



**GENDER ASPECT OF  
THE NOVEL PANAS MIRNY'S *POVIYA***

doi: <https://doi.org/10.34142/astraea.2022.3.2.02>



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**ABSTRACT**

Historical events of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries contributed to the fact that women were forced to expand the list of their traditional social roles, which could not but lead to the fact that the status of a woman began to change in literary works. The development of women's movements, and especially the feminist movement, contributed to the growth of widespread attention of researchers to the study of the role and image of women in Ukrainian literature.

Focusing on the differentiation of the male and female in the literature, we get the opportunity to radically change the idea of the social status of a man and a woman, their relationship in the conditions of the hierarchy formed in a concrete-historical society.

Analysis of the category "gender" allows you to differently evaluate sociocultural processes, formed stereotypes of the interpretation of the problem of power and dominance in social life, profession, career, household life of people depending on their gender. The gender aspect of literary criticism provides ample opportunities for interpreting the artistic text as a kind of gender picture of the world, where the male and female type, the nature of the worldview, is specifically revealed.

The relevance of the study is due to the fact that feminism from the point of view of history and sociology has been studied very thoroughly, and from literary positions - in insufficient.

The consideration of Panas Mirny's novel *Poviya* in the gender aspect contributes to the identification of national features of the existence, life and culture of the Ukrainian people.

**Key words:** feminism; genderology; realism.

## АНОТАЦІЯ

### Гендерний аспект у романі Панаса Мирного «Повія»

Історичні події кінця XIX – початку XX століття сприяли тому, що жінки були змушені розширити список своїх традиційних соціальних ролей, що не могло не призвести до того, що статус жінки почав змінюватися і в літературних творах. Розвиток жіночих рухів, і особливо феміністичний рух, сприяли зростанню поширеної уваги дослідників до вивчення ролі і образу жінки в українській літературі.

Акцентуючи особливу увагу на диференціації чоловічої та жіночої статі в літературі, ми отримуємо можливість кардинально змінити уявлення про соціальний статус чоловіка і жінки, їх взаємовідносини в умовах сформованої в конкретно-історичному соціумі ієрархії.

Аналіз категорії «гендер» дозволяє по-іншому оцінити соціокультурні процеси, сформовані стереотипи інтерпретації проблеми влади та домінування в соціальному житті, професії, кар'єри, побутовому житті людей залежно від їх статевої приналежності. Гендерний аспект літературознавства надає широкі можливості інтерпретації художнього тексту як своєрідної гендерної картини світу, де специфічно розкривається чоловічий і жіночий тип, характер світорозуміння.

Актуальність дослідження обумовлена тим, що фемінізм з точки зору історії та соціології вивчений дуже ґрунтовно, а з літературознавчих позицій – недостатньо.

Розгляд роману Панаса Мирного «Повія» в гендерному аспекті сприяє виявленню національних особливостей буття, життя і культури українського народу.

**Ключові слова:** фемінізм, гендерологія, реалізм.



## INTRODUCTION

Global transformation processes in countries developing democracy and principles of open society have not so much decided, but set new challenges for society, one of which is to overcome all types of discrimination and suppress the free development of the individual, including on the basis of sex.

The personality problem is one of the main ones in literary studies. This is due to the fact that the person, the person in his connections with society and sometimes is the main object of the image and research of literature. However, in recent decades, in fiction, the study of a person and related problems at the level not only of genre, composition, ideological content or problem field, but also in terms of the artistic concept of personality, due to the vision of the master of the word.

The main parameters of the artistic concept of personality, according to V. Marko, are the following: fundamental principles, ideological and aesthetic aspects, in which it is manifested and realized, sources. The components of the artistic concept of personality are recognized: the ideal of man, the author's view of man and his attitude to the characters, the principles of human reflection [Marko (1987), 12].

The connection of the artistic concept of man with the ideological-thematic spectrum of the work is carried out by the following aspects: "man and nature," "man and time," "man and society," etc. V. Marco identifies three groups of sources of the concept of personality. The first is socio-philosophical sources: philosophical science, the life of the people, their historical experience, folk morality. The second is literary and aesthetic sources: literary currents, which the writer focuses on, folklore those literary traditions. The third is family and household sources: the writer's impression of family life is actually alien, which he observes.

The point is that gradually the classic basic sex-role contract, at least for the middle class, is a "equal status" contract, according to which the hierarchy of the patriarchy is replaced by an equalization of the situation regarding the rights and opportunities of men and women, both in the public and in the private spheres. There are opportunities for self-realization, both in the professional and in the political field, the sensitivities of women regarding individual rights and self-esteem are increasing. Discriminatory practices are increasingly building women's activism in its various forms: from so-called women's mutual assistance and psychological support to active participation in politics, creativity, education, etc.

The emergence of the term "feminism" (from Latin. femina – "woman") refers to

the beginning of the XIX century. At that time, he understood the totality of qualities inherent in a woman, in analogies with specific masculine traits - masculinity. At the end of the 19th century, within the framework of the suffragan movement (for enfranchising women), the term "feminist" appears, which is called the activist of the women's movement. That is, by the beginning of the 20th century, the meaning of the word is changing, and for the last 100 years feminists have unequivocally called women who are fighting for their rights, and not only political.

Therefore, feminism - provisions, principles, ideologies that are aimed at solving the problems of women, namely: legal, political, social equality with men. The basis of feminism is beliefs about inequality between men and women, as well as that women constantly face various biases.

Being half of humanity, a woman occupies a significant place in folk literature. The name of the woman, the heroine of the work of fiction, is associated with the embodiment of artistic and aesthetic ideals in literature. In order to realize beautiful ideals, aspirations for the heights of moral and physical beauty, female images in art and literature were generously endowed with the best qualities. Therefore, a woman in art and literature often acquired symbolic meaning.

The phenomenon of feminism is marked by the setting of numerous philosophical, sociological, psychological, literary problems regarding the situation and problems of a woman in society and in the family, the possibilities of self-realization of a woman and liberation from the traditionally imposed social roles.

Feminism has had a significant impact on the development of society, this includes politics in the field of higher education. Thanks to this direction, women received the right to obtain higher education, to work in prestigious jobs. Feminism also contributed to the introduction of anti-discrimination programs, which increased the representation of women in the field of science and politics.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of women's prose, in particular the concept of the personality of a woman in it, is devoted to many works of Ukrainian researchers: V. Ageeva [Ageeva(2003)], I. Andrusyak [Andrusyak (2005)], G. Biberova [Biberova (2006)], O. Bilik [Bilik(2007)], T. Vorobyova [Vorobyova(2005)], N. Kotenko [Kotenko (2005)], M. Krupka [Krupka(2000)], others.



## **AIM OF THE ARTICLE**

Identify the nature, signs, features of Ukrainian feminism in the work of Panas Mirniy.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In the analysis of the problem of the nature of women, both in the history of Western European philosophy and in the theory of modern feminism, the principles of historical and philosophical analysis played a major role, according to which the study of each theoretical position must be carried out taking into account the historical, cultural and philosophical context in which it arose.

Phenomenology, since today it is obvious that the question of female nature cannot be considered without taking into account the female experience of life, that traditional theories should be revised from the standpoint of the female "life world".

## **RESULTS**

The penetration of feminist ideas into Ukrainian culture begins with the second quarter of the nineteenth century. By that time, there were objective conditions for its distribution in Ukraine. A number of reasons contributed to this: the low social status of women in Ukraine; new economic conditions that forced women to look for work, to get a job on their own in life; a broad revolutionary democratic movement, in which the problems of female emancipation become part of the general problem of human freedom.

The feminist direction in Ukraine may be due to the emergence of numerous organizations engaged in cultural, educational, publishing, political, as well as charitable activities. Such organizations include: "Svitske zhinoche tovaristvo", "Zhinoche tovaristvo O. Dobrograevoi", "Klub rusinok", "Kruzhok ukrainskih divchat", "Zhinocha gromada", "Soyuz ukrainok". The rapid activity of these organizations was evidenced by the fact that the women's movement became part of the cultural and social life of Ukrainians.

At the same time, it should be noted that in Ukrainian society there was a paradoxical situation - on the one hand, society, although with a certain reservation, perceived the process of socialization of women, on the other, it threw up its ideological

expression - feminism as too radical a teaching.

At the turn of the XIX-XX centuries, a specific women's journalism is also formed, which focuses on other problems: the self-value of the female personality, the development of female individuality, the self-realization of women. She was able to follow the topics that were developed in another period.

In studies of the work of Panas Mirny, rich material is accumulated that corresponds to a gender approach that is quite limited in its capabilities, when the attention of researchers is directed to the reflection of individual female and male images in the works of the writer. It is time to change the point of view and identify the writer's gender as his personal artistic study of the problems of relations between women and men. This implies in a single aspect to pay attention to the key ones for each stage of Panas Mirny's work, that is, the path of artistic and genderological search for the writer as a whole.

The novels of Panas Mirny are distinguished by a special interpretation of reality, due to belonging to realism, the national mentality of the writer, creative individuality.

An interesting object is the study of Panas Mirny's novel *Poviya* – a unique phenomenon in the literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And today it attracts the attention of scientists not only by poetry of prose, psychological development of characters, but also by a deep aesthetic that combines the author's perception of nature, man and culture.

The basis of the novel is the real reality that took place in Ukraine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The novel reflects the story of the evolution of the worldview of Christ Prytikovna against the background of gender stereotypes of his time. The 19th century - the century of industrialization of society, which influenced the everyday life of Europe, made changes in the way of family life. The real division of society into private, domestic, the sphere of life, on the one hand, and into the professional world, on the other, had certain ideological consequences. The woman was assigned traits that will come in handy in family life and the preservation of the home. The meaning of her life was to be a faithful wife, a loving mother who followed religious and social rules.

In the novel *Poviya* the main character is Chrystya, she is the center of the writer's artistic attention. Attention should be paid to the title of the novel. It is worth noting, because it is known that the authors often call their works the names



of the main characters. And the novel *Poviya* although it does not contain a name, instead characterizes a person's belonging to a certain layer of society or records his emotional, spiritual state, expresses a key episode in the fate of a person.

So from the point of view of psychologism, when we delve into events, the motives of the person who embarked on such a path finally become clear; internal contradictory struggle of mental forces. And at the same time - kindness in relation to the surrounding world, openness and naivety (mainly at the beginning of the novel).

The life of Christ in the novel *Poviya* is reproduced mainly in socio-psychological terms. The writer is too stingy on descriptions of the external features of the character not related to his inner being. As a rule, the portrait characteristic of the writer conveys primarily not external signs, but psychological aggravation, it contributes to the identification of internal spiritual changes, the spiritual state of the heroine.

In order to consider the genderology of the main character of Panas Mirny's work *Poviya* it is necessary to refer to the psychological image of a person in this work, on the basis of this study we will be able to analyze its formation in this novel.

It is known that the psychological direction in literary criticism developed in the 80s-90s of the XIX century. This direction pays special attention to the psychology of personality, motivation of human actions, etc. The turn to psychology in literary criticism was also associated with an increase in attention to the psychology of perception of works of fiction, as well as to an in-depth analysis of characters, the psychology of literary works.

The term "character" is one of the most controversial in modern psychology. In general practice, it is used to describe persistent and specific manifestations of individuality: lifestyle, repetitive habits, passions, urges, as well as to indicate constitutional and other outwardly expressed hallmarks of an individual, features of speech, behavior; formed taking into account the circumstances of life and its individual episodes.

Character in a work of art is called such an image of a person in which his individual features are reproduced deeply and vividly. Literary characters are in connection with the aesthetic ideal of their time, as well as with the artistic method of writers.

Emphasizing the cheerful nature of Christya, Panas Mirny at the same time emphasized her suffering due to the needy life of her family. Figuratively, the artist conveys this condition to the heroine. Here the girl goes to the party: "With joy and

fun, the heart beats in Christ, the eyes play like those stars in the cold sky. The calamity that fogged them, which lay on the soul with a heavy stone, rolled as she stepped over her court" (Mirniy, 1989: 125-127).

Characters in the work are manifested not only and not so much with the help of a list of their features, but by showing these characters in specific actions and actions, clashes and struggles under certain circumstances.

For example, you need to remember the episode when, after a drunken feast, Kramar forces Christi to sit all night and look at him. And at this time, Christ resorted to sad and cruel thoughts about his work at Zagnybida: "At least we were not born into the world when we were so mocked! He, turned out like a boar, capricorns... And thou shalt sit over him, and stare at his blown face, and hear his boil, and curse, wait till he sleeps. If it were not for sin, he would put you to sleep - he would not rise for ever!" (Mirniy, 1989 243).

So Christya reflected, thereby exposing her soul. This monologue testifies to hatred and a desire for revenge, but these are justified feelings - its cruelty is justified. In conditions of psychological pressure, such feelings are fully justified and, moreover, do not contradict the creative design of Panas Mirniy.

In contrast to this episode with Christya, you can also give another example, where the main character represents only purity. After the death of Olena (the wife of Zagnibida), Christya is accused of her murder. And it is here that Christya appears as the personification of truth and justice, contrary to everything else (except Priska). And that other, dark side, did not believe in Christya in any way. And she only honestly answered the question about what Zagnibid's money gave her.

Let's give this example:

"- Yes... So... – looking at the paper, he said. – Where did you get it?

The host was given.

- Oh, you're a master to lie... Don't you have any more money?

- No.

"Wow, howl!" shouted the officer.

"By God, no!" said Christya wept" (Mirniy, 1989: 176).

So, the main character Chrystya is quite positive, which is even more clear from the very context of the novel. In an environment of poverty, enslavement and cruelty, psychologism is deepening – this is clearly visible from the subsequent events of the work.





According to the semantic design of the author, the search for truth and truth in the cell of good and evil was embodied in Christya. Based on this, it can be argued that Christya is the main heroine of the novel, because her personality in terms of psychological characteristics is outlined widely and brightly (especially in relations with life and with other heroes). So through it the author embodies a psychological portrait – but not only one person.

Through one person, some social phenomena characteristic of the then society are personified in difficult conditions for the peasantry. Or more precisely - psychological reactions to these phenomena in terms of a normal healthy moral and physical personality.

And in the future, when these phenomena condensed in the heroine Christi, presented "transformations of man from the inside", that is, manifestations of the human soul in various conditions: arbitrariness, despotism, wanderings, freedom, etc. And all this, after all, affects many human characters and worldviews. It should also be noted that all of the above is quite consistent with the writer's plan.

Another heroine who directly affects the formation of the image of Christi - Priska, her mother. We can consider her the main heroine of the novel, because her personal history and psychological world are recreated no less colorful and bright than Christine. Priskaya is quite positive, but carries in its image a large negative impact on the reader.

Priska is mostly almost always focused on herself, on her feelings and worries: "Priska dybala and dybala, rushing home. She did not notice the beauty of the world; her oblique head was troubled by her thoughts. They were not bitter; if Priska had not forgotten to rejoice, they would have been, maybe, joyful; and now they are only quietly sad, just like her faded soul. She thought of a land for which so much hurt her heart, which evil people intended to take away..." (Mirniy, 1989: 256).

Little attention is paid to Panas Mirny's image of Christya in all aspects.

For example: "– Such annoyance took me, Odarko, hugged me!.. Christi cries, and my heart is so bitter that I cannot cry.. If the earth had gone apart, it would have gone through the earth".

"God be with you, Aunt! " says Odarka. – you have a daughter; It is necessary to bring it to mind, it is necessary to device it. Who will take care of her without you?

Good people, Odarco, when they're still there; and no – it won't get any worse!" (Mirniy, 1989: 279).

Trouble – the death of a man, completes this image of "negative in positive".

For example: "The house door forgot Zdorikhi to close; cold went into their open hole from the blue: in the house – at least wolves ghosts! And Prisci and Christi are indifferent. They are warmed by grief with their burning fire, they are brought to tears with their bitter warmth..." (Mirniy, 1989: 379).

It can be traced that here the bifurcation of Christian life originates. On the one hand – quite a good girl, not distinguished from others, moderately beautiful, kind, honest; and on the other hand, her fate is completely dark, without light, among cruel or simply indifferent people.

Positive embodied in the appearance of Christya, and all negative – in her life. Thus, by examining these episodes, it can be concluded that her mother Priska has a direct relation to all the events of Christya life. Priska seems to complete her image and her fate, and Christya seems to be her continuation. And this psychological effect is enhanced by the fact that Priska dies just when the climactic decisive events in Christ's life occur: accusations of murder, hiring, gossip in the village that she allegedly killed Olena, the wife of the owner. As if with the death of Priska comes eclipse in all subsequent Christiya life.

Analyzing the image of Christya, we can trace that the author showed us a whole nature, which, having passed life's difficulties, was able to preserve the best qualities of a person in the heart. Panas Mirny especially draws attention to the pure heart of Christya Prytikovna. "A good soul, does a lot of good", peasants say about it. Not that the latter, as they get rich, have forgotten God and people. And Christya is not, everything is for people. Because of their calamity it is good" (Mirniy, 1989: 37). So, despite all the trials of life, she was able to find strength in wanting to help people.

The heroines of the novel *Poviya* were able to look inside themselves and understand the main thing regarding the status of a woman in society. These important things – a woman's self-sufficiency, an active life position, faith in her powers – could all change their lives.

Thus, Panas Mirny creates the concept of female personality, reflecting it not only in the characterization of the character being analyzed, but also in the very structure of the novel. The genre specificity of this work implies an expanded narrative about the life and development of the personality of the main character. The narrative structure of the novel *Poviya* clearly traces the author's attitude towards Christ. The work is saturated with reflections, inner monologues of the heroine. The writer



records the feelings, experiences, moods of the heroine. The reader observes those internal changes that occur in Christ's views during her lifetime.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

Based on the theory of W. Marko on the parameters of the artistic concept of personality, it can be argued that the connection of the artistic concept with the ideological-thematic spectrum of the novel is more carried out through the aspect of "man and society." Given the personal experiences of women close to the writer, Panas Mirny presents her view of the female freedom of his time. The classic depicts her heroine, linking her life to the material and spiritual basis of a particular era. Panas Mirny, condemning the moral and ethical principles of high society, is the first to depart from the traditional romance novel and realistically reproduces the range of psychological experiences of a woman. Thus, a specific Mirnovo method is formed - analytical realism, which implies a deep, systematic study of modern life and its understanding at the level of general patterns of human nature, historical time and social existence.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Ukrainian feminism arose later than in the West. If in the West feminist ideology was born as a consequence of the existing women's movement, then in Ukraine the emergence of the women's movement was the result of a wide discussion in the Ukrainian press about the emancipation of women. The women's movement of the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a collection of numerous societies, different in forms of work, unions, guided by the idea of the value of a free, independent and self-sufficient female personality for cultural progress, the purpose of which was to expand the public rights and freedoms of women in the economic, political, cultural and social spheres. Emancipation, a feminist ideology based on the ideology of individualism, opposed on the one hand the cultural attitudes of traditional Ukrainian society, consisting in suppressing an individual from a kind, a community, a state, in dominating the idea of the common good over the idea of the well-being of an individual, and on the other - the Orthodox tradition of the ideal of female sacrifice. The women's movement in Ukraine at the initial stage was

associated with charity, as well as an attempt to achieve economic independence and a struggle for women's access to independence.

For Panas Mirny, there is nothing more expensive and meaningful than a person. She is an absolute value. The most important in the religious and philosophical searches of the writer and determining the complex structure of the personality in his novels is the discovery of the primary source, opposing the vicious passions of man. The worldview of Panas Mirny is revealed in the choice of themes of his work. In the novel *Poviya*, he portrays a man-seeker who, in the path of individualism, seeks to solve the problem of living order and suffers complete defeat on him because he feels a protester deep moral consciousness in himself.

The writer's work is characterized by the principle of exclusivity of each person. The writer went to understand the essence of man, as a universal being who wants to understand himself as a part of a common, absolute, free whole. Panas Mirny believes that both good and evil are originally inherent in human nature. The concepts of truth and good live in every person, even in the most recent villain.

The whole history of mankind is considered by the writer as "development, struggle, desire" to achieve the ideal. A person cannot "love his neighbor as himself" because he is bound by the "law of personality". But she is not just an earthly animal, not just a part of nature. It manifests itself in her as a voice of conscience. The correct conclusion is not that the human personality cannot be changed, but that it is too complex to change under the influence of social measures alone, social rearrangement of life.

The work of Panas Mirny still gives scientists the opportunity to talk about the creation of a full-fledged gender vector in Ukrainian literature, but the images of Priska, Marina, Christya, which, undoubtedly, are participants in the civilization period, in the author's psychological characteristic have separate feminine markers. Their attitude to the present and future in the development of humanity is determined by the degree of their spirituality. These women in crisis situations overcome an increased sense of personality, individualistic impulses. The heroine of the novel *Poviya* at the end of the work is not the same people as at the beginning. From mistakes, moral immaturity, they move towards spiritual enlightenment and goodness. In the struggles of passions, in the trials of life, the heroines are purified and in their souls the highest harmony wins.

The writer's female imagery is a unique artistic fiction. This was made possible

by a focused study of the polar, unexpected, irrational female personality.

In the Ukrainian literature of the late XIX - early XX centuries, as in the literature of the XVIII century, the development of traditional, "eternal" female images, playing various social roles, as well as new female images arise, the appearance of which is due to time and social conditions. In the future, it is of scientific interest to consider the image of a woman on the material of more works of one of the writers (I. Nechuya-Levitsky, O. Kobylanskaya, V. Stefanyk, etc.), created by them at different times throughout the creative period, as well as the conclusions obtained in this study seem interesting to compare with the results of the analysis of the image of a woman in Western literature at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries.

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**Received:** 11.07.2022

**Accepted:** 5.09.2022

**Cite materials as:**

Khachaturian, K. (2022). Gender aspect of the novel Panas Mirny's *Poviya*. *Astraea*, 3(2), 27-40. doi: <https://doi.org/10.34142/astreaa.2022.3.2.02>

