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Notes on two lyrics by Lina Kostenko

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Many of the lyrics of Lina Kostenko are so immediately engaging that a reader may fail to notice their great complexity and internal structure. In the present article, the author analyzes two such lyrics in some detail, using techniques that might be called structuralist. The analyses, however, begin with no pre-selected methodological framework, but simply start where the lyrics themselves seem to suggest and follow that thread of thought, examining various aspects of the poems. The interpretations built on these analyses are significantly richer than a superficial reading would allow, and therefore, the results may be of interest not only to scholars of Ukrainian poetry, but to the general reader, as well. In the first lyric examined, two lines that are almost lexically identical lead to an examination of a complex mirror-structure that reveals a picture of a continuum between the extremes of metaphor and metonym. A morphological peculiarity of the poem then reveals that it is a response and rebuke to a lyric by the Russian poet Fyodor Tyutchev. With attention paid to the poem's intricate structure and to the work to which it is a response, the analysis reveals that Kostenko's lyric may have an anti-imperial meaning that was invisible to the authorities at the time of its publication. In the analysis of the second lyrics, the author begins with a large and memorable rhyme-set, examination of which leads to observations that reveal the unusual self-similar structure of the poem. Further analysis reveals the poem to be a work of verbal art that functions on multiple levels of organization at the same time. After the two analyses, the author makes broader remarks about his general impression of Kostenko's extremely masterful work, a brief suggestion about introducing this work to anglophone students of Ukrainian literature, and a suggestion for future work on Kostenko's poetry.

Key words: Lina Kostenko, metaphor, metonym, self-similarity, lyric poetry

Introduction

Having begun at last in my middle years to study Ukrainian poetry, I am struck by the complexity and beauty found therein. The notes that follow in this article are concerned with two lyrics by Lina Kostenko. Only two — but in these twenty lines are found worlds of remarkable thought and feeling. I offer the notes below in the hope that they will be useful to scholars and to the general reader. For each poem, my notes will be given in a few separate sections for clarity of organization, although I am convinced that the observations in each section are relevant to those in the others.

My approach to poetry has been called structuralist. Despite the well-known tradition of structuralist readings of lyric poetry, it is possible that some of my methods may seem unusual. I can say nothing better in their defense than to quote Halina Kosharska's remarks from her monograph on Kostenko: "Ясна річ, я взялася досліджувати творчість Ліни Костенко не задля того, щоб продемонструвати можливості мого підходу на вдячому для цього матеріалі, а тому, що її поезія

потребує докладного глибокого вивчення, як і творчість кожного непересічного автора." [2, p. 9]

Notes on "Юдоль плачу, земля моя, планета"

Kostenko's poem "Юдоль плачу, земля моя, планета," from her 1980 collection *Неповторність*, has a striking internal structure invisible to any casual reading. The details of this structure may be considered a meaningful addition to the superficial sense of the text.

Section 1: A most unusual mirror-symmetry

The text of the poem is given here with Latin letters that denote the distance of each line from the center of the poem.

Юдоль плачу, земля моя, планета,	D
блакитна зірка в часу на плаву,	C
мій білий світ, міцні твої тенета, –	B
страждаю, мучусь, гину, а живу!	A

Страждаю, мучусь, і живу, і гину,	A
благословляю біль твоїх тенет.	B
Цю грудочку тепла – у Всесвіті – людину!	C
І Всесвіт цей – акваріум планет.	D

[1, p. 8]

I will first make basic remarks about the features of each pair of lines (the A-pair, and so on), then go into more detail about the relationships between the pairs.

A-pair: We find here near-perfect lexical identity. This much is obvious even to a casual reading.

B-pair: Here, we have significant, but reduced, lexical identity: *тенета / тенет* and *білий / біль*. The lexeme *біль*, however, may be interpreted as ‘the color white, whiteness’ or as ‘pain,’ both of which seem plausible in context.

C-pair: These lines are related in two ways. First, each C-line contains one of the two morphological diminutives in the poem (*зірка, зрудочку*). Second, the first of the C-lines refers to time as a medium of existence (*в часу на плаву*), while the second refers to space (*у Всесвіті*). Space and time, naturally, are the aspects of space-time (*простір-час*, which term does not occur in the poem).

D-pair: These lines, the first and final of the poem, are related by lexically obvious synecdoche (*планета / акваріум планет*).

What I have outlined above may seem to be mere curious coincidence until the reader notes how these line-pairs are related to each other: from A to D, the pairs describe a stepwise motion from *metaphor* to *metonym*.

A-pair: This is almost perfect lexical similarity (four words) and therefore is a strong example of likeness (metaphor).

B-pair: Here we see recognizable, but diminished, likeness (two words). Nominative *тенета* is imperfectly like genitive *тенет*, and the adjective *білий* is imperfectly like the noun *біль*. Further, *біль* (whiteness / pain), depending on its interpretation, may or may not be etymologically related to *білий*. The root-vowel for the sense ‘whiteness’ has its source in ancient *ǫ* (Proto-Slavic *běľь*), while the *i* in the sense ‘pain’ is from ancient *o*, which still appears as *o* in Ukrainian in open syllables, as in genitive *болю*.

In the B-pair, then, we have still-visible metaphor in the first stages of decay (imperfect likeness) with a seed of metonym beginning to sprout (the differing case-forms of *тенета*, along with the possibly different origins of *білий / біль*, mean that they belong to ‘sets’ in addition to looking similar).

C-pair: Metaphor is significantly reduced now, as the abstract notion of *morphological diminution* (*зірка, зрудочку*) is the central similarity between these lines. They are, however, united metonymically by participation of space and time in the notion of *spacetime*, familiar enough even to the non-physicist.

D-pair: A shred of metaphor remains in the similarity between the nominative *планета* and genitive *планет*, but it is felt primarily as a support

to the now-dominant synecdoche (*планета / акваріум планет*).

The remarks above may be summarized in this way: the poem contains an almost-repeated line that alerts us to the possibility of a mirror-symmetry. On examining the other lines, we find that they are easily understood as a set of pairings. At the center of the poem, the A-pair is strongly metaphoric. On the ‘edges’ of the poem, the D-pair is strongly metonymic. Between them, the B-pair and C-pair display falling metaphor and rising metonym, metaphor still dominant in the B-pair and metonym already dominant in the C-pair.

This first intriguing aspect of Kostenko’s poem may bring to mind Efim Etkind’s monograph on symmetry in the poetry of Aleksandr Pushkin [3]. As it seems to me, however, the mirror-symmetry in “Юдоль плачу, земля моя, планета” contains features not explored in those twenty intriguing studies.

Section 2: Rhyme

The poem contains four masculine and four feminine rhyme-words, a familiar enough setup. However, we may also divide those words into two other sets, each of which contains four items. The first is the set of rhyme-words related to each other by being forms of the same lemma, or dictionary form: *планета, тенета, тенет, планет*.

The second set contains the masculine rhymes of the first stanza (*плаву, живу*) and the feminine rhymes of the second stanza (*гину, людину*). These words are linked together by the shift in position of *живу* between lines 4 and 5:

страждаю, мучусь, гину, а живу!

Страждаю, мучусь, і живу, і гину,

живу ‘would have been’ at the end of line 5, but changes places with *гину*. The swapping of *живу* and *гину* creates a link between the masculine rhymes of stanza 1 and the feminine rhymes of stanza 2.

So we may arrange the rhymes in this table:

Feminine	Masculine	Related by lemma	Related by shift
планета	плаву	планета	плаву
тенета	живу	тенета	живу
гину	тенет	тенет	гину
людину	планет	планет	людину

It is curious that the two unusual groups (lemma, shift) easily bring to mind metaphor and metonym, the twin qualities of rhyme. The ‘lemma’ group brings to mind likeness (metaphor) with all its similarity, but shows participation (metonym) as well, as the different case-forms are parts of the same paradigm. The ‘shift’ group brings to mind metonym first, as varied elements are joined in a set, but also has identity (likeness, metaphor) at its core: the group is created by the shift

of the second *живу*, which is identical to one of the members of the group.

Section 3: *Morphological nominative for vocative*

Kostenko's poem contains five nouns that appear to have a vocative function and might be expected to have the appropriate endings of the vocative case. However, they appear in forms morphologically identical to the nominative (*юдоль, земля, планета, зірка, світ*). They are functionally vocative, but formally identical to the nominative. This situation creates a degree of memorable tension.

The nominative / vocative tension recalls to mind Fyodor Tiutchev's "Душа моя — Элизіумъ тѣней."

Душа моя — Элизіумъ тѣней,
Тѣней безмолвныхъ, свѣтлыхъ и
прекрасныхъ,

Ни замысламъ години буйной сей,
Ни радостямъ, ни горю непрічастныхъ.

Душа моя, Элизіумъ тѣней!
Что общаго межъ жизнью и тобою,
Межъ вами, призраки минувшихъ, лучшихъ
дней,

И сей безчувственной толпою?... [4].

In Tiutchev's poem, a similar tension between nominative and vocative is created by different means. The two stanzas begin with lexically identical lines, but punctuation and intonation indicate that in the first instance, we have two nominative phrases joined by a zero copula, and in the second, the same words must be understood as having a vocative function.

And so, the two poems have the following in common:

1) the nominative / vocative tension described above

2) iambic pentameter (but see below), with alternating masculine and feminine rhymes (although the masculine and feminine clausulae have switched places in Kostenko's poem)

3) the phrases Элизіумъ тѣней and акваріум планет (metrically identical nouns in -іум + disyllabic feminine genitive plural stressed on the final syllable)

4) line 7 is exceptional, hexameter where we expect pentameter (Tiutchev then uses tetrameter in line 8, as if having stolen a foot from it, while Kostenko does not)

It is therefore reasonable to read Kostenko's poem as a reply to Tiutchev's. And Tiutchev does pose a rhetorical question: "Что общаго межъ жизнью и тобою, / Межъ вами, призраки минувшихъ, лучшихъ дней, / И сей безчувственной толпою?..." This question even shows another tension of number: *тобою / вами* (планета / акваріум планет).

In considering Kostenko's poem as a reply to Tiutchev, it may be useful to dismiss the words metaphor and metonym and to substitute the terms,

less familiar in studies of poetry, *likeness* and *partness*. After all, when Tiutchev asks "Что общаго межъ жизнью и тобою?" we see easily that the very phrasing of the question points to participation (metonym), while its 'paraphrasable' content is about similarity (metaphor).

Kostenko's poem can be taken as a thorough, although indirect, answer to this rhetorical question. Its complex mirror-symmetry and the organization of its rhymes all point clearly to the interaction of *likeness* and *partness*, to their ability to replace and give birth to each other. They cannot truly be separated, although they can be distinguished clearly for purposes of analysis.

Section 4: *Interpretation*

To offer even a simplistic interpretation of Kostenko's poem in relation to Tiutchev's, it is necessary first to note one syntactical item: *зрудочку* is clearly in apposition to *людину*, and both seem to be in apposition to *биль*. This brings us back to the question of the meaning of *биль* in line 6.

- If *биль* is glossed as 'pain,' then *людину* is in apposition to the 'pain' of the *тенета* (net, spiderweb, situation that restricts movement). The knot of painful experience then 'is' the human person.

- If *биль* is glossed as 'white thread' or even 'the color white,' then the apposition appears more positive, as the human is the very fabric of the 'network,' although the network is primarily a trap.

I am inclined to take the very tension between these two senses of *биль* as part of the meaning of the poem: the human 'is' pain and 'is' the material of which the network / trap of the world is made—yet is still the object of *благословляю*. Below, I will refer to this complex notion simply as *людина*.

This *людина* is a component of the 'world' that is the addressee of the poem. But the final line states that the universe is *акваріум планет*. So we can see an inequality of participation, of components. Humans are the components of the world, while the world is one of many such in the cosmos.

людина < світ < Всесвіт

But then, we recall that this poem is a response to Tiutchev, in whose poem the soul itself contains many *тѣни*. Viewed through the cosmology of Kostenko's poem, Tiutchev's *душа*, apparently a human 'unit,' is itself at the level of 'planet' and contains many other human figures. And recalling Kostenko's carefully-woven polarity of metaphor and metonym, we are easily led to the notion that worlds and the intelligences that populate them are fractal-like, self-similar at any level of magnification.

Taken at face value, Tiutchev's poem is not solipsistic in the strict sense, as it supposes a world outside the soul. Yet it wishes to ignore that world. Kostenko's cosmology, however, prefers a picture of complex relationship rather than opposition (between metaphor and metonym, between components of the world, between levels of magnification, between senses of words).

Section 5: *Metaphor and metonym, revisited*

After the intertextual focus of the previous section, I wish to return to the striking complexity of the mirror-symmetry discussed in Section 1. To me, this symmetry and the relationships between its elements are the most memorable aspect of the poem.

Kostenko's unusual picture of the relationships between units at various levels of magnification (*людина*, (perhaps implicit *країна*), *світ*, *Всесвіт*), and the relationships among those relationships may be part of a greater concern with relationships between humans and larger units, such as countries and empires. Halina Kosharska writes that "Постійні теми творів Ліни Костенко в загальному плані можна об'єднати 'визначенням відсутність індивідуальної та національної свободи.'" [2, p. 15-16] Perhaps after this attempt at somewhat detailed analysis, we might allow ourselves a moment for a more relaxed and intuitive interpretation of the poem. If Kostenko's "Юдоль плачу, земля моя, планета" is an answer or correction to Tiutchev's semi-solipsism, perhaps it contains an implied rebuke to that poet's well-known political views, as well.

"Православная церковь никогда не отчаивалась в этом исцелении [the proposed reunion of Rome with the Orthodox Church]. Она ждет его, рассчитывает на него—не с надеждой только, но с уверенностью. Как тому, что едино по существу, что едино в вечности, не восторжествовать над разъединением во времени?" writes Tiutchev in "Папство и римский вопрос с русской точки зрения" [4, p. 323]. The sentiment is consonant with his political views, which might be called imperial. Earlier in the same essay, he writes that "Исходь этот [the attempts at reform leading to the loss of authority of, and schism within, the Roman Church] был неизбежен, ибо человеческое я, предоставленное самому себе, противно христианству по существу" [4, p. 312]. Tiutchev, whose poetry reveals experience of a rich internal world, here appears completely dedicated to imperial ambition and to the dismissal of the human individual outside of the context of the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian Empire.

If this is the context in which Tiutchev's readers find his remarkable lyric poetry, then it is also the context for Kostenko's rebuke to Tiutchev. Her poem, masterful to an almost unbelievable degree, destroys the very terms of his argument: in her cosmology, items of various sizes are not subjected to one another, but exist on a continuum, and even the very ideas of similarity and participation become aspects of each other. It is possible, therefore, to see this apparently astronomical lyric as political in its context, although its politics were surely invisible to any censor.

Naturally, any of the remarks above that seem fruitful to the reader will show that there is plenty of room for further work on the poem examined here, and on its relationship to Tiutchev's "Душа моя — Элизіумъ тѣней." One topic for more concentrated research, of course, is the place of this poem in Kostenko's work in the Soviet period, and her relationship to the censors of that era.

The poet spoke at a symposium on February 10, 1990 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, saying "Тепер я могу сказати вам, що моя книжка 'Неповторність' була опублікована лише в результаті мого голодування... Чому протягом всього мого життя жодна з моїх книжок не вийшла в тому вигляді, як я пропонувала" [2, p. 23]. This short lyric, contained in that very collection, has well-hidden poetic art and far-ranging concerns about the relationship between the human person and the wider world. Surely it is a part of the author's response to the circumstances of the time, including the imperial attitudes of Soviet authorities, and is worth further study.

Notes on "Очима ти сказав мені: люблю"

*Лети, душа, у сонячні краї,
у вирії мислі, у країну слова.*

Kostenko's lyric "Очима ти сказав мені: люблю" has been performed as a pop song, but among the secondary literature at my disposal, there is no attempt at a full analysis. As I offer these notes to those who have an interest in Kostenko's poetry, I hope that they will not overlap too greatly with observations already made by others. My remarks in the early sections of this article will be concise and I shall endeavor to make them clear, as well. In the later sections, I shall allow myself to essay an interpretation on the basis of my observations.

Очима ти сказав мені: люблю.
Душа складала свій тяжкий екзамен.
Мов тихий дзвін гірського кришталю,
несказане лишилось несказаним.

Життя ішло, минуло той перон,
гукала тиша рупором вокзальним.
Багато слів написано пером.
Несказане лишилось несказаним.

Світали ночі, вечорили дні.
Не раз хитнула доля терезами.
Слова як сонце сходили в мені.
Несказане лишилось несказаним [1, p. 379].

Section 1: *Rhyme*

The poem's rhymes contain one obvious special ornament, the rhyme-set of all the B-rhymes (each stanza is ABAB) that rhyme with *несказаним*, the final word in each stanza: *екзамен*, *вокзальним*, *терезами*. That is, we have the following rhyme-pairs as the B-rhymes:

екзамен
несказаним

вокзальним
несказаним

терезами
несказанним

Seeing this as a large rhyme-set, we may note that *екзамен*, *вокзальним*, and *терезами* are different kinds of rhymes for *несказанним*. Consider the rhyming syllables, counting from the stressed vowel: -амен, -альним, -ами. The first contains only part of a stem. The second contains part of a stem and an ending. The third contains only an ending.

Syllables that rhyme with *-анним*

Stanza 1	Stanza 2	Stanza 3
part of stem	part of stem + ending	ending

One thing on each end and both in the middle gives us a suggestion of balance, or a pair of balances: a scale.

Section 2: Scales

Of course, we see that the poem mentions a scale explicitly in the final stanza (*терезами*, the final of the three rhyme-words discussed above). But that is not the only scale in the text. *екзамен*, the first-stanza counterpart of *терезами*, is also a scale: although the meaning in Ukrainian is ‘an exam,’ Latin *examen* has the additional meaning ‘a scale,’ or ‘the pointer on the scale that helps to determine fine differences in weight.’ *складати екзамен*, therefore, might mean ‘to take an exam’ or ‘to assemble a scale.’

In Section 1, we found a notion of balance after a glance at the rhymes. Here, we see that this notion is deeper than it appeared at first: stanzas 1 and 3, the two ‘sides’ of the scale, have scales in them. Further, each ‘scale’ has two meanings or suggestions (exam / scale, physical scale / the scale in the structure of the poem), contributing further to the notion of balance. But what of their friend in stanza 2, *вокзальним*?

On thinking of *вокзальним*, we may note that all four distinct rhyme-words in this large set are supported before the stressed vowel with the consonant *з*: *екзамен*, *вокзальним*, *терезами*, *несказанним*. Having understood this, we immediately think of *вокзальним* without the supporting consonant: *вокальним*. This is a legitimate word, although it does not quite fit the context in its Ukrainian sense. But it points us to the obvious source-word, Latin *vox*.

Stanza 1	Stanza 2	Stanza 3
<i>екзамен</i> - сап меап 1) іспит 2) in a Latin context, терези	1) <i>вокзальним</i> 2) <i>вокальним*</i> , from Latin <i>vox</i> , ‘voice’	<i>терезами</i> 1) a scale 2) the ‘scale’ that is depicted in the very features of

		the poem
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екзамен in stanza 1 offers a choice of senses, one of them self-referential (may point to the ‘scale’ that is the poem). *терезами* in stanza 3 offers a choice of referents, one of them self-referential (again, the scale of the poem). Stanza 2, between them, has a ghost-image of another word arise when we look at the rhyme-set as a whole.

The ‘scale’ of the poem becomes self-referential: each of its balances contains a lexical ‘scale,’ each of which contains two elements (another scale). Any of these ‘scales’ can suggest the largest ‘scale’ of the poem, and therefore might ‘contain’ the whole poem. Magnifying a portion of the poem, we find the poem itself encoded inside...itself. It is self-similar (exactly or approximately similar to a part of itself) and gives a suggestion of infinite depth, infinitely many scales weighing each other. We are dealing, after all, with a *тяжкий екзамен* (a difficult exam / a heavy scale).

We see some even more noteworthy matters in stanza 2. If this were a real scale, we would find between the (roughly) evenly-weighted balances the tongue of the scale (a sense of *екзамен*) that would help us to make a very fine judgment about the weight. And indeed, in stanza 2, we need fairly fine judgment. *вокзальним* in the context of the rhyme-set suggests *вокальним*, from the Latin *vox*. So, is this ‘voice’ here or not? Everything points to it, but it is not actually present in the text (*зукала тиша*).

This notion, attention on the idea of ‘voice’ while the voice is in fact absent, is consistent with the superficially visible ideas within the poem, particularly the idea common to these lines, the first and last in the poem:

Очима ти сказав мені: люблю. (voice notably absent)

Несказане лишилось несказанним. (voice notably absent)

Section 3: Balance and Recursion

We have seen above that the poem can be conceived as a set of self-similar scales. In this section, I will mention another kind of balance that can be found within each stanza. Each stanza contains a fairly obvious ‘contradiction’ or ‘balanced phrase.’ These three contradictions increase in ‘intensity’ as we move through the poem. *тихий дзвін*, *зукала тиша*, and then stanza 3 is practically a feast of impossible contradiction, as we shall see below. These three contradictions increase in ‘intensity’ as we move through the poem.

In stanza 1, *тихий дзвін* is simple enough, a humble and everyday contradiction: a sound, but a quiet sound.

In stanza 2, *зукала тиша* is stronger, a true contradiction: quiet itself is shouting.

In stanza 3, we have something very strange that requires commentary. The two parts of the line *Світали ночі, вечорили дні* look balanced, but in fact one is ‘worse’ than the other. The verb *світати* at least

can take a nominative subject in the sense ‘to grow lighter.’ So there is a balance of senses in *Світали ночі*: something dark becomes light. But *вечорити* should be impersonal. Yet here it is personal, with a nominative subject. The very nature of the verb is altered. These two phrases describe the cycle of day and night, but defeat our grammatical expectations.

Then we have the line *Не раз хитнула доля терезами*. The adverbial phrase *не раз* almost requires the imperfective aspect, but here has a perfective verb, *хитнула*. Here, our aspectual expectations are shaken.

Once we have felt this disturbance of time and aspect, the very concepts that we use to track and understand the cycle of day and night, the text has shaken our sense of whether something happened once or endlessly many times, in time or in eternity. Then we read the following line: *Слова як сонце сходили в мені*. Now that time and aspect have been shaken like the ‘scale’ (*хитнула доля терезами*), we have a metaphorical sunset of words themselves. This verbal sunset is itself a scale, as the symbol for Терези (the sign of the zodiac) is ♎, a rising or setting sun. Here again, a part of the poem returns us to the whole poem, and the self-similarity of the text is reinforced: recursion.

Section 4: *мені*

We may note further that, despite the apparently personal topic of the poem, there is very little of the first grammatical person: no verbs and only two formally identical pronouns: *мені*, dative (давальний) in the first stanza and locative (місцевий) in the third. These are also the only instances of dative and locative in the entire poem, which gives them a bit more weight: they are graphically the same, they are the only direct representation of the grammatical first person, and they are the only instances of those two cases. The grammatical first person is completely absent from the second stanza.

This is another display of balance in the poem. The two bowls of the scale have ‘equal amounts’ (rather little) of the first-person. In the middle of the poem, at the ‘tongue’ of the scale (again, Latin *examen*), there is a conspicuous absence of the first person.

Життя ішло, минуло той перон,
гукала тиша рупором вокзальним.
Багато слів написано пером.

Несказане лишилось несказаним [1, p. 379].

Who lives this life? Who hears the ‘loud silence’? Who moves the *непо* that appears here as the instrumental agent? Our intuition says that the speaker does these things, but there is no mention of the speaker.

There is little of the speaker here, and no speaker at all in the very center. There are experiences, but no subject to experience them.

Section 5: Subject and Object / Aspect

We have seen a fair amount of Latin in this poem already: *examen* in stanza 1 and the ghostly presence of *vox* in stanza 2. With Latin in mind, the extreme presence of ‘scales’ and balances of various kinds throughout the poem, and with the day-cycle and the sunset (♎) in the final stanza, the word *Libra* (for the astrological sign) naturally comes to mind. *Libra* can mean ‘scale’ (*терези*) or, in medieval and New Latin usage, any unit of weight (*доля*), such as one might use on a scale.

The line *Не раз хитнула доля терезами*, then, is even more unusual than it looks at first. Not only are aspectual expectations broken, but *доля* and *терези* resemble each other in the Latin to which the poem refers us.

Of course, being named by the same word does not make two objects or concepts identical. In the line, however, we see two sections, verbal and nominal:

Не раз хитнула | доля терезами

In the first, as discussed above, we have the smearing of verbal aspect. In the second, the two words resemble each other in the Latin outside the Ukrainian text. We might say that both halves of the line smear some kind of *вид*: verbal aspect or a rarer sense of *вид*, ‘appearance’ (вигляд, зовнішність). Boundedness and unboundedness in time, subject and object—these basic categories of language and perception are disturbed in the very description of the process of disturbance.

Finally, we may recall another meaning of *доля*, ‘умови життя,’ that can fall into the line as well. The gloss of the line, with all these suggestions, becomes unwieldy: ‘Once or more than once, a weight or life itself unbalanced the scales, which are self-similar and also may be indistinguishable from the poem and from the weight or the life that unbalanced them.’ But taking this information in while reading the poem is not awkward at all.

Section 6: *Interpretation*

The observations in the preceding sections look rather structural and abstract. In this section, I will build on them to suggest a brief and somewhat more human-sounding interpretation.

Recall the complex self-similar and self-describing structure we have seen. This entire intellectual-looking structure is, however, a kind of container for and interpreter of grief. Within the ‘plot’ described in the poem, what do we have?

Two people part at a train station. The man uses only his eyes to say he loves the speaker. What was not said remains unsaid.

Just about everything else is in the realm of memory about this incident or even interpretation on the part of the reader. Here is such an interpretation.

Stanza 1: The male party says with his eyes that he loves the speaker. (Her) soul experiences a kind of examination / is already in the process of constructing a balancing-device, this poem, by which to contain and measure the grief of this parting. The unspoken words are real, but extremely subtle, as if they were radio-

waves converted to sound by the quartz crystal in an old radio receiver (кристалічний детектор радіоприймача): they are still inaudible without amplification. To a human ear, they are an abstraction that cannot be experienced directly.

Stanza 2: Life goes on, like the train one of them boarded, and leaves the platform behind. What sound there is at the station seems silent, inaccessible to the mind, but also jarring and loud at the same time. Much has been written (in life, in this poem), but what was unsaid remains unsaid.

Stanza 3: Memory of this experience is so overwhelming that basic categories of perception and language are smeared. The cycle of day and night continues, or perhaps it happens just once. The carefully-constructed scales for examination of grief and fine interpretation of the past are shaken by life and by their own contents, but distinctions between basic categories of perception are smeared. Words may set like the sun, or they may set and (implicitly) rise like the sun in a cycle, but regardless of time and aspect, what was unsaid remains unsaid.

The astounding structures examined in the first five sections of this article act as a kind of distraction from the apparent content of the poem: a grief that seems to be outside of time itself. In examining this structure attentively, like a radio enthusiast carefully adjusting his crystal set (*тихий дзвін гірського кристалу*), the reader seems to participate in the very composition of the poem. This is appropriate, as there is so little of the first person in the poem: it is as if the reader's consciousness is recruited to fill in for the absent poetic speaker. The poem contains experience with very little self to experience it, and the reader acts as a substitute for the original experiencer / author / speaker.

In this interpretation, the smearing of the boundary between author and reader is only one of many smearings. The examples given in parenthesis are not the only examples in the poem.

- sound and silence (*тихий дзвін, гукала тиша*)
- speech and writing (*Багато слів написано пером. / Несказане лишилось неказаним*)
- time and timelessness (*Не раз хитнула доля терезами*)
- presence and absence (technical presence of a first-person speaker / absence of direct statements of experience, first-person verbs or pronouns in the nominative case, or explicit rumination. Also, *вечорили дні*: a impersonal verb with a subject)
- subject and object (*доля терезами*—their similar appearance in the implicit Latin word *libra*)
- distinction and non-distinction (*доля терезами* clearly distinguished lexically in Ukrainian text, but not in implicit Latin)

- life and work (the poem is a “heavy” self-similar scale that seems to contain the entirety of life)
- part and whole (again, *доля* and *терезами*: the weight is part of the whole ‘set’ of the scales, but then may be named with the same name as the scales, which themselves are similar to the poem itself)

Overall, we have a picture of a grief so terrible that it shakes the very foundations of perception, being, and language.

But despite that great disturbance, the poem itself is an unusually rich example of verbal art. Even as the poem demonstrates its own complexity and carefully organized self-similarity, it claims that the very distinctions that allow such organization are blurred.

Interpretation might go on forever. But in an article, interpretation must come to an end that may feel premature. However, the author of this article hopes that the analysis presented here will be of some use to readers and scholars of Kostenko's poetry.

Section 7: *Brief Notes on Intertextual Possibilities*

Kostenko's “Не говори печальними очима” may appear to address some of the same topics. Surely, more work on the interpretation of “Очима ти сказав мені: люблю” will help readers to understand it as a part of the Kostenko's larger body of work.

Не говори печальними очима
те, що бояться вимовить слова.
Так виникає ніжність самочинна.
Так виникає тиша грозова.

Чи ти мій сон, чи ти моя уява,
чи просто чорна магія чола...
Яка між нами райдуга стояла!
Яка між нами прірва пролягла! [1, p. 11]

Also, since “Очима ти сказав мені: люблю” does appear to make references to non-Ukrainian texts, perhaps brief mention of a thematically-similar English work, Canto V of Alfred Tennyson's long English-language poem “In Memoriam A.H.H.” (first published in 1850), is appropriate.

I sometimes hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel;
For words, like Nature, half reveal
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
A use in measured language lies;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,
Like coarsest clothes against the cold;
But that large grief which these enfold
Is given in outline and no more.

I will refrain from extended ruminations about Tennyson's canto and will say only that the lines “But, for the unquiet heart and brain, / A use in measured language lies” capture neatly the common human impulse that is one of the sources and topics of Kostenko's poem: using verbal art to express or contain

powerful emotion, using external verbal organization to hold that which cannot be held or consciously understood by the mind.

I do not suggest that Kostenko's poem examined here is in any way a deliberate response to Tennyson's Canto V. I say only that Tennyson's poem states on its surface part of what Kostenko's demonstrates more subtly. Should anyone wish to present "Очима ти сказав мені: люблю" to anglophone students of Ukrainian, perhaps Tennyson's Canto V might be used as a brief preparation or epigraph.

Final Remarks

As the second of these two readings comes to its end, I understand that to some readers, such fine analysis seems to 'kill' the work examined. Suffice it to say that it is not so for me. Rather, what looks to some like an autopsy is actually a celebration of the vitality of the work. If anyone who finds such analysis inappropriate has read this far, I suggest that that person simply consider the remarks I have made, and then return to the poem itself, which is the beginning and end of any attempt at exegesis. Analysis and interpretation can present only a part of what is contained within such works of art.

I will make only a few more remarks. The works of the great anglophone poets Tennyson, Keats, and Coleridge contain fine examples of poetic art that consciously considers the phenomenal world as a kind of shell. Coleridge has a memorable couplet in "Dejection: An Ode":

I will not hope from outward forms to win

The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

Changes in literary fashion within the anglophone world have led to a great loss of interest in our poetic tradition, and the would-be poets of today have no one of their parents' generation or even their great-grandparents' generation to learn from. Our consciousness and our relationship to speech have changed remarkably since that time. It seems to grow ever more difficult to address the concerns of our own Romantic poets: their concern with the 'inwardness' of phenomena becomes ever less useful to us, as we continue to

walk a path that leads us to take each phenomenon not merely as a phenomenon, but as an idol (in Owen Barfield's definition, "a representation or image which is not experienced as such" [5, p. 110]).

It is from this perspective that I make the following remark: Lina Kostenko's lyrics seem to embody a kind of poetic consciousness I have not seen before. My sense is that it is not a remnant of the past, but a guide to a future in which the participatory consciousness of the past may be resurrected to even greater vitality. The first poem in her collection "Неповторність" makes a suggestion in this direction:

Все, що буде, було і що є на землі,
і сто тисяч разів уже бачене й чує,
сірі вузлики ранку — твої солов'ї,
все це тільки одне нерозгадане чудо.

Знаю склад біосфери, структури кислот,
все, що є у природі, приймаю як даність.
Я, людина двадцятого віку, — і от,
зачудована, бачу лише первозданність! [1, 280]

Her poem *Еволюції ідола* is even clearer in its characterization of the speaker as one in touch with ancient forms of perception. Given the quality of Kostenko's verbal art, it is easy to take this claim as truth and not an affectation on the part of the lyrical persona.

Моя вина — моя надмірна віра,
ілюзій непогашена зоря.
Не могу із поганського кумира
зробить святі ворота олтаря. [1, p. 181]

ілюзій непогашена зоря — we modern humans sometimes imagine that our own very young children, or perhaps those who lived in the distant past, knew this state. Yet Lina Kostenko is a modern human, not a ghost of our prehistoric or medieval past. Therefore, I suggest that her unusually finely wrought verbal art and her deliberate hearkening to the more participatory consciousness of the past be considered together in new analyses, to see what hope they may contain for the future of literature.

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Про два вірші Ліни Костенко

Деякі ліричні вірші Ліни Костенко так захоплюють читача, що їхня складна внутрішня структура залишається непоміченою та невивченою. Ця стаття пропонує аналіз двох віршів Л. Костенко, для чого використано структуралістські прийоми. Однак цей аналіз не зумовлений і не відзначений якоюсь упередженою методологічною позицією, він починається з досить очевидних прийомів, які ми знаходимо у розглядуваних творах. Автор статті здійснює цей аналіз, намагаючись виявити, наскільки це можливо, хід думки, пройдений поетом у творчому процесі. Результати інтерпретації значно багатші, ніж інтерпретації, базовані на поверховому прочитанні кожного з віршів.

Перший аналіз починається з очевидного факту: два рядки майже ідентичні в лексичному плані. Така схожість розкриває всю дзеркальну структуру тексту з великим діапазоном, полюсами якого є метафора й метонімія. На додаток до цього одна морфологічна особливість твору відсилає читача до відомого вірша Федора Тютчева. Надалі стає зрозуміло, що Л. Костенко ніби дорікає Ф. Тютчеву за його політичні ідеї, хоча текст написаний так, що його антиімперіалістичний зміст був неочевидним для влади та цензури того часу.

Другий запропонований аналіз починається з великої групи рим, розгляд якої розкриває самоподібну структуру всього вірша. Подальше вивчення доводить, що в плані змісту ховається особисте горе, яке безладно поєднує процеси людських мови та мислення. Такий підхід є безперечно перспективним для майбутнього дослідження лірики Ліни Костенко. Ця студія може бути вступом до вивчення української лірики англійськими науковцями, бо автор статті також пропонує порівняння другого вірша з однією відомою поезією в англійській літературній спадщині. Стаття адресована філологам, які вивчають лірику поетеси, і всім, хто цікавиться українським письменством.

Ключові слова: Ліна Костенко, метафора, метонімія, самоподібність, лірика
