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## THE SATIRICAL MODE OF WILLIAM THACKERAY AND IVAN FRANKO: TYPOLOGICAL CORRESPONDENCES

**Summary:** In the article, a comprehensive comparative analysis of the satirical prose of W. Thackeray and I. Franko, focusing on socio-political themes, is carried out for the first time in Ukrainian literary studies, significantly expanding our understanding of the interaction between the works of these artists. The authors systematize theoretical concepts about satire as a literary genre and concentrate on the phenomenon of socio-political satire. The research identifies and explores objects of satirical representation in the works of the Ukrainian and British writers. In his works, William Makepeace Thackeray subjected contemporary society to scathing criticism, following the path of truth and nature, employing irony and grotesque to expose various moral and ethical flaws of its representatives, such as feudal privileges of the nobility, subservience to titles, hypocrisy, vanity, and decadence. According to A.M. Khalimonchuk's calculations, Ivan Franko's satirical legacy comprises over 30 satirical short stories and sketches, six satirical poems, three

comedies, and several dozens of satirical poems. In addition to translating the works of prominent satirists from around the world into Ukrainian, Ivan Franko's archive contains numerous unfinished satirical works from various periods of his literary career. Ivan Franko's literary contributions played an equally significant role in the development of Ukrainian national satire as William Thackeray's works did for British and European satire as a whole. In the article the poetic modes used to create satirical phenomena in Thackeray's and Franko's prose are analysed. The hypothesis regarding the possibility of indirect contact-genetic relationships between the works of these authors is put forward.

**Keywords:** socio-political satire, comparative-typological analysis, satirical image, satirical typification means, comparative research, opposing trends, object of satirical representation

## 1. Introduction

Satire, as one of the possible modes of literary creativity, occupies a significant place in the writing of Ivan Franko. The satirical method of reflecting life's phenomena was used by the Ukrainian writer with a similar purpose: as a means to critique contemporary artists, state and political institutions, and moral-ethical norms. This satirical approach was employed mainly in the same genres (a series of essays, short stories, novels, and novellas) as in the works of W. Thackeray.

Furthermore, the works of both artists unfolded within similar socio-economic and literary-arts realities, despite a slight asynchrony in the years of their lives.

It is important to note that the issue of the comparative study of the satirical prose of W. Thackeray and I. Franko in terms of typological similarities and possible genetic contacts, despite its obvious relevance, remains virtually unexplored in modern Ukrainian literary studies. Some of its aspects have been addressed in the academic works of I. Zhuravska, D. Zatonsky, D. Kuzyk, D. Nalyvayko, and M. Tkachuk. However, this problem has not been thoroughly examined as a whole to this day.

Therefore, the chosen problem allows for a more in-depth exploration of the nature of artistic traditions in the works of I. Franko and reveals new aspects of the relationship between Ukrainian and English literature.

Based on the considerations presented, a comparative-typological analysis of the works of W. Thackeray and I. Franko regarding the specificity of satirical elements in them, typological correspondences in the use of satirical techniques, and the methods of creating satirical images appears to be both reasonable and timely. This also underscores the relevance of our chosen research topic.

**The aim** of the research is to conduct a comparative study of satirical prose works on social issues by William Makepeace Thackeray and socio-political satirical stories by Ivan Franko, as well as the novellas and novels by the Ukrainian writer, in which satire serves as one of the existing modes of constructing reality to identify typological correspondences and intersecting trends.

**The goal** of this research is to conduct a comparative study of the socio-political satirical prose of Wil-

liam Thackeray and the socio-political satirical short stories and novels of Ivan Franko in which satire serves as one of the available modes for constructing reality to identify typological correspondences and opposing trends.

**Research methods:** historical-typological, comparative, and partially biographical.

## 2. Satire as a literary phenomenon

Exploring the specifics of the satirical mode in the creative heritage of W. Thackeray and I. Franko first requires clarifying the conceptual and terminological peculiarities of the phenomenon of satire. The lineage of satire, as the analysis shows, can be traced back to ancient Greek satirical drama and socially critical comedy by Aristophanes. It's evident that the term "satire" becomes terminologically ambiguous when it refers to both a distinct literary genre and a unique form of reality representation (Bogel F., 2001). Therefore, a satirical work should be considered one in which the dominant and organizing principle is the corresponding aesthetic concept of depicting life phenomena. This is evident at all levels of the artistic structure of the work, from its problem-thematic complex to its language and stylistic features. In other cases, when it comes to the satirical mode of representation, language may be considered just one of the artistic elements of a specific work.

Social-political satire, most vividly represented in the works of the novelistic format (Cervantes, Rabelais, Swift, Thackeray, and others), constitutes one of the two historically formed types of satirical exposure, involving destructive criticism of the socio-economic and political-ideological institutions of a specific historical epoch.

A comparative study of satire necessitates outlining a set of representational and expressive means that serve as the distinctive poetics arsenal of satire and are used to criticize unacceptable social phenomena. It is established that the peculiarity of the poetics of a satirical work lies in the heightened exaggeration and concentration of the essential characteristics of the depicted phenomenon. Therefore, the main means of creating a satirical image (satirical expressiveness) include hyperbole, grotesque, caricature, parody, irony, the use of "expressive" proper

names, oxymoronic images, and animalization (Bogel F., 2001).

### **3. W. Thackeray and I. Franko's view on satire**

The conducted study provides grounds to delineate the conceptual level of satirical modeling of reality in the literary and critical work of English and Ukrainian writers - W. Thackeray and I. Franko. Analyzing the thoughts, statements, and evaluations of W. Thackeray, we can identify the main direction of the evolution of the writer's artistic consciousness and aesthetic principles, including his views on the essence and purpose of satire, from an awareness of the necessity of sharp, thorough, and uncompromising exposure of negative life phenomena in the early stages of his creative work to reconciliation with reality and the abandonment of an active aggressive position in exposing its disgraceful aspects.

I. Franko's requirements for the activities of the satirical artist largely correspond to Thackeray's interpretation of the satirical writer, and allow us to conclude on the significant similarity of their aesthetic views and certain defining features in understanding the essence and tasks of satire by Ukrainian and English writers. Both W. Thackeray and I. Franko are unanimous in their beliefs that satire is meant to portray a broad picture of society, taken in its most characteristic features and types. The similarity in their aesthetic views also extends to their perception of the moralistic and didactic purpose of satire.

### **4. Typological correspondences**

In addition, we note the specific nature of the functioning of the satirical discourse in the works of these authors and their views on satire. The differences between them are due to obvious differences in the realities of the contemporary material and cultural existence of England and Ukraine, as well as the specificity of the creative talents and life experiences of each of the artists: their social backgrounds, the circumstances of their social lives, which had a decisive influence on the formation of their worldviews, value systems, aesthetic preferences, and creative principles.

In contrast to Thackeray, I. Franko deeply believed in the richness and national originality of the satirical-humorous element, both in nature and in the creativity of the people. Valuing the importance of folk satire and humor as an inexhaustible source for the creativity of satirical-humorous artists, the critic saw them as the "highest development of popular self-awareness" and a way to express the self-consciousness of the nation (Zatons'kyi D., 1982). Therefore, the geopolitical and ethno-cultural characteristics of the Galician region, as well as the ideological and philosophical beliefs, determined – in contrast to Thackeray – the deeply and consistently democratic foundations of Ivan Franko's creativity and aesthetic views, his rootedness in the tradition of Ukrainian folk creativity, the desire, and demand to draw themes and artistic means, including those for satirical works, from the treasury of folk humor and folk satire.

In the views on satire of Ivan Franko and William Thackeray, another notable difference is vividly evident. The satirical perspective on the world was an integral part of the artistic personality of the English writer, which manifested not only in his literary works but also in his drawings. Satire, as a specific way of modeling reality aimed at eliciting a very specific emotional-psychological effect in the reader, covers the entire artistic space of Thackeray's works traditionally classified as satirical, leaving little room for other aesthetic dominants. In contrast, in Franko's works, satire and tragedy, denial and affirmation, humor and elevation often coexist within the same work, representing just one of its artistic streams. In the process of satirical modeling of reality, Ivan Franko distinctly distances himself from the objects of satire, while William Thackeray consciously, sometimes even demonstratively, underscores his affinity with them. The Ukrainian writer believed that satirical images, due to their unique nature, the concentration of colors, and the exaggeration used in their creation, serve as one of the main means of satirical typification, contributing to the deep and comprehensive reflection of negative aspects of social life and moral-ethical flaws of certain social strata and their individual representatives.

Satire intrigued Ivan Franko as an independent theoretical problem, while Thackeray's interest was driven solely by his fascination with the works of specific satirical writers. Moreover, endowed with philo-

sophical and theoretical thinking, Franko's presentations are terminologically precise, unlike Thackeray's often verbose and emotionally charged style.

## 5. Objects of satirical exposure

In Thackeray's works, the objects of satirical portrayal are primarily manifestations of snobbery, which the writer views as a characteristic feature of the English social psychology, almost as an element of the national mentality. In his essays ("The Book of Snobs," "Yellowplush Papers," and others) and his masterpiece novel "Vanity Fair," the writer constructs the social hierarchy of English snobbery, presenting a gallery of characters as representatives of this type of social psychology (Yakhontova D., 1963). On the other hand, in Franko's satirical representation, the objects are the representatives of the "Jew-capitalist" type, a distinctive feature of Galician reality during the period of industrial development. The images of significant representatives of this social-psychological type, Herman Goldkremar and Leon Hammeršlag, are developed based on the principle of parallelism against the backdrop of the broad life of the Jewish population in Galicia.

Ivan Franko also portrays Ruthenians – representatives of the Galician Rusyns – as a specific type of contemporary reality, focusing on their "tribal" commonality of individual traits: cynicism, lack of principles, bourgeois narrow-mindedness, a priority of financial interests, individualism, and more. These "tribal" features are manifested in the representatives of the "Ruthenian" type in his stories, such as "Dr. Besserwisser," "The History of a Confiscation," and "Opposition," and are genetically related to the Ruthenians of the 1840s-50s portrayed by Franko in the eponymous series of essays (Zhuravska I., 1956).

In both Thackeray and Franko's works, the bourgeois-aristocratic marriage is also a significant object of satirical portrayal. Therefore, despite differences in mental, psychological, national-cultural, and domestic orders, the heroines of the works of the eminent English satirist and Ukrainian artist often find themselves related in the circumstances of their married life. Virtually all of them (Becky Sharp, Becky Crawley, Olimpia, Rose Crawley) become victims of the conventions and stereotypes of patriarchal society,

experiencing indifference, contempt, and open hatred (or even conscious tyranny) from their husbands and are condemned to emotional emptiness and insignificance not only in their social but also in their family life.

## 6. Thackeray and Franko's satirical modelling of reality

While analysing the textual facts, similarities in the poetics of satirical modeling of reality in the works of W. Thackeray and I. Franko were discovered. Moreover, considering the inclusion of the Ukrainian artist in the broader European cultural and artistic continuum, where the work of the English satirist had a wide resonance, the continuous and often explicitly verbalized creative utilization of the best artistic achievements of the past in Ivan Franko's expressions provides grounds to hypothesize the likelihood of indirect genetic contact between them (their texts) as a process of creative reinterpretation of the English novelist's elements, which served as the foundation for the integrity of Franko's works. A significant common feature of satirical modeling of reality in W. Thackeray and I. Franko is the use of such metase-mantic units as meta-images, both abstract-allegorical (images of Boa constrictor, Vanity Fair) and metaphorical (the image of Borislav). These units, with their high concentration of sociocultural ideas in a "condensed" form, contribute to the crystallization of the author's concept of the era, understanding it as a holistic phenomenon, and vividly illustrate its "face" (Zatons'kyy D., 1982).

A powerful tool for satirical modeling of reality, widely used in the works of both W. Thackeray and I. Franko, is metaphor. In the prose works of these authors, a series of vivid metaphors are realized, such as the metaphor of the fair, the theater, war, and thematically related metaphorical images of the hive, exhibition, comedy, drama, action, game (acting), actor, curtain, scenery, enemy, opponent, attack, siege, weaponry, battle, heart, which both writers use to express the essence of social conflicts and personal relationships in bourgeois society. In Thackeray's novel "Vanity Fair," the metaphor of the theater has an all-encompassing, organizational nature and determines the theatricalization of the entire narrative.

The satirical mode in W. Thackeray and I. Franko actively engages the traditions of past carnival literature. The most wide-ranging manifestation in the analyzed works of both authors is the oxymoronic nature of character traits (Becky, Emilia, Aniela Angarovich, Olympia Torska, Father Nestor). The life conflicts of the characters are often constructed according to the scheme of a carnival “wheel” (the change of “top” and “bottom”). In Thackeray’s novel, the situation of “unmasking” the carnival king is widely used (the vicissitudes of George Osborne’s social life, Rodon Crawley, and Becky Sharp) (Yakhontova D., 1963). For Franko’s works, the use of such an element of carnival literature as “crisis” dreams of the characters is entirely individual.

A comparative analysis of the characteristics of portrait descriptions in the satirical texts of W. Thackeray and I. Franko indicates that depicting the appearance of the characters is an effective means of constructing satirical images in the works of both the English and Ukrainian writers. It can be argued that satirically rich portrait characterization is used by both artists when portraying characters who exhibit negative moral qualities. Both Thackeray and Franko often avoid detailed portrait descriptions and focus the reader’s attention on the most expressive and eloquent, including character-forming, portrait details. Some common “schemes” for using portrait details, their integration into the artistic fabric of the works, show most vividly the possibility of indirect genetic contact between Thackeray’s “Vanity Fair” and Franko’s works (Hrom’yak R., 2002).

## 7. Conclusions

In conclusion, the typological correspondences identified during the study of this issue and the stated scientific hypothesis regarding the likelihood of (indirect) genetic connections between the texts of the eminent English satirist and the Ukrainian artist, despite the emphasized differences in social, cultural, individual-specific orders, are one of the bright manifestations of the ongoing, living dialogue between literatures of different times and nations, confirming the immortality of the high artistic achievements of the past and their constant orientation toward the future.

Comparing the statements of W. Thackeray and I. Franko regarding the issues of satire and the factors that shaped their ideological and aesthetic positions, we find significant typological correspondences between them.

W. Thackeray and I. Franko are in agreement regarding the emotions that a satirical work should evoke and the objective of exposing the “weak and comical” aspects of life as the primary social function of such a work (Zatons’kyy D., 1982).

Similar to W. Thackeray, I. Franko believes that the objects of satirical exposure are social and socio-psychological types that could become generic terms, in other words, concepts used universally.

Both English and Ukrainian writers share the belief that satire is meant to depict a broad picture of society, capturing its most characteristic features and types.

The aesthetic convictions of W. Thackeray and I. Franko also align in their understanding of the moralizing and didactic purpose of satire.

However, the uniqueness of the creative talents of each writer, their social backgrounds, and the differences in their ideological and worldview positions, as well as the collision of personal lives with the specific political-ideological, socio-economic, and ethno-cultural realities of Britain and Galicia, have led to differences in the theoretical and satirical discourse in the works of W. Thackeray and I. Franko.

The geopolitical and ethno-cultural characteristics of Galicia, as well as ideological beliefs, have led to deeply rooted democratic foundations in Ivan Franko’s creative work and aesthetic views, in contrast to W. Thackeray. Franko’s work is deeply rooted in the tradition of Ukrainian folk creativity, with a desire to draw themes and artistic tools, including those for satirical works, from the treasury of popular humor and satire.

Satire interested Ivan Franko as an independent theoretical issue, while W. Thackeray’s interest was dictated by his curiosity about the works of specific writers. Moreover, endowed with philosophical-terminological thinking, Franko is more terminologically precise in his explanations, unlike the verbose and sometimes excessively emotional Thackeray. In the works of the English writer, the satirical construction of reality covers their entire artistic space, while in Franko’s work, satire is just one of the artistic stre-



ams. The Ukrainian writer clearly distances himself from the objects of satire, while Thackeray consciously and sometimes demonstratively emphasizes his kinship with them.

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