there exists an impenetrable barrier between what might be called the “social” psyche and the “psychological” psyche. The two are mutually exclusive. This is made explicit in the example of Poturaichyn, the “radical” from *Zabobon*. A true “social” being, he is described as totally insensitive to the “human” dimension of the peasants:

Потурайчин був політичний агітатор, поза програму своєї політичної партії нічого більше слухачам не роз’ясняв. Не почував навіть потреби дати їм щось більше

понад таке роз'яснення. А зрештою не був навіть *свідомий* того, чого прагне *мужицька душа* від нього довідатися.<sup>11</sup>

More often than not, Martovych's attention is lavished on a peasant's consciousness rather than on his economic plight. Consider, for example, a scene from "Os' posy moie" (To This Point, It's Mine). As Semen talks of lawyers and litigation, the narrative dwells on the mental confusion of his wife (Semenykhа):

Семениха зупинилася й злякалася. Радитися—тепер! Льоху вже продали, й знов радитися! [Семен] [г]оворить: радитися, а розповідає за адуката. Казала би Семениха, що чоловік п'яний, та бо не тямить, аби він мав тепер де та й чого впитися. Казала би. . . Щось воно та не так. А Семен торочив далі. . .<sup>12</sup>

It is common to encounter Martovych's characters in states of introspection. "Thinking" verbs of all kinds are conspicuous (e.g., *hadaty*, *mirkuvaty*). Self-communion is explicitly underscored by expressions like "he says to himself." In "Khytryi Pan'ko" (Sly Pan'ko), the hero actually divides himself psychologically and exhorts his lazy half to action.<sup>13</sup> Hallucinations, fantasies, day-dreaming, wishful thinking, projection of thoughts into the future are some other devices of consciousness.<sup>14</sup> Interestingly enough, even animals think on occasion:

Збудилася зозуля, дивиться: аж свитає. Сама своїм очам не повірила. „Аби соловії сьогодні заспав?!” — думала.— Це не може бути!”<sup>15</sup>

In "Lumera" the narrator turns himself into a mare in order "to find out what she thinks."<sup>16</sup>

Martovych's narrative voice is generally unobtrusive and neutral. If, on occasion, there is a rise in pitch, the persona that emerges is prone to be more of a psychologist than a sociologist. "Muzhyts'ka smert'" (A Peasant Death) yields a borderline example:

Не лиш кождий нарід має свою бесіду, але й кожда суспільна кляса має хоть своє наріччя. Не в тім річ, як виговорюють слова, але як їх розуміють.[...] Коли би хтось ужив цього слова [дім] так, що воно мало би викликати на слухачеві якесь чуття, то іншого чуття зазнав би чоловік, що зріс у місті, а іншого той, хто виховався на селі. Та й навпаки. . .<sup>17</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 199.

<sup>12</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 150.

<sup>13</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 130.

<sup>14</sup> For examples see "Ian," "Na torzi," "Nichnyi hist'," "Muzhyts'ka smert'," "Persha svarka."

<sup>15</sup> Cf. "Viit," in Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 191.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 23.

<sup>17</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 76.

Here social and psychological perceptions intermingle (i.e., class and feeling). The attitude is more clear-cut in the following example from *Zabonbon*:

А Славко? Він не догадувався, які почування задля нього носить Краньцовська в своїм серці. Був *загіпнотизований*, аби не розуміти те, що до нього говорять. Ще змалечку защеплений йому погляд, що лиш той людина, хто має диплом і золотий ковнір, виробило в нім переконання, що *він—чоловік гіршого типу*. . . .<sup>18</sup>

Equally “psychological” is the narrative position in “Proshchal’nyi vechir”:

Дуже то немилий випадок, як тебе при людях сварять і плюгавлять. Усі ззираються на тебе, посмішкуються, а ти червонійся й відгрижайся, як знаєш. Але ще немиліший випадок, як тебе при людях хвалять, хоч нема защо. Бо тут ти й відгризтися нічим негоден; лиш маєш слухати, червоніти й пріти. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Passages like these point out that Martovych’s model of human behavior derives more from psychology than it does from sociology. References to childhood, to sexuality, the use of words and phrases like “unconscious,” “hypnotized,” “fantasy,” or “insane” strengthen this general impression.

As the question of narrative voice suggests, the introspective nature of Martovych’s prose is very much a matter of technique. Addressing the formal issues requires first of all a recognition that Martovych worked in both the non-narrative genres (i.e., the dramatic) as well as in the first- and third-person modes. While results in all these forms have been deemed “psychological” by one critic or another, there can be no question that narrative posture offers discrete permutations in the revelation of the fictional mind.<sup>20</sup>

Although Martovych’s exceptional ear for dialogue produced only a few dramatic works, among them the play “Politychna sprava” (A Matter of Politics) and the less clearly defined “Hrishnytsia,” “Za toplyvo” (About Firewood), and “Za mezhu” (About the Boundary), one can actually speak of a dialogic tendency dominating all his work. This is evident in such first-person stories as “Ne-chytal’nyk” (The Non-Reader), which reads like a dramatic monologue, and in much of his third-person prose, which is rife with vibrant conversations. If we compare his dramatic pieces with the first- and third-person prose by isolating the dialogues in them, it is easy to see the continuity and consistency of his dialogue technique. Our first example comes from “Hrishnytsia” (the phonetic spelling is Martovych’s):

<sup>18</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 75–76.

<sup>19</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 247.

<sup>20</sup> The techniques of conveying consciousness in the first- and third-person are discussed very well in Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton, 1978). I have adopted some of Cohn’s terminology and metaphors for describing internal states.

—Не втихомирюй мене, Андрійку, бо ти ще мало що знаєш, то ще не все. Бо я . . . Та ти міні радше вперед у очи наплюй (бо так міні належиться), а потім слухай. Я тебе ніколи не любила та й тепер не люблю.

—Ти, біг-ме, Аничко, в горячі. Що це ти таке говориш? Опам'ятайся! Таже ти на мене працювала, таже ти мене господарем зробила, таже ти для мене біле вижмакала, таже ти міні шосуботи голову змила, ти міні смашно їсти зварила. Що тобі таке?

—Бо ти, Андрійку, ще не вирозумів, куди я говорю. Я люблю Йвана. Я вдивлювалася в него, як у образ. Без него міні ніщо не було миле [ . . . ] А ти цього не знаєш.

The practical differences between the above and a section of dialogue from the third-person *Zabobon* are insignificant:

—Добре йому так, пане добродію, —обізвався Тріщин якимось таким голосом, що нагадував фірмана, як кричить на коні: „стій,” коли вони обгоняються від мух і скидають нашильники.

—Цілий повіт, пане добродію, збунтував [Пан Потурайчин]! Тими читальнями, то, пане добродію, лиш ширить деморалізацію поміж народом. Якись, пане добродію, узялися радикали, ліберали, масохісти. . . .<sup>21</sup>

The first-person story, “Ne-chyтал’nyk,” shows no formal differences from the works above. These are the opening lines:

—При келішку горівки я й побалакати, вважаєте, люблю, бо я старий, та чей не піду з парубками за льондрами гонити, о, ні-і!<sup>22</sup>

But in what sense are these dialogic forms “psychological”? The answer lies clearly in their perfect mimicry of human locution, in their ability to individualize effectively each hero through speech. There is no question that the syntax, lexicon, and even the enunciation attributed to these characters yields very palpable psyches. It is hard not to see in the excerpt from *Zabobon* a pompous, conservative, self-assured, intolerant, and semi-educated mentality. Yet in agreeing with critics that it is appropriate to call this effect “psychological,” one must stress that Martovych’s dialogic technique has important limitations when it is contrasted to his third-person narratives. The drawback of his dialogues is that they are basically not self-reflective. While personality is revealed indirectly through speech, the reader does experience a thinking being. The character in such instances is never the subject of his own attention. In most of Martovych’s dialogues/monologues, there is no true inside view of the character. In fact there is no pretence of thought; everything is handled as speech. The reader hears the protagonist’s spoken, enunciated, physical voice, but is not privy to his thoughts. “Narodna nosha” (Folk Dress) and “Nichnyi hist’” are notable

<sup>21</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 247.

<sup>22</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 1.

exceptions to this general rule primarily because their first-person narrators betray acute self-consciousness and offer an analysis of their own personal feelings and moods. Compare this “speech” from “Narodna nosha” to the dialogues that were cited above:

Отак я собі розважав у своїй голові, але вже на дорозі, як визволився з тої западні: із реставрації. Не йшов я, але тікав! Бо добре то приповідують, що вдарити можна не тільки буюом, але також і словом. А я був битий і словами і своїми власними думками! Отож утікав від цих побоїв, куди ноги несли.<sup>23</sup>

We thus come to the conclusion that it is through the third-person narrative mode that Martovych most thoroughly renders the “atmosphere of the mind” (to borrow a phrase from Henry James).<sup>24</sup> This technique, with its omniscient and impersonal manner of articulating the scene, exposes the muted “voice” of the mind very graphically; it creates the impression of a psychological space where thoughts, awareness, and consciousness are localized.

We have seen this technique at work to some extent above, especially in the excerpt from “Os’ posy moie.” The story “Muzhyts’ka smert’” contains another fine example. As Hryts’, the principal character, lies dying in the presence of his family and neighbors, Martovych zeros in on his mental sensations:

. . . Гриць ніби відчуває, що найстарша донька, Василина, вже не дуже за ним жалує. Там у серці глибоко, в самім кутику, ворухиться несвідомо в неї бажання, щоби дедя довго вже не карався на цім світі, щоби пішов там, куди справився. . . .<sup>25</sup>

And somewhat later:

Щоби сяк-так оправдати себе перед родиною [Гриць] удавав, що ще не вмирає. Але був переконаний, що йому ніхто не вірить. . . .<sup>26</sup>

While these are but short—and not necessarily representative—segments of the entire tale, they are typical of a frequently employed device. As is apparent, this inwardly directed narration renders complicated states of awareness, transmitting Hryts’ simultaneous cognizance of self and others. There is a feeling that the character is reading other minds. Unlike dialogue, this scene is capable of penetrating to the “sub-verbal stratum [of the] mind.”<sup>27</sup> Martovych’s first-person narratives can neither achieve the same level of psychological intimacy nor convey this type of complex

<sup>23</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 265.

<sup>24</sup> Henry James, “The Art of Fiction,” in *The Portable Henry James* (New York, 1956), p. 401.

<sup>25</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 78.

<sup>26</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 85.

<sup>27</sup> Cohn, *Transparent Minds*, p. 43.

mental resonance. His dialogues recreate what one critic has referred to as “speech level” consciousness; the third-person technique evokes in Martovych the un verbalized or “prespeech level” of consciousness.<sup>28</sup>

The sophistication of this third-person technique can be better appreciated if we compare it to that of another writer. Below is a scene from Panas Myrnyi's *Khiba revut' voly, iak iasla povni?* The choice is arbitrary, although it was partially dictated by the fact that Myrnyi is one of the few Ukrainian writers whose “psychological analysis” has been studied.<sup>29</sup> In the following excerpt, the hero (Chipka) is observed while under the amorous spell of a woman he just met (the emphases both here and in the next quotation are mine and apply to the ensuing comments):

Ішов він такою ж тихою ходою, як і сюди, а може ще й тихішою,—та все думав та думав. . . А в серці—почував він прокидалось щось невідоме, чудне: *і важко мов, і легко, і сумно, й весело, й хочеться співати й хочеться плакати. . . . Сльози не ллються, а голос рветься, несподіваний сум обіймає голову, думка думку гонить: нігде пристати, ні за що зачепитися—так і ганяє за manoю. . . . А перед очима—зелена керсетка, червона спідниця, знадний з усмішкою погляд, червоні, як кармазин, уста, з котрих виглядає рядок дрібних, як перли, зубів. . . . У його аж мороз пішов поза спиною. . . . „Оце так!!—промовив він уголос.—Чи не здурів, бува, я, чи не збожеволів? . . .*

Now let us compare a roughly analogous scene from *Zabobon*. Here, too, Slavko is seen mulling over a recent meeting with a woman (Kran'tsovs'ka) who evokes in him strong sexual desires. Note how Martovych handles the portrayal of his subject's thoughts.

А Славко не був радий ні трохи. Ані одна справа не зложилася так, як він про це мріяв. Давно йому знакома зневіра закралася наново до його серця. *Це й зполудня [мені] не варт іти. Нащо? На пусту балаканину. Але що сталося з його забобоном? Із тим забобоном, що завжди справджувався. Хіба би він тепер Славка здурив? Це не може бути! Ніяким світом! У ніщо, але до слова: в ніщо так Славко не вірив, як у той забобон. Тільки тепер якось вони оба не порозумілися.*

Славко задумався. Задумався глибоко. Всі сили умислові зібрав до купи, напружив їх і радився з ними, в чім, він схибив своєму забобоні. *Ага! Є, [я] найшов! Ой, який же він дурень! Сама доля дала йому притоку журитися, а він не журився! Адже зараза, зараза. Тільки було нею перелякатися, загризтися, а за те в Крацьовської збирав би самі тріюмфи. Так же ні! Він собі байдуже про заразу. Зараз таки потішився, що вона його не вчепитсья. Та хто знає, чи Славко здужає*

<sup>28</sup> Robert Humphrey, *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. M. P. Pyvovarov, *Maisternist' psikhologichnoho analizu: Roman “Poviia” Panasa Myrnoho* (Kiev, 1960). On the subject of psychological portrayal in literature see also: S. H. Myroniuk, “Psikhologichnyi analiz u noveli M. Kotsiubyns'koho ‘Persona grata,’” in *U vinok Mykhailu Kotsiubyns'komu* (Kiev, 1967), pp. 140–46; M. P. Kodak, *Psikhologizm sotsial'noi prozy* (Kiev, 1980).

журитися коли тою заразою так, як того треба на те, щоби його мрії здійснилися?! Але ще поспробує. Поспробує навіть піти до Краньцовської, бо почуває по собі, що щось його до неї дуже-дуже тягне. Не вірить навіть, чи вдалося б йому лишитися дома, хоч би й завзявся.

Of the two authors, Myrnyi is clearly the more hackneyed; his portrayal of Chipka's mental state is at once static, very abstract ("і важко мов, і легко, і сумно, й весело, і хочеться співати й хочеться плакати. . .") and general ("думка думку гонить"). Martovych, on the other hand, is concrete and dynamic. Instead of reporting on Slavko's anxiety, he recreates it through a direct rendering of his swarming thoughts.

Observe that one and the other writer maintains a third-person narrative, both resort to tense shifts (from past to present) to achieve a psychological effect. Martovych's text, however, contains a number of nuances that give it a clear advantage over Myrnyi's. The latter alerts his reader that he is about to enter Chipka's mind by the phrase, "А в серці—почував він прокладалось щось невідоме, чудне." The sentences that follow are in the present tense (cf. italic text above), ostensibly to set off Chipka's thoughts from the past tense authorial narration. In fact, what Myrnyi tries to pass off as Chipka's thoughts sounds like another version of the narrator, but instead of being "objective," he now waxes lyrical. As if to compensate for this, the passage ends with Chipka *speaking* to himself out loud (cf. the bold text above). The over-all psychological effect is rather shallow.

If Martovych's text penetrates deeper into Slavko's consciousness, it is because it is more intricate and involved. Through subtle temporal, lexical, and syntactic transformations he modulates the third-person narrating voice, shifting it from an authorial position to one more closely resembling the subjective perspective of his character. Even though Martovych's passage is smooth and seamless, it actually contains several different narrational tones. First, there is the neutral, all-knowing narrator (cf. the regular type above). Punctuating this stratum are snippets of Slavko's own quoted thoughts, rendered in the present tense and in a way that suggests that they may be in the first-person (cf. italic bold; pronouns in brackets are mine). Finally, we have the authorial voice in a different guise: while maintaining the narrative past tense and third-person, it masquerades as Slavko's by adapting his peculiar reasoning, syntax, and lexicon.<sup>30</sup>

Other characters are also rendered through this method. One example is a passage depicting Kran'tsovs'ka's mind. Note how the narrator imperceptibly fuses with her personality, how sentences of outward description (normal text) alternate with an inner focus (italic text):

<sup>30</sup> On the use of these techniques by Western authors, see Cohn, *Transparent Minds*.

По цих словах вийшла до другої кімнати. Якийсь час шукала й знайшла запечатаний лист. Взяла його в руки й застановлялася часочок над тим, чи би не вволити Славкову волю. *Не могла ніяк. Ще би за один поцілунок нічого їй не сталося. Але вона була певна, що він не вдоволиться одним. А тоді вона може заслабнути на правду та й пролежати довгий час у ліжку. Зрештою боїться, що зі зденервовання може так поводитися супроти нього, що він це візьме за зневагу. А опріч того зденервовання й біль голови додавали їй упертости. „Адже,”—думала собі,—„я маю також право домагатися від першого поцілунку якоїсь приємности” . . .* Вернулася й показала Славкові лист.<sup>31</sup>

Among the stories, “Persha svarka” utilizes this technique to best advantage. Here is a passage showing Mrs. Dorozhyns’ka’s frustration:

. . . Вона лишилася в сальоні коло столика, з хустиною коло ротика, проливаючи сльози.

*Ах, пімстится, думала й гризла судорожно пальчики. Покинути його. Поїхати додому до родичів.*

*Та в тім біда, що родичі тільки й ждали на то, щоби її якнайборше з дому збутися. Партія така добра лучилася: пан Дорожинський—лікар, а вона мала всього три тисячі посагу. І дурний знав, що не вона йому, але він їй ласку зробиє.*<sup>32</sup>

The woman’s see-sawing thought and moods are conveyed very well here: at first they are childishly spiteful, then more coldly realistic, finally angry. Throughout, the narrator maintains the character’s perspective and adapts to her idiom.

For a writer who has such obvious talent for dialogue, Martovych often purposely avoids it to enhance the psychological effect. One notes, for example, that Slavko utters very few lines in *Zabobon*; in fact, he is close to being speechless. The reader experiences him primarily through the activity of his mind. Often, narrative summaries of conversations are provided in places where dialogue would be natural:

*Як лиш повозка рушила, стратила одразу пані Краньцовська сумний настрій. Зачала Славкові докоряти за те, що він тепер ніколи в них не буває. Дуже великий з нього самолюб. Бо коли зимовою порою нудьгував, тоді приходив до них, а тепер не хоче [ . . . ].*

Славко розумів цю бесіду зовсім дословно. Не важився доглубатися у ній якоїсь укритої думки. *Для того лиш виправдувався, що не мав коли [ . . . ].*

Краньцовська ж докоряла йому далі. *Певне, говорила, вона не може мати претенсії на увагу мужчин таких молодих, як Славко, бо вже застара. . .*<sup>33</sup>

As is clear from the italicized text, these sentences could have easily been rendered as dialogue. By refraining, Martovych creates the distinct impres-

<sup>31</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 179.

<sup>32</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 100.

<sup>33</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 53–54; see also 68–69.

sion that these words are echoing in the minds of his characters, instead of their ears.

Martovych goes out of his way to endow even minor characters with a distinct psychological dimension. When such figures are introduced, attention is drawn to their internal state, rather than to gesture or physical appearance (which are often ignored). Take the portrayal of a judge in “Os’ posy moie.” Although his role is trivial, he nevertheless acquires a conspicuous psychological profile:

Суддя був *лютий*, бо фіякер його стряс, та й з того *голова розболіла*. Зачав кричати на Семена, чого за таку дрібницю процесується. „Погодисься!”—кричав. Але ні Семен, ні Юрко не знали, що робити. Суддя був *сердитий* ще й тому, що було аж два адвокати, та не міг справи вбити, значить: залагодити її так, аби мужики пішли собі з нічим додому, а він аби *не потребував протоколи списувати*.<sup>34</sup>

While physical details are missing, the psychological portrait of a corrupt, aggressive, slothful, and frustrated personality comes across clearly.

Similar instances occur in *Zabobon*. When Pazia, the cook, materializes in the novel for the first time her appearance is not described; her personality, on the other hand, is given solid elaboration:

Розгнівана їмость пішла до кухні, а кухарка, Пазя, побігла шукати панича-Славка. Вона залюбки взялася до цього діла, бо намагалася вже від довшого часу здібатися зі Славком чи не вдалось би їй прихилити собі Славкового серця. На тепер із тої причини не мала ніяких паскудних намірів. Та й не потребувала цього, бо була любаскою Івана. . . .<sup>35</sup>

Again, in chapter 4, while depicting a group assembled to discuss the reading room, Martovych suddenly highlights a village elder (the “Viit”) by focusing on his temperament:

Війт *уважав себе за приятеля* панотцевого дому, для того з приходом Славка заборонював курити, аби панича не душило.<sup>36</sup>

The prominence given to peripheral psyches tends to create brief side-shows, mini-dramas in Martovych’s work. A classic case of such a “psychological *intermedia*” occurs in “Muzhyts’ka smert’,” when the reader’s attention is momentarily deflected from the main story line by the intrusive consciousness of a tall woman, standing near Hryts’ s bedside. Ivanykha, as she is called, appears and disappears without serious repercussion for the story. But her brief spell on “stage” is memorable:

. . . Іваниха з Процихою стояли коло дверей. Молоденька Іваниха дуже несмілива. Страх їй прикро було, що дуже велика. Проциха стояла їй під груди. Іваниха

<sup>34</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 156.

<sup>35</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 15.

<sup>36</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 83.

чулася опущена бо кілька разів глипнула в бік на Проциху, не виділа нічого, тільки Процишине волосся. Ще й то її непокоїло, що не могла найти слова розради для Грицихи.<sup>37</sup>

As always in such cases, the passage represents a complete shift of narrative perspective to the point of view of this minor figure. Moreover, Martovych is not satisfied with making a point about the woman's physical stature: typically, he distills from it a psychological portrait.

There are other instances in the prose that illustrate Martovych's tendency to move adroitly from the physical to psychological realm, to "psychologize" an object or event so that it becomes a factor in a character's identity. Take, for example, in *Zabobon* the portraits of Pavlo Haieviyi (the illiterate who wears glasses)<sup>38</sup> and Petro Oskamiuk (the peasant caught going beltless).<sup>39</sup> The glasses are an emblem of Haieviyi's personality, his guileless pride; while Oskamiuk's inadvertent moment of "indecentcy" becomes an indelible mark on his psyche, the source of permanent humiliation. Each is portrayed through this single individualizing psychic stamp, which is employed like a musical leitmotif: whenever the reader encounters Haieviyi, he always refers to his glasses; when Oskamiuk appears in a scene, he is fearful that someone might remember his embarrassing incident.

It has been said, quite justifiably, that Martovych is a "thoroughly tendentious writer."<sup>40</sup> This in no way detracts from his achievements, for he is that rare breed of storyteller who handles civic commitment dexterously and, from the reader's perspective, inoffensively. His psychological approach to character is very much a part of this tendentiousness, a sobering message about the intellectual and spiritual limitations of the human milieu he describes. In maneuvering the reader to their level of awareness, Martovych reveals that there is no self-knowledge among these people, and, what is worse, that there is no groping for meaning in life, no desire or even ability to comprehend their true condition. Although education and literacy are proffered as a distant hope, the overall view remains pessimistic: Martovych's characters are not on a spiritual or intellectual quest that ends in an epiphany. With the exception of Semen in "Os' posy moie," his beings cannot attain liberation from either their suffering or stupidity. Even in victory (cf. the election stories "Khytryi Pan'ko," "Smertel'na sprava"), the peasant's social and intellectual consciousness barely rises to a higher plateau. Slavko's mental anguish ends not in self-understanding, but self-

<sup>37</sup> Martovych, *Tvory*, 1: 69.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 24–25.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Martovych, *Tvory*, 2: 43–44.

<sup>40</sup> Hamorak [Stefanyk], "Talent bez seredovyshcha," p. xxxviii.

deception, illustrated by the fact that he seeks escape from his problems in a hopeless marriage. These are people on a psychological treadmill, from which they cannot step down. Their inwardness is ultimately unrewarding.

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