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PERFORMATIVE TEXT IN THE NARRATIVE DESIGN OF YURI ANDRUKHOVYCH'S NOVEL *PERVERZION*[4]

This article discusses the narrative design of Yuri Andrukhovych's novel Perverzion (1997) and particularly the way the author uses various aspects of performance to drive the narrative. It examines various genre issues including the novel's nature as a saint's life as well as a pastiche. It observes similarities with several literary antecedents including Mikhail Bulgakov's The Master and Margarita, *Vladimir Nabokov's* Ada, *Tadeusz Konwicki's* A Minor Apocalypse, *Vasily Aksenov's* The Burn, *and Tomas Mann's* Death in Venice. *The discussion notes how Andrukhovych's novel fits into the postmodernist tradition with its playfulness and mindful cognizance of the vast literary and cultural traditions without any anxiety of influence, yet also deals with the accursed existential questions that are posed by writers such as Dostoevsky. The article applies Terry Eagleton's definition of Postmodernism and shows how Andrukhovych in the novel "leap[s] the barrier between art and common life" to create his postmodernist masterpiece. In addition, the discussion describes Stakh Perfetsky's identity quest (both for himself as well as for his nation) and the use of masks in the novel for numerous characters, which links it to an essential psychological element of Venetian carnival to explore an alternate self. The article details the numerous performances that are an essential part of the narrative and how they comprise a fundamental aspect of the makeup of the character of Stakh Perfetsky. The most detailed analysis in the article focuses on a deconstruction of the performance of the opera* Orpheus in Venice, *which is at the heart of the novel. The very nature of the opera as a pastiche and bufonada (one of the tripartite founding aspects of the very name of the BU-BA-BU literary performance group) mimics the actual and philosophical organizing principle of the novel.*

Keywords: *Yuri Andrukhovych, Perverzion, opera, narrative, performative text, BU-BA-BU, carnival.*

[4]This is my published English translation of the title of the novel *Perverziia* that appeared with Northwestern University Press in 2005. All English-language quotations will be from that edition.

Jaque in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* remarks, "All the world's a stage." In Yuri Andrukhovych's novel *Perverzion*, all the novel's a stage as the author patches together numerous genres and transcripts from various media to allow the reader to participate in the re-creation of the life of the novel's hero Stanislav ("Stakh") Perfetsky. Perfetsky himself sets the stage for the novelistic scripting of his life by arranging for his own purported dramatic demise–to achieve a sense of immortality in the mortal world, to make memorable the memory of his life for his contemporainity and posterity, to make a name for himself in Europe as well as in his native Ukraine. The novel's hero/anti-hero Stakh Perfetsky is, in fact, a performance poet, one of whose forty nicknames is Spas Orpheusky (Savior Orpheus) – the archetypal poet, singer and performer from Greek mythology. The first and last names of this particular nickname serve symbolically to span two worlds: the first of spiritual faith (Spas–the traditional appellation for the Savior in the Byzantine Slavic tradition) and the second of pre-Christian mythology (Orpheus). These two elements, two phases of historical human time and mentalities, establish the parameters for Perfetsky's life possibilities and choices in the novel and define significant aspects of his character.

In a sense, Perfetsky achieves postmodernist "sainthood" through his disappearance and his ostensibly posthumous fame. Observe the "St." abbreviation of his name that occurs on many occasions in the novel and matches the Western-style abbreviation for the word "saint." There are two Saint Stanislauses in church history, both of them Polish: St. Stanislaus of Cracow (1030–1079), who was persecuted by agents and eventually slain by the hand of Polish King Boleslaw II during the rite of Holy Communion, in what should have been sanctuary in a church, and St. Stanislas Kostka (1550–1568), who foretold his own death a few days before it happened and who was known as a pious innocent and protector of novitiates. The theme of persecution, typical of the lives of saints, does provide a common motif both in Perfetsky's as well as in St. Stanislaus of Cracow's respective narratives. While Perfetsky's life does not match the two Stanislas saints' lives in any great detail, his "zhyttyia," does correspond with the genre of a saint's life, filled with the temptations, lustful thoughts and debauchery that precede conversion to faith and which often serve as an admonition to others in traditional saints' lives.

Stanislav Perfetsky, too, like a saint, and as his last name implies, is an all too imperfectly human searcher for perfection, a seeker of some kind of ineffable, inner, reconciliation in his life's quest. Not quite a rebel without a cause, he's more of a hero unsure of his quest, more of a Jack Kerouac hero like Sal Paradise on the road of life. Note the coincidence that Stakh Perfetsky and Sal Paradise share the same initials and the same quest for perfection inherent in their last names.[5] This affinity between the two novels is supported by the fact that the notion of saintliness, the Beats as beatification, is a quite prominent motif in *On the Road*. Instead of being known for his unwavering faith or heroic actions like a traditional hero, Perfetsky seems to be better defined by what he rejects–immortality (when offered it by demonic agencies) and becoming an assassin–because he realizes he has a soul and is not innately evil. Additionally, he rejects his former life as well as a new life with the most profound love of his life Ada Tsytryna. Stakh's earthbound immortality through notoriety serves to remove him from the performance stage of his previous life and establishes a clean slate for him. As with all good performers, the time comes to exit from the stage, and Stakh does that in dramatic fashion. There is a traditional narrative denouement–and a traditional epilogue to the novel with numerous hypotheses, hints and conjectures, which all further confuse matters for the reader.

The saint's life is but one of the many genres found and parodied in the pastiche of the novel. One can see partial similarities with a number of modern literary works, including Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, Vladimir Nabokov's *Ada*, Tadeusz Konwicki's *A Minor Apocalypse*, Vasily Aksenov's *The Burn*, and Tomas Mann's

[5]Andrukhovych has a particular affinity for the Beat Generation writers and began translating a number of Beat and New York School poets into Ukrainian during his Fulbright grant stay at Penn State University in 2000/2001. He also completed something of a pilgrimage in November 2000 with me to the opera house in Central City, Colorado–a place prominent in the action of Kerouac's *On the Road*. He published a collection of his translations of the Beats and New York School poets under the title *Den' smerti pani Den'* [Kkarkiv: Folio Publishers, 2006].

Death in Venice, among others.[6] Terry Eagleton in his book *Literary Theory: An Introduction* gives a general definition of Postmodernism that largely coincides with the essential nature of *Perverzion*:

The typical postmodernist work of art is arbitrary, eclectic, hybrid, decentred, fluid, discontinuous, pastiche-like. True to the tenets of postmodernity, it spurns metaphysical profundity for a kind of contrived depthlessness, playfulness and lack of affect, an art of pleasures, surfaces and passing intensities. Suspecting all assured truths and certainties, its form is ironic and its epistemology relativist and sceptical. Rejecting all attempts to reflect a stable reality beyond itself, it exists self-consciously at the level of form or language. Knowing its own fictions to be groundless and gratuitous, it can attain a kind of negative authenticity only by flaunting its ironic awareness of this fact, wryly pointing its own status as a constructed artifice. Nervous of all isolated identity, and wary of the notion of absolute origins, it draws attention to its own 'intertextual' nature, its parodic recyclings of other works which are themselves no more than such recyclings. Part of what it parodies is past history – a history which is no longer to be seen in linear terms as the chain of causality which produced the present, but which exists in a kind of eternal present as so much raw material torn from its own context and cobbled together with the contemporary. Finally, and most perhaps typically of all, postmodern culture turns its distaste for fixed boundaries and categories on the traditional distinction between 'high' and 'popular' art, deconstructing the borderline between them by producing artifacts which are self-consciously populist or vernacular, or which offer themselves as commodities for pleasurable consumption…. There is no better or worse, just different. In seeking to leap the barrier between art and common life, postmodernism seems to some the resurgence in our own time of the radical avant-garde, which had traditionally pursued this goal [Eagleton, 201–202].

[6]For an excellent general discussion of the nature of the novel see Nila Zborovska, "Zavershennia karnavalu *Perverzii* Iuriia Andrukhovycha." Lesia Kalynska discusses some of these parallels in her doctoral dissertation – "Prozova tvorchist' Jurija Andrukhovycha jak fenomen postmodernizmu." Marco Stech has an extremely interesting reading of the novel in his article "Khto khoche vidrodytysia, musyt' pomerty" and regards *Perverzion* as a polemic with Tomas Mann's *Death in Venice* [19].

Perverzion self-consciously resonates virtually with all these above-noted characteristic elements, especially in its playfulness, in its mock-epicality, in its mindful cognizance of the vast literary and cultural traditions and conventions that have preceded it. With its self-deprecatory attitude that strives to obliterate or at least mock profundity, it still manages to deal with the accursed questions that many great writers and thinkers throughout time have grappled with: love, death, immortality, the nature of the soul, good and evil. Thus the narrative seems to protest too much: while the novel is infused with the spirit of carnival,[7] it is still profoundly thoughtful, both aware of as well as stretching the parameters of the literary tradition.

One particular aspect of Eagleton's definition of Postmodernism[8] is particularly relevant to Andrukhovych's novel–the preoccupation with "leap[ing] the barrier between art and common life." In this regard performance comprises the essence of Stanislav Perfetsky's nature. He, in his quest for his true self, takes the role of a performance poet as one of his primary identities. It is no surprise that performances and performance metaphors abound in the novel, including the entire libretto of a pasticcio opera *Orpheus in Venice* at the virtual center of the novel, which mirrors elements of Perfetsky's life on stage. The author himself unabashedly reveals the operatic nature of *Perverzion* in comments on the back jacket of the novel's first edition: "I wanted to write a book, bitter and sweet, I wanted it to be like a dream, to be like another planet, like a thriller, like poetry in prose, like an opera. I invite my readers to Venice–the Venice along which entire detachments of hired killers and jealous avengers search, equipped with capes, swords and masks, seeking their potential victims with a singular striving–once and for all lowering their joyful carnival bodies to the bottom of the odiferous but romantic canals."

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[7] In conversations with me Viktor Neborak has indicated that the members of Bu-Ba-Bu (Andrukhovych, Neborak and Oleksandr Irvanets) were greatly influenced by Mikhail Bakhtin's writings, particular the latter's *Rabelais and His World*, which focuses on carnival and carnivalization and which they read in the original Russian.

[8] For a good discussion of the fragmented nature of Ukrainian Postmodernism see Tamara Hundorova's book, *Pisliachornobyl 's 'ka biblioteka: ukrains 'kyi literaturnyi postmodern*. [Kyiv: Krytyka, 2005].

Like an actor who plays numerous roles on stage with a plethora of alter egos, Stas Perfetsky has many names – 40 to be exact. We learn of this first in I. Bilynkevych's necrology on Perfetsky published in the Lviv New Millenium News. Before enumerating some of those names Bilynkevych writes: "He had countless faces and countless names [8]." Later Perfetsky gives a more complete list of his names from his diary:

They called him Stakh Perfetsky and Carp Loverboysky and Sheat-fish Saintlymansky and Pierre Fukinsky and High-as-a-kite Birdsky. But they also called him Gluck, Bloom, Vrubl, Strudel and Schnabel. In addition he was Jonah of the Fish and Devourer of Chickens and Shura of the Fish and Siura of the Balls and Glory of the Days. But he was also Hunkman, Juan Perez, Billygoat Friend, Pepperman and Ertz-Hertz-Pertz. Some knew him as Persiansky, Parthiansky, Personsky, Profansky, and Perfavorsky. His closest friends loved him for the fact that he was Kamal Manchmal, Johann Cohan, Buddah Judas, Fishsoup Loafman, and Pu Fu. But all without exception called him Bimber Bibamus, Agnus Magnus, Avis Penis, Shtakhus Bacchus, and Cactus Erectus. Therefore no one could even guess that he really was Antinoah and Zorro Vavel and Hams/m/bur/g/er and Savior Orpheusky and P.S. [*Perverzion* 154]

Thus the many nicknames comprise the different ways that Perfetsky the performer in life is perceived by his "audience," which, of course, participates in the process of naming and thereby defining him. This multiplicity of appellations also suggests an identity crisis for him in his search to find himself.[9]

While Perfetsky's many names represent probing for his identity in life, he paradoxically seems to find himself through his apparent suicide (if you want to believe that) or his disappearance (if you feel that his suicide was staged and part of a calculated plan to establish a new life). That single staged event (intentionally taped by Perfetsky for posterity on a tape recorder) generates the interest to solve the mystery behind the motivation for Perfetsky's disappearance. In the archetype of the fish, a recurring motif in the novel and in all of

[9]See Naydan, "National Identity for the Ukrainian Writer: Writing into the New Millenium," 143–152.

Andrukhovych's works for that matter, Perfetsky symbolically returns to his origins–the waters of the Grand Canal – by jumping from his hotel window. And like Orpheus, who is torn to shreds by maenads and whose head and lyre are tossed into the river Hebrus, Perfetsky, who serendipitously replaces the actor playing Orpheus during the performance of the *Orpheus in Venice* opera presented in the novel, also makes a return to the river. And his love Ada is at least linguistically and metaphorically linked to the naiad Eurydice (note that the word is "naiADA" in Ukrainian–my emphasis), who steals Orpheus' heart in the ancient Greek myth. Observe also the affinity between her name Ada and the Ukrainian word for Hades – *ad*. She, of course, also plays the role of the queen at Satan's ball.

The novel, too, is infused with the central motif of the mask, which embodies the theater and performance. Take note of Oscar Wilde's comment on the nature of the mask in theater: "Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask and he will tell the truth (Wilde 389)." *Perverzion* is largely a novel about finding a postmodernist truth in a morass of knowledge and history, of donning masks to help find true identity. Andrukhovych has noted on several occasions that he chose the title for the novel in part for its sound similarity with an Etruscan god of death, which he called in conversations with me "Perzu Versu." The figure of the masked Phersu appears in Etruscan tomb drawings as a figure associated with death and funereal rites.[10] The Etruscan word "phersu," which means mask, is the likely origin of the Latin word "persona," which was originally associated with the theater.

The action of *Perverzion* occurs mostly on the backdrop of carnival in Venice – the time of acting out passions in masks, which represent alter egos for the various aspects of the human personalit – both good and evil – and which are embodied in these visual representations. The following passage provides an historical description of the psychological function of carnival masks:

[10]I am grateful to Prof. L.B. van der Meer of Leiden University for assisting me with information on the origin and nature of the Phersu. For a depiction of the Phersu in The Tomb of the Augurs see: http://www.mysteriousetruscans.com /taraugurs.html.

Masquerading used to be common practice among Venetians, whether rich or poor, timid or daring. Masked courtesans would participate in the most wanton games of lust, and confident of their anonymity would shed all conventional inhibitions. Noblemen, who would normally take painstaking care not to divulge a hint of their sexual preferences, could perform in mask acts that at the time were considered immoral and illegal. Gamblers disguised themselves so they would not be recognized by their fellow players, and so that transactions of money or property would not be made public; here, mask-wearing often became an imperative.

For Venetians, life in the crowded calli (the Venetian narrow streets), courtyards and squares did not afford personal anonymity nor any sense of privacy. Their need "to escape" was satisfied by the Venetian's best friend, the mask. It allowed any common denizen to reveal in public his or her true nature, the truth kept normally hidden for fear of criticism and denunciation. Repressed impulses would finally find an outlet, so to speak, where the true "I" could triumph, if only for a moment, unchaining the masquerading Venetian from everyday reality and from the norms that governed it.[11]

Masks are both literal and figurative in the novel. All the scholars and performers invited to the conference in Venice except for Perfetsky trade their mortal mask, their mortal identity for immortality: the ultrafeminist Liza Sheila Shalizer becomes "a snakebodied winged lamia, a succubus by the name of Lilith"; Alborak Djabraili becomes a nameless winged spirit; the Jamaican Cossack Rastaman John Paul Oshchyko becomes a spirit of the African forest Dada; and Gaston Dejavu a winged Marquise of Frogs. Ada and her husband Reisenbock are not what they appear to be. They both play the role of secret agents spying on Perfetsky. And Ada, too, is the queen of the satanic rout that occurs in section 25 of the novel. She constitutes a force–evidently through her love–that protects Perfetsky, much like Margarita, who protects the Master in

[11] I originally accessed this concise explanation of carnival in Venice at http://www.fondazione.com/masks/mask.htm. Unfortunately the link is no longer operative, though I have opted to retain the quotation precisely because of its pithiness. For additional information on the Venice carnival see Rowen, *Carnival in Venice*.

Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*. She eliminates the two assassins sent to murder Perfetsky at the La Fenice Theater performance, and she keeps Perfetsky from drinking the devil's brew at Satan's rout. Stas Perfetsky, too, is a man of many masks. On the one hand he is a womanizing performance poet–an Orphic figure who can sing and play passionately in both Italian and Ukrainian, and does so on many occasions in the novel. He is also a serious scholar and lecturer. In his masked secret life he is an assassin sent to murder "the Ukrainian Kevin Costner."

In his necrology at the beginning of the novel, the journalist Bilynkevych describes some of Stanislav Perfetsky's performances in purple prose. As he puts it:

He constantly risked his wealth, his talent, his life. Almost all his actions, these escapades of audacity, acted out publicly, surrounded by television crews and video pirates, assured complete failure, yet were consummated with absolute triumph. Wherefore it's just worthwhile [to look at] the horrifically-sweet "Resurrection of Barbara Langisz," performed with extensive sponsorship from the north before one of the half-ruined gravestones in the Lychakivsky Cemetery, when from twelve cardboard towers there were released into the rainy Lviv skies countless pigeons, balloons, condoms, crows, and poetic metaphors?! (Our newspaper at that time contained reports about this multivalenced action.–The Editor.). Or the unforgettable flight above the rooftops and squares, fearlessly begun from the heights of the highest point in Lviv Vysoky Zamok– "A Young Poet in the Claws of a Delta Glider?!" Stakh Perfetsky, now he didn't just recite poetry. He played and sang with rock groups, symphonic quartets, street jazz musicians, with choirs and orchestras (the oratorio "Nights of Incarceration"), with itinerant Peruvian musicians and bandits from the Zbiy neighborhood of Lviv and Armenians, with the Chortopil jaws harp players, whom he brought one time to Lviv right from the highlands with three military helicopters, and also with Elton John, who that year happened to spend time in our city incognito. Stas could play almost every musical instrument, but with the utmost accomplishment he played our souls–on the strings, completely invisible to the naked eye, of those who revered him as well as his enemies.… (*Perverzion* 9)

It is, of course, tempting to disregard the biographical fallacy and point out the partial similarity between Perfetsky's penchant for performance and the Yuri Andrukhovych's own participation in many Bu-Ba-Bu performances, including the famous Chrysler Imperial three-day "happening" at the Lviv Opera House in 1992.[12] This fact, of course, plays into the postmodernist penchant for obliterating the barrier between art and life. Suffice to say that Stanislav Perfetsky inescapably shares certain significant biographical similarities with the author of the novel, who also happens to reside in the city of Stanislav (now named Ivano-Frankivsk but called Stanislav or Stanislaviv by many of the current local inhabitants including Andrukhovych himself). Perfetsky, though, according to the way he is depicted in the novel, in physical appearance more closely resembles the Lviv performance poet Nazar Honchar from the Lu-Ho-Sad literary performance group. Honchar embodies Perfetsky's Kozak dandy style.[13] Honchar unfortunately tragically drowned in May 2009 near Uzhorod.

In many ways, Perfetsky's life in the novel is presented in a theatrically voyeuristic way for the audience, whom the author allows to become the fourth wall of the novel's stage. This, in fact, is quite necessary for the reader to have a more complete, well-rounded understanding of the novel. Over the course of the novel Perfetsky is constantly followed by Ada, whose alter ego, masked as Cerena, writes secret reports about him to a mysterious, demonic figure called Monsignore. She and her partner in conspiracy Reisenbock even arrange to ransack Perfetsky's room to obtain information on him, which is also passed along to their secretive patron. Bilynkevych in his article points out that Perfetsky attended a number of theatrical events, particularly operas. It is at the opera *Orpheus in Venice* at the La Fenice Theater where he transforms his

[12] For a discussion of the Chrysler Imperial rock opera happening, see Alexandra Hrycak, "The Coming of 'Chrysler Imperial': Ukrainian Youth and Rituals of Resistance." Harvard Ukrainian Studies 21.1–2 (June 1997): 63–91.

[13] For a picture of Honchar see: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File: Nazar_Honchar.JPG. I personally have seen several of Honchar's comic stage performances and readings at the Lviv Philharmonic in 1993 and the Pototsky Palace and elsewhere in later years in Lviv.

life into stage as he escapes from two hired killers to seamlessly become a hero and part of the performance, which is perceived by the audience as part of the production. This mimics his quest to be an active performer and not a passive observer in life, but he does so by accident, by attempting to evade the assassins trying to kill him. His sense of individual quest in life is bound with his obsessive need to perform, to have an audience. We can also point out that the author Andrukhovych often performs on stage with rock and jazz bands, and even has released a trio of CDs with the Polish group Karbido, the last one entitled *Absinthe*, presented as a soundtrack for an unrealized film based on scenes from *Perverzion*.

Performances in the novel are many, and not just by Perfetsky. He performs a number of musical pieces while becoming inebriated with the Italian priest Antonio Delcampo in part 10 of the novel. Part 11 comprises a radio interview with Liza Sheila Shalizer filled with feminist clichés, expletives, and scatological interjections. In part 12 Jamaican Cossack John Paul Oshyschyrko performs reggae-rap incantations to his music. The parodic scene of Shalizer's male-bashing lecture (while Perfetsky is playing postmodernist "footsy" with Ada under the conference table) ends in a riotously climactic scene of total chaos. The boisterous explosion of the crowd mimics Perfetsky's own simultaneous climax in another venue under the table as Ada pleasures him. The *Orpheus in Venice* opera is presented in part 15, while part 16 comprises Ada's report to Monsignore on the events, and part 17 – press reports on the doings at the opera house. Part 20 presents the fire swallower Tsutsu Mavropule's performance at the conference, in which he becomes the unleashed Mesopotamian demon Bakafu; while in parts 21–23 Perfetsky reads his lecture, which allows him to take control of discourse and shape his own and his country's identity. During a break in the conference, he attempts to become a 20th century man of action by assassinating the "Ukrainian Kevin Costner," which he fails to do because of his conscience. There is a surreptitiously taped video of Perfetsky's meeting with Ada in a restaurant in part 28. And chapter 30 presents a scene of threesome performance sex–with both Ada and Reisenbach in bed with Perfetsky. And, as noted above, Stas controls the reception of his demise by leaving his tape recorder

turned on when he purportedly jumps into the canal from his hotel window. After his death, the myth surrounding him grows larger and he continues to be seen by his friends from time to time on television news clips after his demise. His untimely end by defenestration, his death-dealing or death-defying leap, depending on how you interpret it, marks his retirement from the spotlight. He apparently begins a new life that is not all that different from his old one.

The journalist I. Bilynkevych in his necrology that appears at the beginning of the novel remarks that over the course of his life, Perfetsky often enjoyed attending theatrical events, particularly operas. Perfetsky, in fact, attends a major performance–the opera *Orpheus in Venice*, which is presented at the virtual center of the novel in parts 15–19. The narrative reconstructs the performance from five versions (note the significance of the novel's title *PerVERZIIA*, which serves as a bi-lingual pun [*versiia*, version] in this regard), from five perspectives. The opera scenes cover 45 pages in the original publication of the novel, or nearly 20 % of the entire text. Part 15 consists of the published program of the opera, including a detailed synopsis, one that is, in fact, significantly more detailed than a typical opera program. Part 16 comprises Cerina's secret report on events at the opera performance conveyed to her employer, the demonic inquisitor figure–Monsignore (who also has a role in the opera as the inquisitor). Cerina's observations obviously are colored by her personal perspective and her love relationship with Perfetsky. And in part 17, the opera's director-producer Mathew Kulikoff describes the opera performance and its aftermath in a book of published interviews entitled *Mister Shock. Five Monologues of Mathew the Frantic*. Part 18 consists of Perfetsky's diaristic perspective on the events interspliced with parts of the libretto from the performance, and part 19 – a culling of published newspaper reports on the opera and other events in Venice from the Venetian press through the filter of the author-narrator, who synthesizes them as reportage. Each segment concerning the opera reveals different information that allows the reader to reconstruct a fuller picture of the performance from the unfolding narrative and the events that actually occurred in the theater.

The opera's plot as it unfolds on stage at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice (The Phoenix Theater), whose name, of course, also suggests rebirth, largely mirrors events occurring in Perfetsky's life, particularly his love interest in Ada. His appearance at the opera, too, gives him the opportunity to make a dramatic entrance on stage before a large audience in the spectacle and to become its focal point, its main hero, which replicates his function as hero/anti-hero of the novel.[14] From hero of the novel he becomes reborn as hero of the opera, whose tragedy lies in the loss of his beloved. And like an Orphic Phoenix he is ritually and/or physically destroyed (by disappearing from those persecuting him) and becomes reborn in a new life at the end of the novel as he dives into the waters of his origins as the zodiacal sign of the fish. He also loses his real-life beloved (Ada), something he is destined to do if he is an Orpheus.

Perfetsky transforms his life into stage to don the mask of Orpheus as he escapes from the two killers dressed in the carnival garb of assassins trying to eliminate him. He seamlessly accepts the role of hero and takes part in the performance. This action parallels his constant quest to be an active performer in life, to live life on the edge and to the fullest. This, of course, lies at the essence of his experiential nature. But he takes the part by accident, in trying to evade the would-be assassins. Circumstances shape his destiny–but he willingly chooses to participate when given the opportunity. He chooses the role for which he has rehearsed and played most of his life, for which he is known and often called–Savior Orpheus. He later rejects other roles that have become available to him–that of an assassin and that of an immortal evil spirit, because he intuitively recognizes that they do not fit his true nature. He becomes his own self-generated myth of eternal return. He is an Orpheus who must be reborn, who must be reincarnated in a new life. His sense of individual quest in life seems to be inexorably bound to his obsessive need to perform, to have an audience. Events within the confines of the performance on stage thus both symbolically and in terms of the plot mark a pivotal scene in the action of the novel.

[14] Mark Andryczyk discusses Perfetsky as a swashbuckler hero in his book *The Intellectual as Hero in 1990s Ukrainian Fiction* [U. of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2012].

The Orphic myth at the core of the opera, is, however, somewhat inverted, subverted and perverted. As opposed to an Orpheus attempting to return his beloved to the land of the living according to the traditional myth, or the Orpheus in Venice on stage trying to save his post-Eurydice earthly Venetian love Rina, in the real-time events occurring in the theater, Ada-Cerina becomes her Perfetsky-Orpheus' savior when she intercepts the two assassins attempting to kill him, apparently eliminating them in the vestibule of the theater, an event which is described in Mathew Kulikoff's account. Perfetsky as Orpheus, however, does play the role of a savior (*spas*). He *saves* the show—by taking the role of the original Orpheus, whom he had just accidentally knocked unconscious during the course of the performance by crashing into him after his journey along a cable stretched as a prop from the balcony to the stage. Yet in the opera, just as in the myth, he fails to save his beloved Rina from her captors. In attempting to escape from them, she drowns in the Grand Canal. Perfetsky in the role of Perfetsky in real life also chooses to drown himself in the Grand Canal–or at least create the appearance that he does so. Just as in the traditional myth, Orpheus, as played by Perfetsky, both succeeds and fails. In the traditional myth he wins his beloved back from Hades, only to transgress the interdiction of the gods and look back for his beloved–thereby losing her. In the traditional myth, Orpheus is ultimately torn to pieces by maenads. In Kulikoff's postmodern opera, he continues to live his earthly life after rending his beloved courtesan's captors. The severed head of one of his captors instead of Orpheus' head floats along the water.

The very genre of the Kulikoff opera becomes a realized metaphor for the novel's collage-like structure. The word "opera" (works) is the plural form for the Latin word "opus" (work). Thus the opera at the center of the novel partly reflects the hybrid, pastiche-like nature of the novel, since as a genre opera comprises various works, combining orchestral and vocal music, staging, and dramatic action. The novel precisely comprises a collection of works (of published and unpublished narratives, audio and video tapes, computer disks, etc.). Like an opera, the novel, too, is rife with all kinds of pointed, dramatic dialogs and music, particularly in the scene where Father Antonio Delcampo and Perfetsky sing and drink themselves to excess and ultimately to personal revelation.

The librettist Kulikoff conveys the conceptual nature of the opera at the end of the printed program. In his words:

However right here, in this island country saturated with culture and its imitations, it is quite appropriate for embodying one of my mad intentions–to create an opera beyond operas, where the elements themselves are operant, its inner actuality, its substance, is parodied, rethought and, if You accept this, is elevated even higher. To my assistance came the old Italian experience of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries (in fact, the centuries of the most luxurious flowering of Venice). I have in mind the so-called "pasticcio," when new operas were created on the basis of the deconstructing and recombination of elements of operas that already existed. The historical-cultural space of Venice, its topoi, its genius loci, it seems, assisted me in my work. [Perverzion 139]

The opera, then, by its very nature represents a metaphor for the author Andrukhovych's interspliced layering, recombination, and presentation of old material in a new way in the novel. In the same way that the Orphic myth is regenerated in a new variation, the myth of Perfetsky is created from constituent elements pieced together by Andrukhovych, the compiler of the Saint's Life (or we might call it the Anti-Saint's Life) of Perfetsky.

The choice of the Orphic myth as the theme of the opera obviously underscores the central theme of death and rebirth in the novel. The myth also brings a focus onto the archetypal nature of the poet-singer and Perfetsky's quest for a more profound spiritual love. The librettist is quite candid and not self-conscious at all in revealing his sources for his pasticcio opera. In his interview about the opera, and without any postmodernist anxiety of influence, he remarks: "The sum that they promised me in Venice gave me the possibility to do an opera that *never had been seen before*. And counter to this, I decided to compose it from operas that *have already existed*" (148). The opera sources on the Orpheus theme revealed in the program include: Claudio Monteverdi's *La Favola D'Orfeo* (The Fable of Orpheus; 1607), Christoph Willibald Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), and Gian Francesco Malipiero's 20th century *L'Orfeide* (1925). The latter, which is really a trilogy, is the least traditional and most innovative of the three since it draws on a number of pre-

existing operas and characters from commedia dell'arte sources. Of the three, Malipiero (1882–1973) is also the closest to the character of Kulikoff in terms of approach to composition. He owed his own compositional style to studies of 17th and 18th century Venetian composers. Thus the essence of his Modernism was based on a thorough understanding of the tradition–a similar attitude that we find in the novel regarding the literary tradition.

Numerous other operatic precursors who composed on the Orphic theme are not mentioned in the program, including Jacopo Peri's *L'Euridice* (1600), Giulio Caccini's *Euridice* (1602), Luigi Rossi's tragicomedy *Orfeo* (1647), Joseph Haydn's *L'Anima del Filosofo Ossia Orfeo ed Euridice* (The Soul of the Philosopher, or Orpheus and Eurydice; 1791), and Jacque Offenbach's comic operetta *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* (Orpheus in the Underworld; 1858), which became extremely popular in France under the title *Orphée aux Enfers*. None of the particular operas can significantly influence the *Orpheus in Venice* opera in terms of plot for a simple reason: the action of Kulikoff's opera occurs as a sequel in Venice following Orpheus' return from Hades after his failure to bring back Eurydice from the land of the dead. In *Orpheus in Venice* Eurydice, in fact, appears only as a disembodied voice from Hades.

Monteverdi's *La Favola D'Orfeo*, one of the earliest extant operas after the two versions of *Euridice*, was, significantly, first performed during the Venice carnival, the same general time period as Kulikoff's version in the novel. While most of the Orpheus-theme operas are in the style of Grand Opera, Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* comes closest in genre to Kulikoff's opera buffa, a generic genre near and dear to the Patriarch of Bu-Ba-Bu[15] and self-proclaimed master of *buffonada*, of buffoonery. A brief synopsis of Offenbach's carnivalized version of the Orpheus myth from the opera articulates an attitudinal similarity:

This is a comic-satiric version of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Orphée is a violin-teacher and Eurydice is no paragon of

[15] For a general discussion of Bu-Ba-Bu see my article "Ukrainian Literary Identity Today: The Legacy of the Bu-Ba-Bu Generation after the Orange Revolution." World Literature Today 79.3-4 (September-December, 2005): 24–32.

fidelity. Amongst her admirers is Pluton, who disguises himself as Aristée, a manufacturer of honey, and Jupiter, who changes into a fly in order to pass through a keyhole to be near her. When Eurydice dies, Orphée, who loathed her, is compelled to behave like the legend and to fetch her back from the underworld. There Orphée sees all sorts of strange things–gods doing the cancan, defying Jove by singing the *Marseillaise* and dancing a minuet. He is about to leave with Eurydice when Jupiter gives him a hefty kick that makes him turn round. She is lost to him forever, to his delight, and is enthusiastically welcomed back to the underworld with a wild bacchanale [Mezanotte 232].

The Offenbach operetta established a new genre of opera that, although criticized by more traditionalist members of French society, managed to create a sensation among the public and de-elevated traditional opera from its pedestal. The Kulikoff opera buffa contains a number of elements of buffoonery with its pyrotechnics, its more than 2000 performers, its recreation of group copulation on stage, its randomly eclectic presentation that borders on total chaos and confusion when observed from within on stage or from without by the audience.

The Kulikoff opera is an extensive pastiche with characters culled from a number of different operas. Besides Orpheus, of course, who comes from the many operas written about him as well as from myth, many of the other characters' names have their source in existing operas mostly unrelated to the Orpheus operas: the professional assassin Sparafucile from *Rigoletto*; Clarice from Rossini's *La Pietra del Paragone*; Rosalinde from Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*; Pantalone from *Le Donne curiose*, an opera buffa by Ermanno Wolf-Ferreri; Fiordiligi and Guiliemo from *Cosi fan tute*; and Commendatore, the avenging statue that comes to life, from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Rina, Orpheus' love interest in the opera, can be linked by sound similarity to the novel's heroine Cerina – the name Ada uses to sign her reports. Yuri Andrukhovych has also suggested to me in personal conversations that the name for him is associated with the Ukrainian word for queen (*tsarina*), since Cerina-Ada (whose two names suggest "queen of hell") is the queen of Satan's ball and the devil's consort. Rina in the opera also functions as Monsignore's courtesan.

While Rina is not a typical character name in operas, hers is a quite popular name among opera singers, including, among many others, Rina Gigli and Rina Dokshinsky. Rina, of course, is a post-Eurydice love interest for Orpheus in the opera, one whom he fails to save from being killed on stage, but whose death he avenges.

Three of Kulikoff's cast characters' names in the opera come from Carlo Goldoni's commedia dell'arte comedy *Il Servitore di Due Padroni* (Servant of Two Masters; 1745/1753) – Pantalone, his daughter Clarice, and the housemaid Smeraldina. Smeraldina is also prominent in Nobel Prize winner Paul Heyse's novella "Andrea Delfin," which takes place in Venice in 1762 and includes certain plot elements that echo the plot of *Perverzion*. In the novella Venice is ruled by a tyrannical triumvirate that secretly executes enemies of the state–not unlike the activities of Monsignore in *Perverzion*. Spies also abound in the novella, and one of the triumvirate–Lorenzo Venier–is stabbed to death with a dagger engraved with the words "Death to all inquisitors." Note well the inquisitor character in the opera as well as Monsignore's nature in the novel. The opera program presented in section 15 of the novel, of course, includes Malipiero's 1925 composition based on Goldoni–*Tre Commedia Goldoniane*–as one of the component elements of the pastiche of *Orpheus in Venice*. The name Asclepio from the cast of characters of the opera in all likelihood comes from the figure from Roman mythology Asclepius, who was raised by the Centaur Chiron and was taught the art of healing by the Centaur. Besides healing, Asclepius also learned the mystery of raising the dead, for which he was eventually punished by Zeus, who struck him down with a thunderbolt. Thus Alclepius, who was transformed from mortal to god, learned the mysteries of healing and gained secret knowledge of the power of resurrection. Yuri Andrukhovych, in fact, has remarked to me that Asclepio for him mirrors Dr. Reisenboch in the novel, who is presented as a urologist.

Other characters' names in the novel may or may not have been borrowed from operatic sources. The evil sorcerer Dapertutto appears in Jacque Offenbach's *Les contes d'Hoffman*; this character, prominent in *Perverzion*, also appears, of course, in E.T.A. Hoffman's prose. The name in Italian means "everywhere." The

name "Dr. Dapertutto" was Russian theatrical director Vsevolod Meyerhold's pseudonym for his highly experimental private theatrical activities, which were greatly influenced by *commedia dell'arte*. Russian poet Mikhail Kuzmin suggested the name to Meyerhold based on the character by the same name from E. T. A. Hoffmann's "A New Year's Eve Adventure. "[16] Dr. Dapertutto is a demonic figure, who appears to the hero Erasmus in the Hoffmann story. Andrukhovych has claimed to me an Italian dictionary as his only source for the name. There is also a sweet and mysterious love interest named Ada in Wagner's *Die Feen*, who turns out to be a fairie.

One other possible opera source may have had some influence on the novel – Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice* (1973). Several critics including Nila Zborovska and Marco Stech have alluded to similarities between *Perverzion* and Tomas Mann's novella *Death in Venice*. These become even more pronounced when one looks at the staging of the opera based on the Mann story, several of whose scenes on the backdrop of Venice share similarities with scenes in *Perverzion*. The backdrop of Venice may be the invariant here that suggests a link. A film source may also have impregnated the author with certain notions–Luchino Visconti's film *Death in Venice* (1971), which, of course, in visual form, deals with the novella's themes of death, sexual obsession, and good and evil in art. In passing Mr. Andrukhovych remarked to me that he had seen the Visconti film 2-3 times in the process of gathering information for his novel.

The plot, too, of Orpheus' sojourn to Venice seems not to come from a single model or source, but is rather an extension of pre-existing sources with random culling of plot elements from operatic and literary sources. This, of course, is what the postmodernist writer does. This is postmodernist recombination, a self-consciousness of the literary and cultural traditions, creating something that is the same, but different.

Thus it can become somewhat of an endless game of hide and seek to find references and similarities to other works, both literary and operatic, in the opera and the novel. Some may be fruitful, some

[16]For a discussion of this see Braun, *Meyerhold on Theatre*, 115. For an English translation of the story see Bleiler, *The Best Tales of Hoffman*, 104–129.

may lead to nowhere. Some may be intentional, some not. The point is that this is what postmodernism can be–an endless number of the possibilities of life and art in different combinations and within the context of thousands of years of the legacy of human civilization. Thus the opera in *Perverzion* is a realized metaphor of the structure and creative principle of the novel itself. The single organizing principle to the novel is chronology, which is the natural order of human life from birth to death, and for Perfetsky, the symbolic Orpheus-Phoenix, to rebirth and a new life inexorably linked to art and the artist.

In many respects, for a deeper understanding of Andrukovych's novel, one must reconstruct many different performances in one's own imagination. Andrukhovych as author manipulates the reader to become co-creator with him of his performative text. The reader must read, hear, see, and feel what the author does in palpable and visual ways. The author, too, gives us many versions and perversions, if you will–of events, letting us as audience determine the veracity of certain moments in his creation of this new and exciting hybrid genre.

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Перформативный текст в нарративной композиции романа Юрия Андруховича "Перверзия"

В статье рассматривается композиция нарратива в романе Юрия Андруховича "Перверзия" (1997), в частности, авторский способ использования различных аспектов перформенса с целью развития нарратива. Исследуются

различные жанровые особенности, включая одновременно агиографическую и коллажную природу рассматриваемого романа. Также прослеживаются его общие черты с несколькими предшествующими романами, включая следующие: "Мастер и Маргарита" Михаила Булгакова, "Ада" Владимира Набокова, "Малый Апокалипсис" Тадеуша Конвицки, "Ожог" Василия Аксенова и "Смерть в Венеции" Томаса Манна.

Уточняется, как роман Андруховича вписывается в постмодернистскую традицию с ее шаловливостью и внимательным узнаванием обширных литературных и культурных традиций, которая нисколько не тревожится о возможном обнаружении литературных влияний, но и не чуждается постановки "проклятых вопросов" бытия, актуализированных в литературе такими писателями, как Достоевский.

В статью используется определение постмодернизма в формулировке Терри Иглтона и демонстрируется, как Андрухович в своем романе "перепрыгивает через порог между искусством и обычной жизнью", создавая свой постмодернистский шедевр. Кроме того, в статье обсуждаются поиски идентичности главным героем Стахом Перфецким (как своей собственной идентичности, так и идентичности своей нации), а также использование в романе масок для многочисленных персонажей, что привязывает его к существенному психологическому элементу Венецианского карнавала, а именно, к исследованию альтернативного "я".

В статье детально рассматриваются многочисленные фрагменты перформенса, составляющие существенную часть нарратива, а также то, как они слагаются в основополагающую черту характера Стаха Перфецкого. Наиболее детально анализируется деконструкция перформенса оперы "Орфей в Венеции", которая находится в самом центре романа. Сама природа оперы как коллажа и буффонады (которая является одним из троих основополагающих аспектов самого названия литературного сценического объединения БУ-БА-БУ) хорошо отображает фактический и философский организующий принцип романа.

Ключевые слова: *Юрий Андрухович***,** *Перверзия, опера, нарратив, перформативный текст, БУ-БА-БУ, карнавал.*

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Перформативний текст у наративній композиції роману Юрія Андруховича "Перверзія"

У статті розглядається композиція наративу в романі Юрія Андруховича "Перверзія" (1997), зокрема, авторський спосіб використання різних аспектів перформенсу з метою розвитку наративу. Досліджуються різноманітні жанрові особливості, залучаючи одночасно агіографічну та коллажну природу названого роману. Також досліджуються його спільні риси з декількома попередніми романами, включно з такими: "Майстер і Маргарита" Михайла Булгакова, "Ада" Володимира Набокова, "Малий Апокаліпсис" Тадеуша Конвицьки, "Опік" Василя Аксьонова та "Смерть у Венеції" Томаса Манна.

Уточнюється, як роман Андруховича вписується у постмодерністську традицію з її пустотливістю та уважним впізнаванням розлогих літературних і культурних традицій, котра ніскільки не переймається можливим викриттям літературних впливів, проте й не ухиляється від роздумів про "прокляті питання" буття, що були актуалізовані у літературі такими письменниками, як Достоєвський.

У статті використовується визначення постмодернізму в формулюванні Террі Іглтона та демонструється, як Андрухович у своєму романі "перестрибує через поріг між мистецтвом і звичайним життям", створюючи свій постмодерністський шедевр. Окрім того, у статті обговорюються пошуки ідентичності головним героєм Стахом Перфецьким (як своєї власної ідентичності, так і ідентичності своєї нації), а також використання в романі масок для чисельних персонажів, що прив'язує його до істотного психологічного елемента Венеціанського карнавалу, а саме, до дослідження альтернативного "я".

У статті детально розглядаються багаточисельні фрагменти перформенсу, які становлять істотну частку наративу, а також те, як вони складаються в основоположну рису характеру Стаха Перфецького. Найдетальніше аналізується деконструкція перформенсу опери "Орфей у Венеції", котра перебуває в самому центрі роману. Сама природа опери як коллажу та буфонади (яка входить до тріади основоположних аспектів самої назви літературного сценічного об'єднання БУ-БА-БУ) добре відображає фактичний та філософський організаційний принцип роману.

Ключові слова: *Юрій Андрухович****,*** *Перверзія, опера, наратив, перформативний текст, БУ-БА-БУ, карнавал.*

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ФИГУРЫ СЛОВА КАК ЭЛЕМЕНТ СОВРЕМЕННОГО ДИСКУРСА

Статья посвящена анализу и интерпретации фигур слова как одного из видов стилистических фигур. Особое внимание уделяется их месту и функциям в дискурсах разного типа. Рассматривается также вопрос классификации фигур слова и их основные механизмы.

Ключевые слова: *теория фигур, стилистическая фигура, фигура слова, фигура модификации.*

В наше время, как и в предыдущие эпохи, вряд ли кто-то усомнится в том, что основой художественного стиля, равно как и публицистического, и разговорного и даже научного (напри-