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Re-visiting History and Culture in Latvian Literature: An Introduction

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As part of culture, literature is closely linked with humans; it is man-made, envisaged for people, and reflects the inner world of man and different stages of human life. At the same time, it is a reflection of reality and a construct that is formed and exists according to its own laws, which differ at various stages of development. Thus, literary texts are related to the time and space in which they are created.

The development of Latvian literature is inextricably linked with the history of Latvia and the development of culture. The history of the Latvian state is a striking example of the constant interaction of different cultures. In various epochs of the formation and development of Latvian culture, it has been influenced by the cultures of bigger nations (German, Swedish, Polish, Russian etc.). The impacts have been determined by the long periods of dependence, namely, Latvia has been subjected to other countries since the thirteenth century, and up to 1918, and then, after a short period of independence, it was occupied again (Kacane and Romanovska 224-226).

The history of Latvian culture is usually considered in two stages—until and after the middle of the nineteenth century. The First Latvian National Awakening (1850-1880) is considered to be the dividing line; it was the time when the national movement "Young Latvians" firmly established itself by starting the formation of the national ideology and the development of the national culture after a long period of Latvian culture being led by other peoples. The national movement started by the Young Latvians determined the further development of the Latvians, creating and spreading the idea that the Latvians are a united nation with a common language, origin and experience, which has developed in a particular territory and is able to shape their culture independently without being subordinated to German or Russian cultures (Apals).

However, it should be noted that although the idea of nationalism was announced and developed in the middle of the nineteenth century, the formation of Latvian culture was a result of the interaction of different cultures both before and after First Latvian National Awakening, as ethnic minorities formed and influenced the development of the national culture. Even today, Latvia is considered to be a multicultural country. According to the census data of 1897, there were 1.929 million people living in the territory of Latvia at that time, 68% of the total population were Latvians. The second largest ethnic community was Russians (12% of the total population), whereas the third largest—Jews (7.4%). The proportions of Germans and Poles were also significant (6.2% and 3.4%, respectively). The results of the 2018 census also are indicative of the situation of multiculturalism: 62% of Latvians, 25% of Russians, 3% of Belarusians, Poles, Ukrainians and other nationalities are also present ("Oficiālās statistikas portāls").

In today's humanities and social sciences in Latvia, much attention is being paid to the interaction of cultures; attempts are being made to form an analytical and neutral view. Intercultural communication has been one of the most pressing, complex and controversial topics over the centuries. Cultural migration/ mobility, as viewed from different perspectives and situations, is treated both positively (as a mutually enriching process) and negatively (as the suppression of culture). Foreign culture tends to be both intimidating (as natural for a human to be afraid of the unknown) and attractive (for the unknown arouses interest) (Romanovska 75).

Interaction of cultures has been described using various theories and their key notions. One of the most relevant notions, which characterises the interaction of cultures in a neutral way and denotes the equal coexistence of many cultures, is multiculturalism. "[M]ulticulturalism refers to the existence of difference and uneven power relations among populations in terms of racial, ethnic, religious, geographical distinctions and other cultural markers that deviate from dominant, often racialized, 'norms.' Based upon an acknowledgement of diversity, multiculturalism also refers to formal recognition and incorporation of those defined by such differences through policies and discourses that acknowledge the rights and needs of minoritized groups within the public realm, but which also control the terms of such integration" (Clayton 212). Notwithstanding the seemingly neutral nature of multiculturalism, in everyday life there are situations that make one discern threats: there appear questions about the democracy and efficiency of the governance system of a multicultural society, respect for the group and individual rights, dangers of assimilation, etc. For instance, the former Minister of Culture of the Republic of Latvia Helena Demakova pointed out that multiculturalism is in stark contrast to the idea of a national

state. However, the future of Latvia is possible only if based on the uniting ideas—the Latvian language and national symbols (Demakova). There is also a positive assessment of multiculturalism, and, for example, Ilga Apine et al. (12-36) claim that democratic intercultural communication is the most successful political solution. With reference to Michel de Montaigne, Stephen Greenblatt, in "Cultural Mobility: An Introduction" (1-24), considers cultural migration a process enriching national cultures; in turn, cultures that do not experience it are stable and develop slowly and dully.

Interaction of cultures may lead to the hybridity of culture and identity. As a complementary and non-exclusionary phenomenon, a hybrid identity may consist of but is not limited to (1) a national identity, (2) a national minority identity existing and developing alongside the national one, (3) European, and (4) global/globalised identity, the latter being often seen as "identification with all of humanity" (McFarland, Webb, and Brown). One of the most influential researchers of cultural hybridity is Peter Burke. In the afterword of Latvian translation of Burke's *Cultural Hybridity*, Dennis Hanov aptly defines his idea as follows: "Cultural hybridity is characteristic of every modern society and is not a sign of negative development or 'decay,' but rather a feature of a long-lasting, enduring cultural process that over the last 20 years is simply building momentum owing to the spectrum of new, technologically advanced distributors" (Hanovs 132).

The articles included in this issue of the journal *Forum for World Literature Studies* on Latvian culture and literature were conducted at the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences at Daugavpils University (Latvia). The studies have been carried out within the framework of various projects, where the focus is on the interaction of cultures and the formation of identities. Within the framework of all the projects, a special place was given to the research on the peculiarities of the culture of the Latgale region.

Latgale is a cultural and historical region in the eastern part of Latvia. The territorial identity of today's Latgale is traced back to the Principality of Jersika at the turn of the thirteenth century, which in the Latin texts is referred to as Lethia, and as Lotigola in the Old Russian records. In the thirteenth century, Latgalian lands occupied the territory of modern Latgale and the eastern part of Vidzeme. The territory Lethia inhabited by Latgalians gave the name for the country of Latvia. After the Livonian War (1558-1583), the Latgalian lands became part of the Polish-Lithuanian State. In 1629, after the Polish-Swedish War (1600-1629), the Truce of Altmark was signed. According to the treaty, Latgale (Województwo inflanckie [the Inflanty Voivodeship]) was separated from Vidzeme, which remained under Swedish rule. In

1772, after the first partition of Poland, Latgale became part of the Russian Empire (Romanovska 46-47). "Latgale was part of other governorates unlike Vidzeme and Kurzeme, and it was not perceived as a truly Latvian territory by people of Vidzeme and Kurzeme up to 1905-1906" (Kursīte 17). This increased the gap between Latgale and other regions of Latvia, and it was only in 1917 when the decision to unite the territories was made. However, the administrative isolation of Latgale, which had lasted for almost 300 years, determined the peculiar economic, social, and cultural development of the region, which still differs from the other parts of Latvia.

In 2020-2021, a project financed by the Latvian Council of Science "The Baltic Germans of Latgale in the Context of Socio-ethnic Relations from the 17th till the Beginning of the 20th Century" was implemented. The project's focus was on the multicultural society of the Latgale region, one of the historical, ethnic monuments of which is the Baltic Germans. Until now, the cultural heritage and identity of this minority in the region of Latgale has not been thoroughly studied. The six researchers involved in the project analysed the different ways in which German and Latvian cultures interact, paying particular attention to the issues of reception. Three facets of perception have been considered: the Germans through the eyes of the Germans themselves, the Germans as viewed by other ethnic groups and other ethnic groups as viewed by the Germans.

The influence of German culture on Latvian culture appeared at the earliest, starting with the arrival of the Crusaders in the territory of Latvia in the twelfth century. Researchers have studied its manifestations in various humanities and social sciences disciplines in Latvia and abroad. By segmenting the influence into the German, Baltic German and that of the German state (Cerūzis, Malahovska), multifaceted impact on Latvia's history and culture has been observed.

In Latvian historiography, the influence of other cultures is often denoted by the notion of "factor." This concept and its significance in the history of Latvia was discussed by several researchers in a round table discussion in 1998 (Krievu-vācu… 1998), as well as considered in their publications. In history studies, the dominant opinion is that the Baltic Germans as a socio-linguistic group of the population formed in the territory of modern Latvia in the nineteenth century, at the same time as the Latvian nation ("Vācbaltieši"). The influence of Baltic German culture diminished significantly at the end of 1939 with the emigration of most people of the Baltic German minority.

The chronological framework of the project was from the seventeenth century till the early twentieth century. That was when the state of Latvia had not yet been formed, and the territory was under the rule of different states—the Polish-Lithu-

anian Commonwealth and then the Russian Empire. However, that was also when the prerequisites for the future national state were formed and the time of the most intense interethnic communication.

As a result of the project, attempts were made to determine the place of the German community in the multicultural environment of Latgale in a diachronic and synchronic perspective based on certain methodological principles, analysis of various sources (legislative enactments, set of laws, ego-documents, folklore materials, etc.) and by introducing new diverse sources into the scientific circulation. The project emphasises the level of perception. The results of the project are diverse and envisaged for both the scientific community and the general public: a summer school was organised, a tourist route was created, a collective monograph was published, and several articles, including the one (presented below) by Tatjana Kuznecova on the image of the Baltic Germans in Latvian anecdotes, were published.

In 2021, another research in the field of culture was supported by Daugavpils University by allocating funding for the development of publications and participation in conferences. The project "Cultural Memory and Identities of Latvia's Future: Crosspoints of Literature, History and Religion III" was implemented in 2021 and is a continuation of the projects of the previous two years. The research aimed to analyse the current processes in Latvian literature and religion in a unified view from a comparative and interdisciplinary perspective, defining the peculiarities of Latvian cultural identity through the prism of collective memory. The topicality of the research in the scientific aspect is related to the current situation in the world culture, i.e., under the conditions of globalisation, a collective and individual identity crisis is observable, hybrid/ multiple identities appear. This is due to the changes in the system of values and social processes, the development of various forms of communication, the openness of the world, problems of integration of past and future and so on. The research on identity is crucial; such studies allow for the definition and preservation of cultural values and peculiarities of collective and individual identities and outline the perspectives of further development.

The topicality and importance of the research in the context of Latvian culture and science is related to the priorities of Latvian cultural policy defined in important policy documents ("Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030," "The National Development Plan of Latvia 2014-2020," etc.). The preservation of cultural legacy and national identity is one of the most significant points in ensuring the existence and security of a country. Therefore, one of the essential emphases in the research is national identity and the role of ethnic, religious, and regional identities in its formation.

The results of the research carried out within the framework of the project have been disseminated both to the general public at science promotion events and to the scientific community in the form of publications and conference presentations, including the publications presented below and developed by Alina Romanovska (on the binary opposition "rural"—"urban" in the Latvian literature of the early twentieth century and Antons Austriņš' (1884-1934) prose fiction in particular), Žans Badins (on the laughter situations in Leonid Dobychin's (1894-1936) novel *The Town of N*, published in 1935), and Ilze Kacane (on aesthetic cosmopolitanism and detachment of art from life under the conditions of the heightened ideologisation of art in the 1940 and the 1950s).

Some articles included in this issue are devoted to the exploration of festive traditions in Latvian literature and have been written within the frame of Daugavpils University research project "Festivity Culture in the Colonial and Postcolonial Latvia: Celebration and Transformation", which was implemented in 2021. The project aimed to provide an interdisciplinary characterisation of several Latvian national, religious, ethnic, family festivities (holidays) and show their transformations in the cultural-historical (including religious), literary and educational aspects by carrying out the analysis of collective and individual memories, traumas and experience of totalitarianism within the context of a 100-year-long changeable power and discontinuity: the period of independent Latvia, Soviet-German-Soviet occupation, Soviet period, and the post-Soviet period—the period of a renewed independence of Latvia. Festivities—a dynamic manifestation of spiritual culture—include both those stable cultural-historical values and traditions that reveal the world view of the present society and transformations caused by the past epochs. Handing down traditions from generation to generation is based on the assumption that a human himself is also subject to change, and that to remain alive a tradition must transform, which implies that throughout decades, centuries and millenniums the Latvian festive culture has changed too. The basis of the Latvian lexeme "svētki" is the Indo-European root "sv-", which within the frame of the opposition "the festive—the mundane" reveals the meaning of festivity as being a moment of enlightening: "During festivities, people must gain spiritual enlightenment, strength for living during the many coming mundane days which won't have much of that light" (Kursīte).

The geopolitical transformations of the 1940 and events of WWII resulted in losing the national independence and Soviet colonialism (1940-1941; 1944/5-1991) oriented towards a systematic splitting/disrupting the national identity and culture. Thus, the development of independent Latvia, which since the foundation of the state (1918) had been recognised as one of the most rapidly growing European

states and cultures, was now brutally halted. De-Sovietization of the calendar in the 1990s is a manifestation of creating a new spatiotemporal reality and the replacement of imposed Soviet holidays by the holidays which were swept away in the 1940s; it included restoration of festivities from the pre-Soviet period and recovery of the national holidays and a religious component of the ritual year (Bule). Cultural and sociological studies reveal that although the continuity of national and religious holidays in Latvia has been preserved to this day, the festive culture has been greatly affected by half a century long Russification and secularism, which is observed in today's cultural processes and testified to by the data of qualitative and quantitative research (Kovzele 2020), as well as by the literary works under analysis.

The articles related to transformations of festivities and cultural hybridity included in this issue of the journal *Forum for World Literature Studies* present the creative work of both widely known Latvian writers and authors whose works have not been so extensively studied and have even been banned during the Soviet period. These articles also add to the research of the above-mentioned project on de-ideologisation of school textbooks (with the focus on traditional/religious festivities) and evolution of festive traditions (with the focus on Old Believer wedding rites in different time periods), which are published in *Proceedings of 13th annual International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies*–EDULEARN21 (Kacane and Kovzele) and in *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* (Korolova et al.).

In her article "Semantics of Religious Festivals in Latvian Childhood Memories in the 20th Century", Anita Stašulāne analyses the autobiographical prose of writers representing different historical periods of the previous century (Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš (1877-1962), Anna Brigadere (1861-1933), Jānis Klīdzējs (1914-2000), Vizma Belševica (1931-2005)) and the semantic fields of religious festivals, which thus allows retracing the transformations of the semiotics of childhood memories dictated by the epoch. The article "Representation of Christmas in Childhood Memory Narratives: Reflecting and Revisiting the Past" by Ilze Kacane and Oksana Kovzele (forthcoming in *Forum for World Literature Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2022) analyses Latvian writer Diāna Skaidrīte Varslavāne's (1932) two childhood memory narratives—*Cilvēks spēlējas ar lāčiem* [Human Plays with Bears] (1975) and *Dzērvinīki* [Cold and Red Feet] (2001), which by depicting World War II and first postwar years, as well as by re-visiting the final years of independence period in the south-eastern part of Latvia—the Latgale region ("the golden epoch"), allow tracing changes in celebrating religious holidays and Christmas in particular, one of today's highest-ranked holidays in the region (Stasulane 2021), and discover strategies for

maintaining one's "self," including religiosity and spirituality in unfavourable historical circumstances and post-traumatic situations. By reflecting on the individual and collective history, the author reveals a crucial place of memory in human's life as memory is "a key to personal, social, and cultural identity" (Kenny 420). The article "The 'Alien' within 'One's Own' in the Twenty-first Century Latvian Literature (on the Material of Dace Rukšāne's Novel *Russian Skin*) by Oksana Kovzele and Ilze Kacane focuses on the transformation of woman's identity under the impact of political and social changes. The theme of festivities in the novel published in 2020 helps reveal relationships between "one's own" and "the alien" and is significant for depicting emotional identification with "others" and delving into self-identification processes. Although the literary work by a contemporary Latvian writer Dace Rukšāne (1969) demonstrates a reconstructed view of the social reality and reveals controversy over "history" and "cultural wars," it also offers the present-day understanding of identity as a changeable social phenomenon and inner expression.

We would like to express our gratitude to the editors of the journal *Forum for World Literature Studies* for the opportunity to present some of our findings in this special issue and hope they will provide a more profound conception of the development tendencies of Latvian culture and literature.

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Urban vs Rural in Latvian Fiction of the Early Twentieth Century: Antons Austriņš

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Abstract   Man and one's space of existence are in interaction with each other. Space influences and determines the peculiarities of one's perception. But man is also looking for a suitable organic place of existence. This peculiarity also applies to literary characters. At the end of the nineteenth century, European culture underwent rapid changes due to industrialization, the development of communication system, and urbanization. Many philosophers point to the spiritual crisis, describing which they make use of such concepts as culture, civilization, and nature. The opposition of the urban and the rural environments is becoming more pronounced, and the urban environment is perceived as contradictory and chaotic, while opportunities to harmonize the personality experiencing crisis are being sought in the rural environment.

The problem of relations between the urban and the rural environments entered also Latvian literature, it was addressed by such well-known authors as Jānis Akuraters, Fricis Bārda, Edvards Virza, Viktors Eglītis, Antons Austriņš, Andrejs Upītis and others. The aim of the present study is to reveal the peculiarities of the dichotomy of the urban and the rural environments in the Latvian fiction of the first decades of the twentieth century, by using one Latvian author's writings as an example. Such an approach allows not only for considering the peculiarities of the depiction of the urban and the rural environments, but also for analysing the subjective and objective reasons determining the emergence of these peculiarities. It is important that the prose of Antons Austriņš (1884–1934) features emphasized spatiality: descriptions of the space are detailed and reflect the peculiarities of the characters' personalities. The peculiarities of the spatial structure and the semantics of Austriņš' prose were determined both by the European cultural context (philosophers' findings, works by other authors) and individual peculiarities, which, in turn, stemmed from life experience and environmental, educational, family, psychological and emotional peculiarities. The depiction of the urban and the rural

environments in Austriņš' prose has a wide semantic spectrum, which develops in the interaction of the spheres of nature, civilization and culture. The most important feature of Austriņš' perception of the world is the ambiguity of the assessment of phenomena. Nature, civilization and culture exist in close interaction, but there is often a contrast between these spheres, which is related to the human concept of Austriņš' prose. The author's characters are torn apart by contradictions, so they cannot find a suitable place to live: in a rural environment, they see opportunities to harmonize their personalities, but they cannot stay there for long and tend to a city where cultural and civilization interact.

Author Alina Romanovska, Dr.philol., is a researcher of the Centre of Cultural Research of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences at Daugavpils University, Latvia. Her research interests are comparative literature, Latvian literary history and identity.

Introduction

In the second half of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century Europe, significant changes took place in various spheres of life. Industrialization, the improvement of the transport system and various changes in the society became the main features of modernization. The changes affected also the territory of Latvia, the number of various manufacturing enterprises, especially factories, increased in the largest towns, particularly in Riga. The development of industry and transport changed both the environment and people's everyday life. Forests were being cut down, railway lines were built in the territory of Latvia in the second half of the nineteenth century, and new environs appeared in the towns. New machinery and other factory equipment often were unsafe and endangered workers' health and lives.

Significant changes in the development of the society were brought by new inventions in the circulation of news. In 1852, the Rīga-Bolderāja line of electromagnetic telegraph, and in 1882, the first telephone exchange in Rīga with 53 subscribers started operating. Travel became more accessible, the spread of the printed word expanded, and restrictions and prohibitions related to position in the society and gender decreased.

The development and industrialization of large towns facilitated the growth of urbanization. In the territory of Latvia, urbanization began in the 2nd half of the nineteenth century. It had been influenced by the development of industry and transport, especially that of the rail network and ports, as well as the abolition of serfdom

and greater freedom of movement for the rural population. Rapid urban development began in Latvia. In 1900–1914, the process of urbanization proceeded rapidly and the proportion of town dwellers in that period increased from 7.3% to 40.3% (Krišjāne). The population of Riga, the capital of Latvia, reached nearly a sevenfold increase during that period.

Changes in the life of the society caused a philosophical reflection on them and were reflected in culture. Fiction as part of culture is an indicator and creator of spiritual search and also tends to display and reflect on the current events of its time. According to Malcolm Bradbury and James W. McFarlane, "the literature of experimental Modernism which emerged in the last years of the nineteenth century.. was an art of cities, especially of the polyglot cities which, for varios historical reasons, had acquired high activity and great reputation as centres of intellectual and cultural exchange" (96).

Depicting the pace of their characters' lives in a peculiar historical period, writers reproduced not only their own subjective but also the nation's collective understanding of the time portrayed from a contemporary perspective, subordinating narrative to certain artistic conceptions (Romanovska 2020). Fictional text provides a subjective worldview and is subject to a certain artistic task; however, the images and events reflect the author's perception of the world and the collective perception and the ideas formed in it (Romanovska 2021). The issue of the relationship between the urban and the rural environments (civilization and nature / urban and rural) became an important object of reflection in the late nineteenth—early twenieth century. In the 1920s and 1930s, Oswald Spengler's work *The Decline of the West* gained great popularity, in which the philosopher points to the emerging crisis situation. Spengler considers that when a Culture enters its late stage it becomes a "Civilization" [Zivilisation], a petrified body characterized in the modern age by technology, imperialism, and mass society, which he expected to fossilize and decline from the 2000s onward (Engels 3–21). According to the philosopher, the world of culture is characterized by spirituality, but the civilization does not know it, because thinking in monetary terms can generate only money (Spengler 10–15), but not spirituality. Spengler believes that the world is degrading, the triumph of civilization is inevitable, the world of culture will be destroyed, therefore human existence in such a doomed world is tragic, but this tragedy is felt only by special, chosen people— creative personalities—poets, musicians, artists, etc. The essence of any civilization lies in atheism: when myth dies and the unity of art disintegrates, incredulity is introduced, and culture dies. Thus, the urbanization of the modern world and the technological nature of the urban environment, according to the representatives of

the twentieth century humanities, caused the crisis of spirituality. The perception of the nineteenth century as the era of crisis, i.e. of civilization, is supported also in the works of Auguste Comte, Rudolf Christoph Eucken, Georg Simmel, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, Vyacheslav Solovyov, Leo Tolstoy, Andrei Bely, and others. These authors' ideas contradict the positivist views of civilization as the highest degree and most complete stage of cultural development. Looking for a way-out of the situation, nature is mentioned as a peculiar harmonizing sphere, as opposed to the urban environment of civilization.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the problematic issues of the relations between civilization, culture and nature started to be addressed also in Latvian literature. Jānis Akuraters, Fricis Bārda, Edvards Virza, Viktors Eglītis, Antons Austriņš, Andrejs Upītis, and others developed the oppositions of nature—civilization, culture—civilization, nature—culture. The aim of the present study is to reveal the peculiarities of the dichotomy of the urban and the rural environments in the Latvian fiction of the first decades of the twentieth century, by using one Latvian author's writings as an example. Such an approach allows for considering not only the peculiarities of the depiction of the urban and the rural environments, but also analysing the subjective and objective reasons for the emergence of these peculiarities.

Peculiarities of the Description of Space in Antons Austriņš' Writings

Antons Austriņš' literary oeuvre is versatile, rich, and demands a second thought as to its evaluation; he has produced poetry, short prose fiction, plays, feuilletons, and a novel-chronicle. Besides significant works that possess constant value in the history of Latvian literature, there are works that seem to be doomed to oblivion. The response of the writer's contemporaries testifies to the fact that Austriņš' oeuvre was a significant part of the culture process of his time. The present study will focus mainly on prose fiction, as it is characterized by particular poetics of the description of space. He describes any event not in the abstract, focusing only on the sphere of emotions and feelings, but makes it spatially precise. Austriņš perceives any place to be described as a carrier of a certain sense, the place of events often signals events that are expected in the near future, and forms a unified whole with the character's perception of the world. Objects, indoor decoration, furniture are closely related to man, one's inner energy, emotional experiences, etc. In this regard the story *Ēnu dzīras* [Feast of Shadows] is significant. Its main character Anita N. has lost touch with her home, she has arrived in Riga and perceives it as a dead city (Austriņš 88), Anita's own perception of life is similar to that of a dead person—life is meaningless, lonely and grey. Describing the space of Anita's home and her perception of

space, Austriņš reveals the main character's personality (89).

For Austriņš, space has a very important symbolic, metaphorical meaning. Any movement in space is important for the character, first of all, because it implies the access to another space and it is related to a completely different, possibly opposite perception of the world. Secondly, since travel is also significant as an independent category, it gives the character the opportunity to feel like a searcher, a person who will never reach perfection. The character's desire to be on the move, dissatisfaction with the space of permanent dwelling characterizes a contradictory character with divided consciousness, who aspires to find inner harmony. Ideally, the human nature, personality should be in harmony with home. Austriņš presents the metaphor of such existence in the story *Klēts priekšā* [In Front of the Granary]. The main character of the story, when remembering his happy childhood, considers the harmony of his personality and his place of birth to be one of the most important features of such a childhood. Being a child, the character felt that "each building attracts its own man" (Austriņš 166), the mother's personality in his consciousness was associated with the granary, Zane—with the kettle-shed, the grandfather—with the threshing barn. This connection of a particular building with a certain personality in the main character's perception grows into the metaphor of the native place and personality's harmony.

The spatial system of Austriņš' prose is heterogeneous, it consists of separate spatial elements, which are of different emotional and conceptual loads. In the writer's prose fiction, one can distinguish spatial units that are essential to his artistic consciousness and that have acquired a certain emphasis and metaphorical meaning in the context of all his creative work. These are spaces related to border consciousness—road, prison, station, etc. spaces whose conceptual load is perceived by the writer as particularly acute. These are spaces where different, often contradictory topoi with their respective ethical, aesthetic and cultural systems are juxtaposed and compared. Complete understanding of the metaphorical meaning of these spaces is possible only by taking into account the work as a whole and bearing in mind the facts of Austriņš' biography. The most essential metaphors that reflect human existence in the modern world are the road and the prison. These two spaces are related to the category of personality's freedom. In the spatial sense, they are mutually exclusive, as the road provides for relative freedom of movement and openness of space, and thus a sense of spiritual freedom, but the prison restricts personal freedom and is associated with seclusion. However, in the metaphorical meaning, which is much more emphasized in Austriņš' prose, the road and the prison complement each other and interact to show the human situation in the modern world. The se-

miotics of the road and the prison in Austriņš' prose is influenced by the general metaphorical meaning of these chronotopes, which has developed in the European literary tradition. Mikhail Bakhtin points out that the significance of the chronotope of the road in literature is immense: rarely are there works that do not have any variation of the motif of the road, but many works are built directly on the chronotope of the road, meetings and adventures (Bahtin 248). In the chronotope of the road, time merges with space, they become united, which is why the metaphorization of the road is so rich. The metaphor of the prison is just as rich as that of the road.

In Austriņš' prose, the relation of road to the idea of the flow of time is relatively minimal, as is often found in world literature. Austriņš' characters are people without home who, once having left their native homes, very rarely return there, but if it happens, then this visit is associated with the end of the life path, their inability to find a way-out of the existing tragic situation. Native homes remain an abstract idyll of the past without any possibility to return there. The characters have preserved their roots that are related to their belonging to a certain place of origin and a sense of national identity; although, by their way of life, they are to be considered the types of wanderers prevalent in modernism. The road is their element: "On the way all minds are sharpened, perception revives, vision multiplies and taste develops" (Austriņš 389). The author's overall spatial system consists of the descriptions of countries travelled by various characters. It is noteworthy that the writer has depicted only those countries that he has travelled himself; for that time, the geography of his prose is relatively wide: Latvia, Russia, Finland, Italy, Spain.

Austriņš' descriptions of spaces are not only emotionally very saturated and conceptually loaded, but also very concrete and precise. The cities he describes are very finely structured—the descriptions enable one to create an accurate map of the city that corresponds to reality. Sometimes such factuality—accurate street signs, descriptions of the place of the event—seems unjustified in the text and is not essential, because it does not bring additional connotative information. Actual street and house names are neutral, over time they have developed the only function—to indicate the exact location of the event. However, the desire to accurately describe the place of the event testifies to the shrewd spatial perception of the writer's consciousness—he tries to assign meaning to any place, any movement in space. This is one of the most essential features in Austriņš' artistic consciousness. He tries to understand the essence of any space described—be it a city or an insignificant village, to reveal its secret. The names of streets, houses and city districts are closely related to the spirit of the city itself, its secret. Nikolay Anciferov points out that "each city has its own style of these names, which is determined by the genius of the city"

(Anciferov 40). The names of the city streets tell about its topography, history, mythology, and people's habits. These names are the language of the city. The names are also important as a documentary source.

In some works, a factually accurate description is one of Austriņš' aims. Literary scholars Vera Vāvere and Ludmila Sproģe hold that, based on Austriņš' documentary descriptions, some real events of the author's own biography can be restored (182).

Nature—Culture—Civilization

In Austriņš' creative work, there appears the third component in the dichotomy of the urban and the rural environments—culture, which is indispensable for the successful existence of any personality. The theme of the relationship between nature, culture and civilization is very important in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century modernists' works. Authors, who are aware of the spiritual crisis and try to depict and understand its causes in their works, address also the issue of the relationship between nature, culture and civilization, respectively, the dichotomies nature—civilization, culture—civilization come to the fore. Depending on the ethical and aesthetic priorities of a particular author, one of these oppositions is emphasized. The view of the opposition nature—civilization has older roots in the history of culture than the opposition culture—civilization. The relationship between nature and civilization is one of the most common themes in European culture, it is represented in the Renaissance and the eighteenth century, but it becomes especially relevant in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. In each culture, the treatment of the relationship between nature and civilization has its own peculiarities and nuances, dominant positions are different. The opposition of culture and civilization was raised by German philosophers in the nineteenth century, however, it did not resonate as widely as the opposition of nature and civilization. However, apart from German philosophers and men of letters, the relationship between culture and civilization was also addressed by the Russian creative intelligentsia—this issue is raised in the theoretical views and works of Vladimir Solovyov, Andrei Bely, Aleksandr Blok and other authors who have significantly influenced Latvian literature. The opposition of nature and civilization more often than the opposition of culture and civilization finds a specific spatial representation, because nature is related to rural space, civilization—to urban space. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the dichotomy nature—culture also appeared as a variant of the dichotomy nature—civilization. Both, the sphere of culture and that of civilization are related to the urban world. In the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, the opposition

between urban and rural areas, which mainly emphasizes the differences in social life, acquires a new quality. It gets expanded, generalized, and is treated as the opposition of nature and civilization. The opposition of culture and civilization is more abstract, these spheres may not always be related to a particular space, more often they are associated with the different, contradictory features of one space, thus, for instance, St. Petersburg often has both distinctive peculiarities of civilization and specific features of a cultural space.

Austriņš, acutely feeling the tragedy of the turn of the century and the loss of spirituality, emphasizes the world of nature, in which he sees opportunities for the renewal of spirituality, but for the harmonious construction of the world the cultural sphere is also necessary. By combining the spheres of nature and culture, it is possible to create a harmonious world. Civilization, on the other hand, is opposed to both culture and nature. In the early twentieth century, civilization is dominant as the basis for structuring the world, it is associated with the dominance of technicalization and the loss of spirituality. By distinguishing the segments of nature, culture and civilization in the spatial structure of Austriņš' prose, the characters' views on ethical, aesthetic and cultural values are disclosed. Thus, taking into account the typological parallels, literary genetic relations, autobiographical conditions and the general context of the writer's prose, the concept of Austriņš' man can be deduced.

When depicting a specific space—Riga, St. Petersburg, Latgale (one of Latvia's regions), etc., Austriņš emphasizes the dominance of some particular sphere, for example, Latgale is treated as a space of nature, Riga and St. Petersburg are mostly treated as spaces of civilization, where culture is sometimes given bright depiction. The issue of the relationship between nature, culture and civilization in Austriņš' prose is addressed also in terms of time, i.e. the past is treated as the time of nature, the present—as the time of civilization, but the perspective of time appears minimally. This is probably related to the peculiarity of Austriņš' consciousness, namely, the dominance of spatial perception, which clearly appears in his prose fiction.

In Austriņš' prose, the relations between nature and civilization and culture and civilization are depicted, in some works, for example, in the collection of stories *Māras zemē* [In the Land of Māra], *Puiškāns* [Boy], the solution of the relations between nature and civilization comes to the fore, in others, for example, in the novelette *Kaspars Glūns* and the collection of stories *Vērpetē* [In Wirlpool] the dominant is the problem of relations between culture and civilization. Thus, Austriņš in his creative work employs the most topical ideas of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Western European and Russian thinkers and writers. He analyses how nature, culture and civilization affect the human personality and strives to answer

the question of how it is possible to harmonize man and the world.

Austriņš' characters are torn by contradictions, they travel, search for spiritual harmony and define in their consciousness certain places they have seen as spaces of nature, culture or civilization. Examples of spaces of nature are Latgale and Vecpiebalga, the synthesis of spaces of culture and civilization is presented in the depiction of Riga, St. Petersburg, Spain, and Italy. The oppositions of nature and civilization, culture and civilization in Austriņš' prose are not valued unequivocally. Thus, for instance, Latgale as a distinct space of nature is interpreted positively, but it is not the best place of dwelling for the main character, therefore it does not give him a sense of absolute spiritual harmony.

Austriņš' characters can experience absolute harmony in a space dominated by attributes and features of culture. The space of culture in Austriņš' model of the world is incompatible with the space of nature, geographically it is located in the city, but the city is also a space of civilization, the main character feels the influence of both culture and civilization, therefore no city can be perceived as a harmonious space. Among all the spaces depicted by Austriņš, the exceptions are Italy and Spain, which are treated as lands of high culture, but the characters' lives there cannot be harmonious, because these countries are not their homeland. But in Latvia, in the homeland, no space can be perceived as appropriate for the character, that is, absolutely harmonious.

The sphere of nature in Austriņš' prose is represented by two spaces—Vecpiebalga and Latgale. Nature is opposed to civilization as the positive to the negative. The idealization of the space of nature is topical in almost all of Austriņš' works, in which some natural phenomena are depicted. However, the space of nature—Vecpiebalga, Latgale or any other place cannot become the character's space of permanent dwelling, because it does not comply with all the character's wishes. Since Austriņš has explicitly projected his worldview to the characters, extracts of his two letters to Jānis Priedis can serve as an explanation of the perception of the space of nature in the writer's texts:

> I like rural life with its peace. You don't have to hurry anywhere. In the morning, after having coffee, you go for a walk for half an hour or so, then come back to the room, sit at the table and write or read, listening to the wind rattling the shutters behind the window and whistling around the corner of the house. Thus the day passes. In the dusk you can sit at the burning woodstove. The moon appears on the horizon—the Gypsy sun. The world gets wrapped in the moonlight. Dream with your eyes half-open. (*Austriņa vēstule Priedim* 28 Jan-

uary 1913).

> You see, living in the countryside, a person falls very much behind that "spirit
> of time", arriving in the city, he hurries to the theatre, concerts and an exhibi-
> tion of paintings, which has just been opened so that he can more or less catch
> up. Of course, I also met my fellows and friends… (*Austriņa vēstule Priedim*
> 19 March 913)

These two extracts reveal the specifics of Austriņš' perception of the space of nature, which determines the concept of his works.

The particularity of the image of Latgale in Austriņš' prose was largely deter-mined by the tradition of depicting the countryside in Latvian literature. In Latvian culture, the countryside and natural landscape are perceived as the basis of national identity, therefore it has been so widely represented in literature. The specifics of the depiction of the natural landscape in fiction are rooted in the folklore tradition and are an integral part of the model of the world in any work of art until the beginning of the twentieth century. Particular attention to depictions of the national natural landscape was paid by Romantics of the 1860s—1880s.

"The description of the landscape, as well as the interest in it can be found most in poetry (lyric or epic). Andrejs Pumpurs and Auseklis are especially con-cerned with this issue" (Kursīte 359). They described both the nature of the mythi-cal antiquity of the Latvian people and the landscape of their time. Biruta Gudriķe holds that "the focus of Young Latvians on the interests of peasants with the empha-sized human self-esteem of the farmer promoted the development of Latvian litera-ture towards the realm of realism" (141). In addition to the tradition of depicting the countryside, Austriņš' perception of Latgale was also influenced by his personal life experience, as, being a refugee, he found an opportunity to hide in the region and Latgale became his second home. Austriņš links the origin of the Latvian people and the idea of spiritual rebirth exactly with Latgale.

A peculiar synthesis of culture and civilization in Austriņš' prose can be ob-served in the depiction of cities (Riga, St. Petersburg). Austriņš ideas about the city have been influenced by the general cultural situation both in Europe, i.e. the emphasis on the antinomy of culture and civilization at the turn of the twentieth century, and the literary, cultural and economic-political situation in Latvia, namely, the growing role of cities, the development of technologies, urbanization, etc. In the first half of the twentieth century, depictions of various cities began to occupy an increasingly important place in Latvian literature; there appeared urban motifs, thus

the opposition rural—urban becomes topical both in literature as a whole and in the works by individual authors. Researchers point out that "though city life had been reflected in the works of many Latvian writers already at the end of the nineteenth century, one can speak about real urban poetry only beginning with the 1910s, when, influenced by modern poetry in the world, also Latvian poets addressed urban motifs" (Sproģe and Vāvere 174). The contradictory nature of the city, its internal struggle between culture and civilization characterize the divided consciousness of an individual living in it and thus becomes the organic space of existence of this individual.

The city in Austriņš' prose is an object of characters' aspiration, it attracts people, despite the fact that it is contradictory, incomplete, and chaotic. None of Austriņš' characters stay for life in some ideal place, they stay there only for a short period, slightly harmonizing themselves, but then they make their move again and return to the city.

The most important feature of all the cities depicted by Austriņš is their contradicting nature. By destroying nature, the city is unable to survive as a phenomenon of culture, it is taken over by technicalization processes that turn "culture into civilization". "Nature parks, so popular back in the eighteenth century, gradually acquire the features of a museum or botanic garden, and "green spaces" mostly play a solely functional role. The city is no longer adjusted to the surroundings and adapted to the waters" (Šuvajevs 28). Most evidently the contradiction between nature and the city is manifested in the image of St. Petersburg, the brightest symbol of this contradiction is the Neva with its banks in granite.

The contradiction has become the internal regularity of the conditions necessary for the existence of the city. A harmonious city is unimaginable, it would be contrary to its specifics. Urban space serves as an indicator of the state of the world culture. Šuvajevs points out that "today's problems are manifested most" in the city. (Šuvajevs 24) In Austriņš' prose, there are no characters—city dwellers whose consciousness and spirit would be in harmony. Harmony should be sought in nature, ideally there must be a balance between culture and nature, which Austriņš' characters feel only for a short time. The urban space depicted by Austriņš is much more diverse than the rural space. The city is changing, it is developing and one can feel the rhythm of life in it. The countryside is static and unchanging, therefore there are many similarities in the representation of different spaces of nature (Latgale, Vecpiebalga, Russian countryside), the space of nature is treated as an embodiment of the idyll of the past. Austriņš' cities are contradictory, it is the only peculiarity of the description of the urban space that is characteristic of all cities and also determines their difference, each

city has its own face, its own particularity, its own individuality.

Conclusion

In the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, industrialization, the development of the transport and communication system and urbanization marked the emergence of a new type of cultural modernism. People's everyday life and the environment were undergoing changes. Those changes brought about a philosophical reflection of the situation, when many creative personalities pointed to the emergence of a crisis situation of the era and personality. In search of its causes, philosophers turned to the analysis of the development of human history and the awareness of various stages and cycles, as a result of which the concept of civilization became topical. The nineteenth century idea of cultural decline was emphasized, indicating that culture has passed into the stage of development of civilization. The juxtaposition of the urban and the rural environments in the works of the authors of that time became one of the possibilities to reflect the situation of the spiritual crisis. In the rural environment (nature), on the other hand, opportunities were sought to harmonize the personality experiencing the crisis.

Austriņš' creative work in miniature reflects the processes taking place in Latvian literature in the early twentieth century. An important feature of his prose is the emphasis on spatiality: the descriptions of the space are detailed and reflect the peculiarities of the characters' personalities.

The peculiarities of the spatial structure and semantics of Austriņš' prose were determined both by the European cultural context (philosophers' findings, works by other authors) and by the peculiarities of his individual perception, which, in turn, stemmed from life experience and environmental, educational, family, psychological and emotional peculiarities. The depiction of the urban and the rural environments in Austriņš' prose has a wide semantic spectrum, which develops in the contact of the spheres of nature, civilization, and culture. The most essential feature of Austriņš' perception of the world is the ambiguity of the assessment of phenomena.

Nature, civilization and culture exist in close interaction, though the opposition of these spheres also often appears, which is represented in different variants: nature—civilization, nature—culture, culture—civilization. Austriņš' characters are torn apart by contradictions, therefore they cannot find a suitable place to live: they see opportunities to harmonize their personalities in the rural environment, but they cannot stay there for long and tend to a city where there is the interaction of peculiarities of culture and civilization.

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What They Laugh at in *The Town of N*: Laughing Situations in L. Dobychin's Prose

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Abstract   The literary scholars who study the artistic world of L. Dobychin's novel *The Town of N* noticed that in Dobychin's world people, things, natural phenomena exist discretely, disorganized, in continuous chaotic movement. This Chaos recognizes only one, very conditional, border-the border of the Town of N. Like any space, the Town of N contains comic and tragic elements. The nature of the comic in the novel has remained little examined until now.The article analyzes the laughter situations that are present in the novel. The answer to the question—what are people laughing at in the Town of N? –, on the one hand, allows us to consider the socio-cultural situation in the county towns of the Russian Empire on the example of Dvinsk (nowadays—Daugavpils), on the other hand, to analyze the evolution of the consciousness of the protagonist of the novel. In the novel laughter situations are divided into two large groups—everyday laughter situations associated with the daily life of the Town of N and literary laughter situations associated with the comprehension of literary texts that define the consciousness of the era of the early twentieth century. It is also important to contrast the culture of laughter of children and the culture of laughter of adults. The adolescent crisis of the protagonist manifests itself primarily in a change of life orientations, in the destruction of myths. Laughter becomes a kind of destruction and overcoming of the old system of values, a factor that accompanies the hero from the world of childhood to the world of adults.

Keywords: culture of laughter; comic; Dvinsk; Town; childhood; Russian literature

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Introduction

The novel by Leonid Dobychin *The Town of N*, published in 1935, has become the subject of a comprehensive analysis of literary critics in the last thirty years. The novel was reprinted several times, including historical and literary commentary, was translated into English (Dobychin), and then into many other languages of the world. In 2020, the novel was first fully translated into Latvian (Dobičins). There are a huge number of interpretations of the writer's artistic heritage. Scientific conferences and events devoted to L. Dobychin are held in Daugavpils (Latvia) and other cities of the world. We can talk about the existence of a fairly wide range of interpretations of L. Dobychin's creative work from avant-garde to satire. In the monograph "The Prose of Leonid Dobychin: Marginalities of Russian Modernism" T. Shekhovtsova pays special attention to the semantics of the town, defining the place of action of the novel "*The Town of N* as a town-myth" (Shekhovtsova 120).

The novel is set in the conditional town of N, in which Dvinsk (nowadays Daugavpils) is easily detected—the place where the writer's childhood passed. The realities and loci of Dvinsk and its environs at the beginning of the twentieth century are recognizable in the text, many characters have real prototypes (Belousov). In the novel, Dobychin, with the help of his hero, creates a myth about the town, represented simultaneously in real (temporal) and sacred (timeless) dimensions. The real, everyday world is presented in the novel quite accurately. The chronicle narration of the hero reveals the author's montage vision, his logic. In the artistic world of *The Town of N* there is no exact dating; there is no direct indication of the date when this or that event takes place. However, the dating of events described can be completely reconstructed thanks to the introduction of real historical happenings into the narrative fabric: the Russo-Japanese war, the events of the Russian revolution, Gogol's centenary, etc. In addition, many episodes of *The Town of N* are associated with memorable and festive dates of the Orthodox calendar. The writer presents the hero-narrator with facts from his own biography.

It can be determined that the action of the novel begins on October 24 (according to the New Style—November 6), 1901, the day when the feast day of Mary, the Mother of God, and the Mother of Sorrows is celebrated. The last historical event

mentioned in the novel is the death of Leo Tolstoy—November 7 (according to the New Style – November 20), 1910 (chapter 32). The novel ends in the summer of 1911, when the main character, like once Leonid Dobychin himself, graduates from *Realschule* of Dvinsk and leaves the town forever.

Methodology

Literary critics have repeatedly drawn attention to the visual principle and its significance in the worldview of the young hero (V. Bakhtin, S. Shindin, V. Erofeev). The French researcher Annick Morard at one time turned to the problem of the interaction between the visual, verbal and acoustic in the novel especially highlighting Dobychin's technique when the verbal is perceived by the hero as an element of acoustic or visual space. The visual and the acoustic are gradually becoming the two pillars of the writer's creative process (Morard). In this regard, it is rather curious to analyse the category of 'laughter', which combines the acoustic and visual. The nature of the comic in the work of Dobychin was explored by Kim Dzhun Sok.

Culture of laughter is a term that is widely used by researchers of the world of comic and laughter (M. Bakhtin, D. Likhachev, A. Panchenko and many others). Culture of laughter is, first of all, a collective concept; by its nature, it is a pronounced sociocultural phenomenon that performs a communicative function. Through the prism of culture of laughter, a person receives this or that information.

Being a philosophical category, laughter is one of the most important cultural concepts, one of the central concepts of art, and is also a psychological phenomenon, thus, the comprehensive analysis of laughter makes it possible to better understand a particular literary image.

Numerous studies of the category of laughter suggest that laughter is an integral part of society. Through it, culture can present worldview guidelines and cultural values. If we generalize the existing definitions of laughter and highlight its essential characteristics, we can say that laughter is a situational emotional reaction of a person (behavioural, mimic, verbal) to absurdities, illusions, contradictions of life circumstances and their exposure, cleansing society of obsolete ideas (Likhacheva 136-137). Laughter situations in Dobychin's novel are multivariate, but they can be divided into two thematic groups: (1) everyday laughter situations and (2) literary laughter situations, as well as into age-related ones: (1) culture of laughter of adults and (2) culture of laughter of children and adolescents.

Humour in all countries and at all times tried to reveal the elementary and spir-

itless in a person, to show the similarity of an "elementary person" (layman) with a thing and the similarity of a thing with a spiritless person. The narrator (a teenage boy) reads a huge number of books (and these are adult books, "not for his age"), but he does not acquire knowledge from these books about the interconnection of phenomena and does not project them onto the world around him.

The present research is dedicated to identifying the originality of "laughter situations" in the fiction of L. Dobychin. Particular attention is paid to the study of the ways and techniques of representing "laughter situations" in the novel.

Laughter Situations in the Novel

Let us turn to the frequency of the use of the lexemes "laughter" and "cry", as well as the lexemes included in these two semantic fields in the novel *The Town of N*. The examples of the lexemes are taken from the original text (in Russian).

Semantic Field "Laughter"	Semantic Field "Cry"
Hihikat' [giggle]– 15	Rydat' [sob] – 4
Ulybat'sja [smile] – 15	Plakat' [cry/weep] – 3
Posmejat'sja [laugh at] – 13	Sljozy [tears]– 2
Smejat'sja [laugh]—11	Vsplaknut' [have a little cry]– 1
Smeh [laughter/laugh]– 2	
Smeshnoj [funny] – 2	
Posmeivat'sja [chuckle] – 1	
Pohohatyvat' [have a laugh] – 1	
Hohotat' [shout with laughter]–1	

The semantic field of "Laughter" in the artistic world of *The Town of N* dominates the semantic field "Cry" (sixty-one lexemes against ten). Some attention should be paid to the small number of lexemes in the semantic field "Cry," even though death is often in the sight of the hero-narrator. In total, ten deaths are mentioned in the novel, and five times the hero becomes a participant or observer of the funeral processions (the first death is the death of his father preceded by his mum's dream in which the ghost of the deceased previous tenant of the house appears, the last death is the death of Leo Tolstoy).

Despite such a pronounced dominant of the category of laughter, it should be noted that during the first third of the novel, laughter is practically not represented. In many ways, this can be explained by the fact that the narrator's perception of

the surrounding world is based not on verbal, but on visual criteria. The hero is too young to fully perceive and understand the conversation of adults. Laughter situations increase as the hero grows up, with his active communication with peers and an assessment of the adult world. In comic situations in Dobychin's novel, which can be divided into previously mentioned two thematic groups (everyday laughter situations and literary laughter situations), the age of the characters becomes extremely important. The novel emphasizes the border between culture of laughter of adults and culture of laughter of children and adolescents.

Everyday Laughter Situations

Undoubtedly, the behaviour of the residents of the town on April 1 is related to the everyday laughter situation in the novel. "On the first of April we were free and set off to visit her. It was cheerful walking through the streets. "You have a worm on your head" people would try to trick one another" (Dobychin 28-29). At the heart of the everyday category of the comic is a contrast that manifests itself in the discrepancy between content and form, essence and manifestation, the expected state of affairs and the real one, which results in laughter. It is April 1 that allows to remove the existing border between the world of adults and the world of children. It is also important to note that this is the only case in the entire text of the novel when Dobychin directly indicates the exact date of the events taking place—April 1 [Chapter 10]. The first of April is not only the day of laughter or the Fool's Day in the European tradition, but, after the calendar reform in Soviet Russia, according to the new style, on April 1, N. Gogol's birthday is celebrated. Gogol's poem *Dead Souls* plays a special role in the hero's life. "Gogol's Town of N for the little story-teller is the embodiment of the ideal, the golden age of human relations. The hero correlates all the phenomena of reality with the realities of the Main Book [*Dead Souls*]. The spiritual town and the material town in which the boy lives are united by a common name and are reflected in each other, as two meanings of Gogol's Mir-gorod—the earthly town and the heavenly town, the Town of Peace, a synonym for heavenly Jerusalem" (Vajskopf 215).

Another variant of the everyday laughter situation in the novel is associated with the folkloric genre of anecdote (in English it is usually referred to as joke sto-ries). Distinctive features of anecdote as a genre of culture (anonymity, laconism, lack of canonical text, stereotyped artistic form and content, parody and theatrical-ity) are due to the specifics of the social environment that generates it and ensures its functioning in social time and space. As it is known, anecdote is one of the most fruitful genres of urban folklore. Anecdotes respond to painful, urgent problems of

society, covering almost all spheres of social life and, not least importantly, express the attitude of certain social strata, people's vision of the reality around them, as well as their attitude to it, thus being a kind of mirror of public consciousness.

"The gramophone sang couplets. Everyone liked the joke about the Jewish boy a lot, and they repeated it. "But it's a pity—said one guest—that science invented it so late: otherwise we would now be able to hear the voice of Jesus Christ, delivering sermons" (Dobychin 34). Many episodes in the novel conceal subtexts and symbolic meanings. In this fragment L. Dobychin creates a rather complex compositional structure of the narrative. The initial phrase—"the gramophone sang couplets"—is a kind of exposition. The second phrase becomes a rising action, the reader expects the denouement of which of the jokes about the Jewish boy caused a stir (no laughter) among those present that it was repeated twice. The third phrase seems to be connected not with the second, but with the first one, generating a comic effect—not for the narrator, but for the reader. Thus, provoking the appearance of laughter beginning outside the verbal textual structure. There are quite a few episodes arranged in this way in the novel. At the very beginning of the novel, *maman* and Alexandra Lvovna Lei repeatedly pronounce the phrase that "No, indeed—they were saying—it would be hard to find a place where this feast would be more to the point than in a prison" (Dobychin 3). For the narrator, who still accepts the statements of adults as true, there is nothing comic here, while for the reader the phrase that prison is the best place for a holiday will cause, if not laughter, then at least a smile.

Lack of fixation of laughter in a situation with a twice repeated joke may also indicate that the narrator did not notice the comic in the funny story, but could well perceive the actions pragmatically. It should also be noted that the novel takes place during the Jewish pogroms that swept across the Russian Empire. "A Jewess wearing a fringed shawl approached us. Don't—she said—beat that boy wearing the gray stockings. We laughed. Then we listened to a man in suspenders, who was sitting by a gate, play a horn" (Dobychin 52).

The behaviour of Jews on the eve of the Passover holiday seriously worries the residents of the town of N. "Today—announced Karmanova once, when I was staring out the window with Serge—is going to be "Fright Night"—and she advised us to go to the river and watch the Jews throng there to shake off their sins. Under Chaplinsky's protection we ran to the river. We laughed terribly. Chaplinsky told us that every spring little Christian boys vanish, and taught us how to show a "pig's ear". It was already just beginning to freeze" (Dobychin 37).

The motive of cannibalism is quite common in the folklore of the Slavs and Balts about ethnic neighbours, mainly about Jews (Amosova 38-52). In this frag-

ment the mythology of blood libel—"a terrible night" during which Christian boys disappear, —a typical example of an adult horror story for children, is combined with the playfully abusive nickname of Jews or Mohammedans associated with the prohibition to eat pork, as well as Chaplinsky's gesture, who taught the heroes of the novel to make pig's ear (folding the hem of clothes so that one gets an image of a pig's ear), generate the phenomenon of terrible laughter, in which metaphysical fear of the incomprehensible is combined with a comic beginning.

The everyday laughter principle of Dvinsk is also represented in the works of Vladimir Krymov, who in the book of memoirs *From the Writer's Storeroom* (*Iz kladovoj pisatjela*) cites an episode from his childhood illustrating the customs and entertainment of Dvinsk (the Russian province as a whole), giving a description of an open-air attraction (Krymov). It is almost impossible to imagine such a scene in the artistic world of *The Town of N*, although L. Dobychin also writes about the entertainment of the townspeople—visiting an agricultural exhibition, student balls; the urban space is filled with the sounds of town and military bands. The nature of laughter in L. Dobychin's work is fundamentally different from that of V. Krymov. In the fictional world of the novel, there is no marketplace, farce laughter or laughter caused by cheap practical jokes. More often the laughter in the *The Town of N* is muffled, almost intimate, as if connected with some secret accessible only to a narrow circle of initiates.

> Some grand lady sped past us, with a soldier on the coachbox. We glanced at each other and chuckled, and Serge taught me a ditty: Poor Madame Fou. (Dobychin 12)
>
> Along with two Pferdchens Serge had already begun studying at Gausmansha's to enter the first form in the spring. Serge told me that Gausmansha said "five fives". After laughing at this, we chatted together pleasantly in my room and didn't turn on the light. (Dobychin, 43)
>
> I left the requiem solemn. Olov suggested that we go to the market. I had never yet been there, and off we ran. We giggled and, holding on to one another, shoved. (Dobychin, 44)

In one of the episodes, the hero himself becomes the object of ridicule. This happens in a situation when the boy is trying to understand the peculiarities of the relationship between the sexes: after the classes he makes a detour on his way home to "explore" Podolskaya Street (now Stacijas Street). There he meets the bully Osip, who laughs at the sight of the hero. The reason for Osip's laugh becomes not entire-

ly clear to the narrator. The thing is that at that time brothels were located on this street (there are direct hints about it in the text of the novel). The appearance of a 12-13-year-old boy with an inquisitive and research gaze on this street causes laughter with an older comrade.

Laughter Literary Situations

Another group of comic situations is associated with the reading circle of both the narrator himself and other characters in the novel. Of course, the reading circle bears a vivid imprint of the era, which makes it possible to judge not only the content of the Dvinsk bookstores, but also the general literary background of the period. It is no coincidence that the first funny situation in *The Town of N* is associated with the name of Nikolai Alexandrovich Leykin. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Nikolai Leykin was already a recognized master of Russian humorous literature, while unusually prolific. To date, literary scholars say that 36 novels and novelettes, 11 plays, about 10 thousand short stories and prose sketches have been written by him. In many ways, thanks to Leykin, the genre of humorous scenes becomes one of the most widespread genres in all types of short prose at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (Shilovskih).

The falling asleep protagonist of the novel hears the muffled laughter of adults—"laughing in a whisper"—discussing an amusing episode from Leykin's. His work is not directly named, but the reader easily understands that they are talking about the book *Ours Abroad*, first published in 1890 and withstood 27 editions before the revolution, which testifies to the popularity and good text knowledge of the reading audience of that time. For his novel Dobychin selects only one episode from the vast Leykin's literary heritage—a scene from the adventures of the merchant Nikolai Ivanovich and his wife Glafira in Paris. The negligent travellers went for a walk around the city without bothering to remember either the name of the hotel or the street on which it was located, being sure that the cabman would understand where they needed to be delivered.

On the one hand, this episode emphasizes the existence of two worlds in the novel *The Town of N*—the world of an adult and a child, respectively, one of the markers separating these worlds, from the point of view of adults, is literature, while this division is absent in the mind of the protagonist. On the other hand, L. Dobychin needs Leykin to demonstrate a different approach to humour. Once K. Chukovsky introduced the term "Leykinschina" into circulation to denote crude vulgar humour. The wealthy shopkeepers and merchants in Leykin's narratives invariably carry a limited view of things, a false notion of etiquette. In this regard,

Dobychin demonstrates a fundamentally different approach. Already in one of the first reviews, Georgy Adamovich noted that in the The Town of N: "... laughter goes even further than the immediate subject of satire and undermines something more than this social order: poison penetrates into the general sense of life, irony eats away at everything" (Pisatel 185- 186). Dobychin's irony seems to be called upon to fight the world of standardized, normative forms. The writer ridicules and parodies all the manifestations of the cliché, template, standard, observed by him in life and literature.

The irony of Dobychin is manifested in the fact that the lexeme "laugh" occurs twice in the text of the novel, both times it refers to the title of Leonid Andreev's work The Red Laugh (Andreev). "From Asia the officers brought lots of all sorts of bric—a—brac. Kondratyev presented us with little knickknacks to hang on the wall. Where once Zaratustra had lain on his table, now The Red Laugh appeared. "He let us read it" (Dobychin 49).

"Have you read"—she said to me—Chukovsky: "Nat Pinkerton and Contemporary Literature"? This title excited my curiosity. I had read Pinkerton, but as to "contemporary literature," I thought that was something like "The Red Laugh." "I imagined vividly how they must laugh at that in this book. I wanted very much to read it" (Dobychin 96-97).

In the first case, the replacement of the handbook is quite curious, which is another allusion to Gogol's Dead Souls and Manilov's world, which is so close to the young hero of Dobychin's novel. One of the material, attributive characteristics of Manilov is "some book, bookmarked on page 14, which he has been constantly reading for two years" (Gogol' 14). Replacing the handbook in The Town of N is, to some extent, overcoming the Gogolian influence in the novel. Valery Meshkov, a researcher of Dobychin's heritage, once drew attention to the fact that "At the same time, one can see here a parody of Tynyanov's work itself. Literary continuity from Gogol to Dostoevsky occurs in the spiritual "microcosm" of the narrator. Dobychin's innovative technique lies in the ambiguity of the perception of the comic and the sublime, the serious and the funny, as is often the case in life" (Meshkov).

It is also fundamentally that in both episodes Dobychin does not directly name the author of the story Red Laughter Leonid Andreev. The story, which begins with the words "... madness and horror" and everything in it is put under the red colour of blood and death, becomes for Dobychin a sign of modern literature, a metaphor for "terrible laughter" that fills the country. It is no coincidence that the phrase The Red Laugh was used by Yakov Aronovich Gibiansky for the name of his magazine—an organ of public and political satire, which was published weekly in St. Pe-

tersburg and contained poems, notes, journalism, cartoons. Exactly under the same name in 1906 in Tomsk the only issue of the satirical magazine *The Red Laugh* was published, which was immediately banned by the censor (Zhiljakova).

In the second episode, *The Red Laugh* becomes a sign of contemporary literature, which must be rejected through ridicule. Here the hero is opposed to the teacher of literature Peredonov from F. Sologub's *The Petty Demon*, who, in a dispute with Nadezhda Vasilievna, declares: "I have read all good books before ... <...> I will not read what they are now composing" (Sologub).

As for the techniques that go back to Dostoevsky and were indicated by Tynyanov, Dobychin "persistently introduces literature into his works", his characters also often talk about literary works, the personalities of writers are in one way or another present in everyday life. Most often it looks like a parody device, and at the same time there is an ironic or comic subtext, there is that "second plan" that Tynyanov speaks about in relation to the parody (Meshkov).

The literary text determines the consciousness and behaviour of not only the protagonist, but also some other characters, the fact which also gives rise to comic situations. So Tusenka (her real name—Natalie) Siu, after the main character was introduced to her as "the son of a telegraph operator", suggested that the name of the main character (who has never been named by his first and last names like his mother and father) is a kind of citizen N having the surname Yat. "Serge told me that Tusenka, too, had arrived from the dacha. She—he laughed—thought that your surname was Yat. It turned out there's book *Chekhov*, in which telegraphists are hauled over the coals, and there's such a name there" (Dobychin 35).

Indeed, Chekhov has two works in which the named characters are present—the telegraph operator Ivan Mikhailovich Yat from the play *Wedding* (1890, 1902 with changes) and the telegraph worker Ivan Ivanovich Yat from the story *Wedding with a General* (1884, *Oskolki* magazine).

The transfer of the literary allusion to the real world evokes the laughter of the narrator's friend Serge. This episode, in my opinion, reflects L. Dobychin's attitude to the problem of correlation between reality and literary reality. An attempt to mechanically transfer the truth of life into artistic truth and vice versa to explain the phenomena of reality with literary images, in other words, write "everything as it was" and write about how it was in the authenticity of the only being and at the same time artistically can only cause laughter from those around. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Dobychin comes to the realization that "artistic truth" does not at all negate historical truth, but supplements it in those places where history has nothing to say.

Conclusions

Creating the artistic world of the novel, L. Dobychin could not ignore the category of the comic. The novel is replete with laughter situations.Understanding a particular laughter situation directly correlates with the age of the main character. The adolescent crisis manifests itself primarily in a change in life orientations, in the destruction of myths. Gradually, the hero changes not only literary preferences, but he also approaches to culture of laughter of adults.

In the appearance of the town, in which the sacred and the profane are combined, there are two types of laughter situations—everyday and literary ones. Everyday laughter situations are close to the folk laughter culture that persists within the boundaries of the county town of the Russian Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Literary laughter situations are designed to show the evolution of the hero's spiritual world. The acquisition of individuality, the awareness of the protagonist of his uniqueness becomes the main event of the *The Town of N*. The study of the category of laughter opens up new opportunities for a holistic and multifaceted understanding of the essence of L. Dobychin's prose, as well as the socio-cultural context.

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Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism in Latvian Press of Soviet Latvia: Reflections on the Detachment of Art from Life

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Abstract   Having originated on the threshold of Modernism, literary Aestheticism is a reaction against the objective perception of art, an affirmation of aesthetic subjectivity, and an expression of writer's cosmopolitan imagination that due to its "cosmopolitan ethos" prevented many national literatures from having an air of provincialism. A complete detachment from social concerns and the aestheticization of art, highlighted by employing a cosmopolitan style and new narrative forms, contributed to the depiction of cosmopolitan locations, international and metropolitan settings, cosmopolitan circles, "strangers" in the world of pleasures (Bohemianism), as well as cosmopolitan outlooks, experiences, and values. After the loss of national independence (1940), the development of Latvian literature was halted by the sovietization and ideological censorship of culture and art, which, demanding the reflection of social aspects of reality and typization in literature, turned against any manifestation of individualization. The paper is aimed at studying the attitudes to aesthetic cosmopolitanism in Soviet Latvia periodicals *Karogs* [Flag] and *Literatūra un Māksla* [Literature and Art] within the 1940-1950s—the period of time when the aesthetic component was rapidly losing its basic value and became the decisive means for educating the Soviet man. The research allows concluding that the distinctly negative attitude to aesthetic cosmopolitanism and to writers representing it was part of a great ideological struggle targeted against the West European avant-garde trends on the whole and writers—"renegades" in Latvia, without highlighting one specific trend or tendency but reducing them to the category of "-isms" harmful for the Soviet power, which do not show "the reality of flourishing life." The research has been carried out by applying cultural-historical method and content analysis.

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Introduction

For many decades and centuries, such terms as "cosmopolite," "cosmopolitan" and "cosmopolitanism" have been the centre of attention for thinkers, philosophers, and researchers of various disciplines. The concept of Greek origin in the meaning of a "world citizen" of "universal community" has also become a topic of investigation in literary studies where cross-cultural communication and openness to cross-border influences have been perceived as the means for enrichment of national literatures. According to Ulf Hannerz (2006), cosmopolitanism can be approached as the structure of the double: it has two faces and therefore is generally perceived as clusters of ideas where the first, namely culture, is related to interconnectedness in the culturally diverse world and the second, namely politics,—to the government and its laws and policies. Cultural dimension of cosmopolitanism is "a happy face" that not only enjoys "new sights, sounds and tastes, new people" (Hannerz 214), but by participating, learning and re-learning also feels enriched with aesthetic tools and materials to experiment and make something new and unique out of something old. There is some affinity between the conception of "the cultural face of cosmopolitanism" and that of intellectuals, including modernist writers and representatives of literary Aestheticism, striving for an absolute freedom of an artist and expressing a variety of cosmopolitan impulses embedded in a literary text by the writers' cosmopolitan imagination. Nowadays, due to people's engagement with cultural diversity on a daily level, every person may be perceived as a cultural cosmopolitan to some degree (Cicchelli et al.; Papastergiadis; Patell), however in some nations, who at some specific period of their history had been behind some literal and symbolic walls or "iron curtains," cosmopolitanism as a cultural phenomenon and aesthetic cosmopolite as an advocate of aesthetic subjectivity and

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artistic freedom were rejected and considered as rebellious opponents and political enemies of the system. The article is concerned with the investigation of the attitudes towards and interpretations of aesthetic cosmopolitanism in the press of the first two decades of Soviet era in Latvia (1940s-1950s) when due to radical political and historical changes the dynamics of Latvian cultural and literary processes was interrupted and greatly impacted by enhanced ideologization of art.

Literary Cosmopolitanism: Aestheticism

Fin de siècle as an important period of transition witnessed an extensive controversial debate about cosmopolitanism and contributed to the formation of local and global identities in an increasingly interconnected world. The literature of that period "became an important medium for simultaneously promoting and interrogating cosmopolitanism" (Evangelista 3) in the frame of such opposite positions as connectivity, belonging to the world, universalism vs. disconnection, non-belonging, nationalism and conveying the opinions that "patriotic and cosmopolitan sentiments cannot thrive on shared ground" (Evangelista 10). Literary modernity of the second half of the nineteenth century, seeking for various innovative forms of expression in art, protested against positivism, conservatism and realism. Relying on the philosophy of art that highlighted its intrinsic value, the representatives of Decadence, Aestheticism, Modernism, Symbolism and other avant-garde trends on their pathway to the renaissance of art followed Théophile Gautier's (1811-1872) coined slogan *l'art pour l'art*. They rejected art's political, didactic and utilitarian functions, perceived it as "the only real mode of individualism that the world has known" (Wilde 130), and imaginatively led individuals (and also nations) towards foreign spaces in their search for new identities. In their works (and sometimes in life), they looked at the prevalence of form over content and delved into expression of hedonism, Bohemian way of life, mysticism, decorativeness, erotic sensibility, and eccentricism to convey the idea that it is not the art that imitates life, but, on the contrary, life is the reflection of art.

These literary tendencies, including Aestheticism, preserving the homogeneity of their structure, simultaneously or consecutively "migrated" from one region and country to another, and in a direct or mediated way through other cultures entered into other national cultures transcending them, thus acquiring cosmopolitan characteristics. At the beginning of the twentieth century, i.e. with a shift of a couple of decades in comparison with the mature western literatures, the new Latvian literature, too, entered a rapid phase of development and was on the path towards individual freedom in art. This process was stimulated by widening the circle of

literary inspirers, seeking for modernistic expression forms and improvement in the individual manner of writing.

From the end of the nineteenth century until 1940, a public debate in Latvian periodicals reveals that cosmopolitan and anti-cosmopolitan positions often existed within the same discourse. Polyphony of opinions is observed regarding cosmopolitanism as an essential phenomenon of the modern epoch that was perceived as both threat to Latvian national values and benefit for the development of culture and literature, i.e. Europeanization that ensures cross-cultural communication. "Significant investment in the circulation of the idea of cosmopolitanism was made by cultural cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitan art—the modern artists' and writers' personas, as well as their works aiming at transforming the culture from traditional to anti-traditional, from national to modern and cosmopolitan" (Kacane, "Interpretations of Cosmopolitanism..." 201).

Aestheticism as a phenomenon of culture, which, contrary to the slogan "art for the sake of life" used by the representatives of Realism, has "art for art's sake" as its motto, thereby declaring the autonomy of art, in Latvian literary criticism has been both praised and blamed, thus revealing differences in approaches to the understanding of art functions. Criticism that tended towards Positivism and declared a utilitarian function of art as primary, perceived dissociation from the dominant of Realism negatively. When turning against the manifestations of autonomous art and individualism, against withdrawal from the reality of life and art as a value in itself, such concepts as "decadence" and "destruction" were used. While usefulness and practicalness of art (referred to as "art as a proclamation" (Bārda 264)), which developed in its interface with the society was praised, art's deviation from depicting the real life (defined as "art as worshiping" (Ibid.)) was sharpy criticized and attributed to exaggerated seeking for an artificial world and manifestation of egoism. Despite such a serious split within writing and literary criticism, the history of Latvian literature reveals several noticeable developmental periods when the freedom of the individual (artist) was actively cultivated and Latvian modernists employed the means of the "universal language" of Modernism and "cosmopolitan art": firstly, in the first decade of the twentieth century when "Latvian early modernists projected the synthesis of decadence, symbolism, modernism and other modern phenomena, as well as brought to the foreground human's (artist's in particular) individuality and inner freedom within the context of art autonomy" (Kacane, "Expressions of Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism..." 374), secondly, after the foundation of the state of Latvia (1918) when due to openness to foreign impulses and active Europanization Latvian literature was striving for

enrichment, and thirdly, in the 1930s when the next generation of modernists reflected their aspirations after cosmopolitan spirit in the search for new forms of expression, style and contents in the situation when "modernistic trends in Latvian literary situation coexisted with those antipodal literary tendencies which belonged to the national ideology-based literature of positivism where emphasis on Latvian values was placed" (Kacane, "Expressions of Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism..." 375). By processing and creatively employing the borrowed innovations, the acquired new models marked by nuances or transmutations testified to the orientation beyond the local cultures.

Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism vs. Socialist Realism

The occupation of Latvia (1940) marked the beginning of drastic reforms, including those in the field of culture and literature (Badina et al.) when millions of books were removed, destroyed, and banned (Briedis). It was the year when "[w]ith lightning speed, the old system of book-printing and periodicals on culture were destroyed, writers' organizations were dissolved, but writers themselves—sorted out into the right and the wrong […]" (Berelis). The attitudes towards and approaches to the "otherness" were at the peak of controversy in the Stalinist years, "since 'internationalism' was the mantra in politics while the reality was incomparably greater isolation from the rest of the world than the relatively liberal approach of German or Italian fascism" (Veisbergs 77).

The leading literary periodicals in Soviet Latvia became the literature, culture and socio-political monthly *Karogs* [Flag] (founded in 1940, during WWII known as an almanac published in Soviet Russia; first editor the Latvian writer and literary scientist Andrejs Upīts (1877-1970)) and the newspaper *Literatūra un Māksla* [Literature and Art] (first editor Latvian poet and journalist Valdis Lukss (1905-1985)). Adhering to the set ideological principles, they did the job of educating young Latvian writers in the spirit of Communism for the development of Latvian Soviet literature. In addition, they supported the publication of full literary works or their fragments written mainly by the representatives of Socialist Realism in Latvia. Specific instructions and recommendations for the development of Soviet literature and creation of ideologically permeated literary works were given also at congresses of Latvian Soviet Writers' Union[1] and by the Writers' Association. The issue 3 of the literary monthly *Karogs* (1940), published "The Declaration of Writers of

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1   Latvian Soviet Writers' Union was founded on 26 October 1940. The First Congress took place on 14-15 June 1941 during which Socialist Realism was declared the dominant method of creative writing (Tabūns; Eversone).

Soviet Latvia" adopted at the opening ceremony of Latvian SSR Writers' Union, declaring that the Soviet literature must be socialist by its content and didactic by its nature, so that people would be educated in the spirit of communist morality and patriotism and would be oriented towards new achievements in their work in honor of the Soviet people and the vast Soviet country, and that "all attempts to jeopardize people's interests in literature and art will receive in return a hard and crushing blow" ("Padomju Latvijas rakstnieku …" 323-324).

Socialist Realism had been declared the only official method of literature and literary criticism in the USSR in the 1930s. It turned sharply against any manifestation of modern art and literature. In Soviet Latvia, as in the then "periphery," the definitions, provided by the political figures from the "center" (Moscow) and by writers representing Socialist Realism, were extensively multiplied, since they were based on the formulation given by Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union Joseph Stalin in 1932, stating that Socialist Realism can develop only on the basis of socialist reality and, though the basics of this method or its elements had been observed earlier, officially its history begins with the Great October revolution (1917) ("Diskusija par sociālistiskā…" 3).

The "artistic method" of Soviet Socialist Realism included true depiction of reality and was aimed at educating the society in the spirit of Communism (James ix), i.e. the supreme task of a Soviet writer was to inspire Soviet citizens and call them to new struggles and victories rather than to provide artistic pleasure and entertainment. The development of a politically mobilizing literature required political-ideological education of writers, involving an in-depth acquisition of Marxism-Leninism science. Soviet aesthetics was based on the official attitudes, principles and ideology of CPSU, therefore only such forms of artistic experimentation that revealed a positive view of socialist society were supported, whereas other creative forms were largely censored or banned.

In reply to the question how "the new literary method" of Soviet literature could be characterized, the post-war Latvian Soviet periodicals expounded on Socialist Realism as the Realism's highest level achievable in a socialist society (Grigulis 2; Upīts). More scientifically sound conceptions of Socialist Realism appeared after many decades, therefore initial attempts to create literary texts in the new mode after the collapse of the national identity, which interrupted the process of its development as a constituent of European cultural space, and the construction

of Soviet Latvian identity were largely based on writers' intuition (Badins).[1] Both literature of national positivism and literature of modernism were perceived identically negative in the Soviet period—as attempts to drag the Soviet literature into the mire of philistinism, absence of ideals and decadence (Padomju Savienības Komunistiskās Partijas Centrālā Komiteja 3-6).

The social function of art and ideological contents contradicted with the aesthetic function of art and the philosophy of "art for art's sake" (*l'art pour l'art*) seen as the primary by modernist writers of the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. Socialist Realism characterized as "a weapon" in the ideological war (Gutkin) and art performing the function of "a campaigner" was perceived as an ideological tool for the sake of the collectivity—referred to as "moralisation" by the opposite party. In its turn, cosmopolitan art, contrary to standardization and typization, was striving for genuine or pure art that expressed individual cosmopolitan (Modernist) subjectivity. The dichotomy of the functions of art is also the underlying reason for the emergence of such poles as "conformists" and "dissidents": by definition a Soviet writer must be a Socialist Realism writer, whereas those focusing on form became marginalized intellectuals, among them aesthetic cosmopolitans oriented towards the artist's rights for freedom of expression and aestheticization.

Results and Discussion

In the periodicals of the second half of the 1940s, regularly prevail expanded articles focusing on tasks and responsibility placed on writers by the Communist party, including the task to stimulate, via socialist realistic art, people's participation in economic-political and ideological-creative activities. The duty of a writer to carry out a comprehensive "building work of culture" (Ābols 2) with the aim to increase the wealth of socialist culture and enhance Soviet patriotism is formulated by analogy that the duty of any Soviet citizen is an active participation in building socialist life and system: "A Soviet writer must be responsible for every word, every sentence he writes and offers to the people. In the Soviet society, literature is not playing games, is not a pastime, and is not an irresponsible aestheticization" (Krauli, "Rakstnieka atbildba" 2). Writing in the spirit of Cosmopolitan Aestheticism is perceived as

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1   Such works as *Zaļā Zeme* [Green Land] (1945) by Andrejs Upīts, *Caur uguni un ūdeni* [Through Thick and Thin] (1945) by Arvīds Grigulis, *Vētra* [Storm] (1946–1948) by Vilis Lācis, *Pret kalnu* [Towards the Summit] (1948) by Anna Sakse as well as other books written by the same and other authors can be mentioned as examples of Latvian Soviet literature written in the spirit of Socialist Realism (Tabūns).

spreading "the dangerous apolitical tendency, detachment from the life of today, and clinging to the past" ("Par rakstnieku politiski…"), therefore it is heavily criticized and characterized as not understanding the social duties, lacking conscientiousness and ignoring the burning interests of people. Formulation "irresponsible aestheticization" is addressed to the so-called salon literature—Romanticism and Modernism—, which gets included into the context of decadence and is interpreted as hooliganism, adventurism, and snobbishness in art created under the impact of "capitalist culture" (Pelše 4), as well as "a speculative fancy in the artificial world" (Rešals 6), namely, it is labelled as "defacing" of the real art and as the harm to the new Soviet system: "All different trends of decadence, all symbolisms, mysticisms, different constructivisms and other formalistic and anti-realistic tendencies do nothing else than release the writer [from the duty] before the people […]" (Krauliņš, "Rakstnieka atbildība" 2).

In the result of the crucial political and cultural shift, western modern tendencies, so well-known to several generations of Latvian modernists, were labelled as "alien" literature, therefore to appreciate it and create works under the influence of this art posed a threat for immediate exclusion and identification with such attributes as "sick," "leprous," and "egoistic," whereas their writing was rejected due to the lack of then prioritised "fundamental real-life values" (such as heroism and selflessness of the Soviet people, education in the spirit of Communism etc.) which would be oriented towards the majority of people. Thereby, the originality was interpreted as artificiality, individual's choice was characterized as aimless since it "confuses," "deviates" and "leads" the reader's consciousness into "vague inventions" ("Padomju cilvēka tēls" 4). In addition, the perceptions of positioning writers as superhumans and divine beings, as well as of manifestation of freedom of art and individualization (with an admixture of sexuality) were completely denied as being extremes. Within the frame of the Soviet ideology, the opinion was enhanced that writers who were "entertainers of a handful of snobs" (Gerasimovs 5) and the art which is "not" virtuous and does not strive for achieving collective aims, i.e. art that is "useless," must not be supported politically and be banned.

For the achievement of aims set for the Latvian Soviet literature, socialist content became of primary importance, since combined with a great ideological force it could reflect what was the most typical and the most characteristic, and, as it was emphasized, it made "the nation's spiritual values the cultural values of the whole mankind" (Žurgins 1). Experiments with form, in turn, were labelled as an expression of a devoid-of-ideas bourgeois literature and defined as "individuals'

spontaneity" and "cult of vanity" ("Partija un literatūra" 1). In the context of turning against formalism, a strong denial of aesthetic cosmopolitanism is revealed:

> The disguised supporters and propagators of the rotten western art, people who are used to bowing deeply to everything that has a foreign trade mark attached to, speaking about the western art usually do not deny its emptiness and lack of principles and ideas, but constantly emphasize the technical mastery of its representatives. […] We have to dispel the mirage as if a free bourgeois art would exist, an unnecessary boasting which smart people need to implement theories and aims advantageous for them. (Gerasimovs 5)

According to the definitions published in the periodicals of that time, Socialist Realism, contrary to aesthetic cosmopolitanism, is also writer's ability to depict a human "truly"—"such as he is and at the same time—such as he should be in Socialist Realism, speaking in point of fact, Realism intertwines with revolutionary romanticism, with striving for the ideal" ("Padomju cilvēka tēls" 4). Aesthetic cosmopolites were sharply criticized for human depictions in the context of both "ugly reality" and "unrealistic beauty" focusing on an individual's inner feelings rather than a wider society. By accentuating the demand for an opposite approach in the characterization of "a Soviet man," Socialist Realism denied "the old" in point of fact in order to emphasize "the new," i.e. positive collective beginning: "The one who does not notice the beginning of the positive and looks at the society only from the back and sees only difficulties and drawbacks, this one […] is not able to show the reality of our life truthfully" ("Padomju cilvēka tēls" 4). Unlike the portrayal of a new hero of that time—"the Soviet man," the human depicted in aesthete's literary works is characterized as creatively unhealthy and individually snobbish, i.e. as both an egoistic biological creature wrapped in an erotic mystery ("bestial man," "brute," "mean physiological creature" etc.), and as a mystical being engrossed in transcendentalism and deep subjectivism. Thereby, in Socialist Realism, such binary oppositions as "Romanticism—Realism" and "individualism—collectivism" are brought into focus with the aim to reveal and show the elements of free art's, so called, "false" slogan as being untrue and harmful. They were interpreted as phenomena of the outdated culture of the by-gone time, which were spiritually poor, seeming and having no content necessary for the society. In the same way, any focusing on the poetics of the Bible and mythology was perceived as "the propaganda of madness" ("Marasma un neprāta propaganda" 6).

Along with Sovietization, collectivization and patriotization, modern tendencies

were marginally revealed and characterized as a "psychically abnormal art" and "a cheap fraud," but writers, "cultural rubbish," in turn, were blamed not only for distorting the reality of life (anti-realism), decline, indifference towards plot and ideological content of art, but also for taking the hopeless labyrinth paths of "different -isms" and going the "alien cosmopolitanism way" ("Divas kultūras" 3-5). To idealize the objectivity of art, subjectivity of art rapidly became more and more severely criticized, mentioning the arbitrariness of individual "misinformation" and exaggerated sensuality of Aestheticism among the qualities unacceptable for the political power of that time. To communicate the ideas of Aestheticism by illustrating negative examples, traditionally well-known representatives of western culture were chosen, while the names of Latvian writers were kept back for a certain period of time. In the first post-war years, belonging to aesthetic cosmopolitanism or, as it was often noted in periodicals of that time, "straying into aesthetic fantasies" was interpreted also as a matter of chance and naivety, and thereby was justified if the writer's works published during the period of Soviet Latvia were considered by the new power as ideologically acceptable, as it was in the case of the dedication to Eriks Ādamsons' (1907-1946) on the occasion of his death and discussion of post-war literature (Sudrabkalns 335-337). Attempts to describe one of the striking representatives of the second generation of Latvian modernists and Aestheticism in Latvian literature as an advocate of Soviet people, as a fighter for equality, due to his ability to reflect the minutest details of life in his writings, can be characterized as politically determined. By including Ādamsons among the ranks of writers-realists, he was not only paid some respect under the conditions of censorial restrictions when the expression satisfying the ruling power was required. It is also an indication to the fact that in war and post-war years, Latvian writers were obliged to change their literary expression and adjust themselves to the new conditions imposed by the Soviet power if they wanted to get their works published.

At the end of the 1940s, the attitude to any "prophet" of pure or formalist art based on Parnassian[1] aestheticism, became openly hostile: writers were reproached for having created a world of cynicism, hatred, horror, absurdity, anarchism, existentialism, sadism, and homosexuality "under the roof of apolitical individualism and aestheticism." The authors themselves were compared with criminal groupings, supporters of Nazi Germany and implementers of imperialist policy, and their works characterized as literature of aggression (Krauliņš, "Literatūra imperiālistu kalpībā"

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1   The name is a reference to the nineteenth-century French journal, *Le Parnasse contemporain* issued in the1860s-1870s. It is the initial phase of the development of the Aesthetic Movement (Thain).

97-107). At that time, the persecution of aesthetic cosmopolitans, known under the title of "Cosmopolitans' case," began in Latvia (Radzobe). Aesthetic cosmopolites in the USSR were called ideologists and dissidents of the bourgeois West and decadence, "alien people" and "cosmopolites having no motherland" who deny "the progressive role of Soviet literature and art" and whose interpretation of art and ideas "makes a direct loss to people's interests" (quoted after Sprūde). Open attacks were launched against those, who in their creative work used "excessive expression means" resulting from decadence, mysticism and aestheticism, mentioning Latvian writers of different generations, such as a leading figure of Latvian "decadents"[1] Viktors Eglītis (1877-1945) and early modernists who have followed the aesthetic style in a concrete period of their creative work, e.g. Jānis Akuraters (1876-1937), Kārlis Skalbe (1879-1945), as well as the representatives of the second generation of modernists of the 1930s and those trying to adapt to new demands towards writers in post WW2 situation – Aleksandrs Čaks (1901-1950), Pāvils Vīlips (1901-1979), Valdis Grēviņš (1895-1968), Jānis Plaudis (1903-1952), etc. ("Formālisma paliekas…" 2; Vasars 237-242; Upīts,"Padomju literatūras desmit gadi" 2-3l). In line with the principled position postulated by the communist system, literary cosmopolitanism was based on the ideology of capitalism, hostile to communism, and on "world culture" (Višinskis 5-6), thereby it was positioned by the leading power as a tool for denying "one's own" (Soviet) people and fatherland, as well as a means of a spiritual destruction, and as such had to be eradicated, while the so-called "aesthetical snobs" and "cosmopolitan saboteurs," destructive for the development of the Soviet literature, had to be unmasked. It is worth noting that the reproach was addressed not only towards the writers, but also towards the literary critics who, in the opinion of the ruling power, did not fight actively enough against the damaging bourgeois aestheticism and imperialistic cosmopolitanism, "completely forgetting that this is their direct battle task set by the people and party. After the two great meetings dedicated to exposing cosmopolitanism and after the publication of the respective reviews, this struggle has become less intensive" ("Par principiālu un lietišķu …" 2).

In 1950, at the 13th plenary meeting of the Committee of the USSR Writers'

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1   Latvian early modernists projected the synthesis of Decadence, Symbolism, Modernism and other modern phenomena, as well as brought to the foreground human's (artist's in particular) individuality and inner freedom within the context of art autonomy. The next generation of Latvian modernists continued their seeking in the field of style, composition and content, reflecting also their aspirations after cosmopolitan spirit (Kacane, "Expressions of Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism..." 380).

Union, it was announced that the Communist Party had fought against the antipatriotic grouping of writers and critics-cosmopolites, followers of Aestheticism and formalism, who "hindered the development of our [Soviet] literature and art," and that it had successfully completed its mission. However, as it was emphasized, the struggle against the "distortion" of Soviet reality and ideologically and artistically "inferior" works had started "belatedly," therefore one of the principal tasks of literary criticism still remained to expose those writers who may adhere to the principles of "pure art," i.e. to recognize and exclude the opponents who appear under "the banner of formalism and aestheticism" ("Uz jauniem panākumiem …" 1-2; Fadejevs 2-3). The newspaper *Literatūra un Māksla* focused also on the "cosmopolites" in literary science, e.g. by republishing reports from the Russian language (by A. Fadeyev, Secretary General of the USSR Soviet Writers' Union), the Soviet literary critics (A. Tarasenkov, A. Karavayeva etc.) were mentioned as an example in critically approaching Alexander Veselovsky (1838-1906), a literary theorist, one of the pioneers of the discipline of comparative literature (comparativistics), known as the one to "offer a synthesis of the study of literatures, both Western and non-Western—that scholars today are increasingly mindful of" (Maslov), and his "school," generally referred to by the name of "Russian Formalism." Considering that Veselovsky's central ideas were related to narrative hybridity, influences, borrowings, it is important to note that cosmopolitanism by nature presumes intercultural communication, or as Hannerz puts it, "It is an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences" (Hannerz 239), thus comparative studies and comparative literature identified with universal or cosmopolitan drive were also caught in the crossfire and actively criticised in Latvian press of Soviet Latvia.

Conclusion

In the conditions of a heightened ideologization of art, Latvian literature, that had developed under the influence of western culture, became a tool of propaganda and, consequently, its artistic value declined. Based on the model of relationships "center – periphery," the requirements of the Soviet didactics in Latvia relate to identical tendencies elsewhere in the USSR, namely, to break the continuity of Latvian literature and its orientation towards European modern tendencies, national literature was maximally deformed. If in previous decades modernistic trends in Latvian literature coexisted with those antipodal literary tendencies which belonged to the national ideology-based literature of positivism, then since 1940, but especially after re-occupation and in the first dacades after WW2, the attitude to literature of

Modernism, (including aesthetic cosmopolitism), as well as to texts having political and scientific content, and recognized as "nationalistic," was openly aggressive. The multiple tools used in the process of ideologization and politicisation of literature, including periodicals, proposed literature of Socialist Realism which aligned with the paradigm of socialist culture, while aesthetic cosmopolitanism, reduced to the category of "-isms," was considered devoid of principles and ideals and immoral. Representatives of intelligentsia of aesthetic cosmopolitanism were perceived as ill-disposed and marginalised, they were often called anti-patriotic and bourgeois aesthetes. Soviet ideological repressions lasted for several decades, and writers and literary critics who had chosen and explored themes not in line with the aims propagated by the Soviet power and were focusing on phenomena of western culture became targets of these oppressions: their literary works were prohibited and writers themselves were sentenced; some of them were deported. This was the way how Soviet man was "educated" according to the position of a political regime and how culture and literature were completely isolated from the West. Aesthetic cosmopolitanism is a cultural phenomenon that emerges due to tensions between the global and the local and may become a productive means for the development of culture and literature, however striving towards cosmopolitanism by Latvian modernists as a manifestation of distancing from and reaction against provincialism (i.e. "aesthetic inventiveness") was completely stopped during the discussed period. "Cosmopolitan conversations" with "cosmopolite aesthetes" to make a cultural space "a changeable reality" were resumed only by exile writers and reached the wider readership after "the iron curtain" would fall and after the renewal of independence of Latvian statehood.

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Sources for the History of Mentality: Latvian Folk Anecdotes of the 19th – Early 20th Centuries

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Abstract　The research is funded by the Latvian Council of Science, project "The Baltic Germans of Latgale in the context of socio–ethnic relations from the 17th till the beginning of the 20th century, project No. lzp–2020/2–0136". The history of mentality / mentalities is a significant branch of modern historical science, the relevance of which as a component of social history is only increasing. The purpose of the article is to define some features of the mode of thinking / world perception of Latvians in the late 19th and early 20th centuries based on the analysis of the lexical composition of Latvian folk anecdotes. This investigation is based on the linguistic analysis of Latvian folk anecdotes (5671 items), published in 1929–1930. The subject of the history of mentality has three facets: way of thinking / perception of the world, ideas about man and various phenomena of the world, existing forms, and norms of human behaviour. The revelation of the mode of thinking / world perception embodied in verbal texts demands to use linguistic analysis in three aspects—structure of texts, structural and functional. The analysis of the lexical thesaurus of Latvian folk anecdotes reveals the mythological mode of thinking/world perception of Latvians. The incomplete isolation of a person from the surrounding world and the resulting concreteness defines this way of thinking. Such features of this mode of world perception indicate narrowness and density of the sphere of human contacts, which was characteristic of the life of Latvians living in the territory of Latvia.

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Introduction

The history of mentality/ mentalities as a branch of historical science got crystallized at the beginning of the 20th century and retains its significance to the present day (which is justified by a considerable number of scientific journals thematic specialization of which includes mentality, for example, *Reflexions Historiques*; *Mentalities*; *The International History Review*; *Culture and History Digital Journal*; *History and Theory*; *Dialog so vremenem* etc). Publications in the said editions provide evidence of the expansion of both, the range of phenomena that come into scholars' attention, and the source data base together with chronological framework as not merely mental systems of antiquity and the Middle Ages are being studied currently, turning out, apparently, to be increasingly relevant as a component of social history. As once pointed by Aron Gurevich, "The history of society and the comprising it large and small groups can no longer be studied in isolation from the history of the world views, value systems, forms of social behaviour, symbols and rituals" (9), seen as the story of the relationship between humans and nature, humans and humans, humans and things in different spheres of human life, at its different levels and in two dimensions—physical activity and perception. The most significant factor determining the "rise" of the history of mentality is "the uprising of the masses" alongside with the dominance of irrationality in the conduct of people organized into masses, which was revealed, in the first place, during WWI (Ortega–I–Gasset). It induced, in addition to psychologists, historians and sociologists, to pay attention to psychology in search of a deep motivation for human behaviour, i.e. to the actual and shaped by various means of communication conscious and unconscious, though still actual self-concepts and world perception shared by people (Parsons). The mass—collective, unconscious perceptions constitute the subject matter for the study of the history of mentality, hence do not go beyond its limits, since the cornerstone of human consciousness, including the unconscious, is the mode of thinking, the world perception, which finds its expression in the content of the text structure leftover by humans and recorded in written-visual forms or observed in directly reactive, automatically manifested forms of human behaviour in various situations. Therefore, the subject of the history of mentality has three facets: 1. Mode of thinking/ world perception; 2. The concept of man in various world phenomena; 3. Actual, existent forms/norms of human behaviour.

The aim of the present article is to determine various mentality features of Latvians living in the territory of Latvia at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In the present work we will focus on the first facet in the study of mentality. To identify the mode of thinking / world perception, the verbal texts and their linguistic analysis are at the bottom-line, the aspects of which, in the first place, are the structural, text-oriented analysis, comprising the grammatical form of words. Secondly, functional analysis, which considers the function of parts of speech and members of a sentence the given words perform and, thirdly, structural (or contextual—semantic) analysis, regarding word collocation and the arising semantic shades of meaning.

Source Characterization: Author, Texts

One significant source for the study of mentality, in particular Latvians, is *Latvian folk anecdotes* collected from various sources: the oral sources, including eyewitness accounts or accounts of the participants of some life situations (1: 386-387), and the written ones, extracted from newspaper and calendar publications, beginning with the early years of the 19th century up to the 20s of the 20th century. A compiler and editor of the four-volume edition, which was published in 1929-1930s, was Peteris Birkerts (1881–1956), an outstanding person whose interests, activities and left-over evidence go far beyond the definition of "a literary and folk scholar" as "the texts created by him are so peculiar that they have not yet been properly integrated into the Latvian culture (Pakalns 744), as pointed by a contemporary scholar. In the 1920s, at the age of 43, prior to Birkerts got determined to launch his collection of Latvian folklore, he had written the first textbooks on psychology and sociology in Latvia.

P. Birkerts was tormented by the question, "Do they really (our folk) barely work, solely sing and, whenever possible, hardly ever think?," which persuaded him to turn to the folklore of Latvians, at first to proverbs and sayings, later to folk anecdotes (Birkerts 20). It was of paramount importance for him to prove that Latvians have their own creative genius, their own ability to think and perceive their own national philosophy. Moreover, the introduction of Latvians into the world cultural space was of equal importance for Birkerts, which resulted in the inclusion of a lengthy sketch *Anecdotes in world literature* in the compiled for publication four-volume issue of folk anecdotes written by his brother, a writer and literary scholar Anton Birkerts. Opening the fourth, final volume dedicated to obscene anecdotes, P. Birkerts outlined some feasible directions for their study: "Folk jokes are folklore, which is suitable as a study material for a folklorist, historian and historian of culture, philologist, doctor, lawyer, educator and other scientists" (3). However, the demand for these texts by scientists of various fields, particularly historical, is unstable and low. According to Guntis Pakalns, "the most popular, many a time

fully or partially republished, as well as the best studied, is the fourth volume, the content of which is obscene anecdotes" (751). It is noteworthy that for a historian the informative potential of sources is not limited by information about various life realia that are recalled there with different degrees of frequency (in this case, anecdotes). As emphasized by the compiler of the collection of Latvian folk anecdotes, "they are of great value as documents of folk psychology" (Pakalns 3). In order to reveal it, it is necessary to identify the world view, which is determined by the mode of thinking / world perception, expressed in language, in the structure of the thesaurus of verbal texts, in a word, for in it, in mind of L. C. Vygotsky, "consciousness reflects itself as the sun does in a tiny drop of water. A word pertains to consciousness like a small world to a large one, like a living cell to an organism, like an atom to the cosmos. It is this small world of consciousness indeed" (509).

The methods, types of thinking that researchers refer to as mythological and scientific-logical ones are based on the capacity of a human's perceived / conscious distance separating him from the surrounding him world. The latter point provides for self–awareness. The indicators of isolation are qualitative homogeneity—heterogeneity of a human and the natural–objective world as well as connected with its division into subject—object or lack of it. It should be borne in mind, however, that in any cultural-historical era there coexist, intertwining in a certain correlation, mental breaks of both types of thinking / world perception that forms the ground basis of human behaviour.

The Latvian folk anecdotes published by P. Birkerts, comprising 5671 units, recorded by 869 persons from 1565 storytellers and related primarily to the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, are distinguished considerably from the texts so common at present day. They do not show a high degree of abstraction which allows to concisely and succinctly express the essence of many- and multifaceted as well as varied phenomena, being like domestic sketches, capable of brightening up joint gatherings on dark evenings, not too burdened with labour. Typologically, these tales, varied in length, ranging from one sentence up to several pages, can be compared to medieval Western European exempla, however, opposite to them, Latvian folk anecdotes are not didactic (Gurevich 7). The given features of the said texts are evident in their lexical thesaurus, wherein several features manifesting a certain mode of world perception will be defined in the present work.

Lexical Composition of Latvian Folk Anecdotes and their Features

Thus, to be noted firstly, there is virtually an equal number of nouns, mainly anthroponomic-subject nouns, and verbs, among which there are hardly any

nominating mental, emotional states / forms; it is evident that the dominant group of verbs are the verbs signifying physical actions, states of being and acts of communication, for example, "I've pointed to him …" (2: 346); "One gentleman coming home late at night…" (3: 445); "Once a gypsy was travelling by train …" (3: 225); "One little girl was cooking milk porridge …" (2: 93); "There was one very stingy mistress…" (2: 321); "The pastor, listening to the children, asked one boy: What do you know, my child?" (3: 342); "Once there was one pastor who was very fond of hunting. He was always taking a gun with him to church..." (3: 407).

Such verbs of being, presence of something, the acts of communication and physical action demonstrate the world as a value of actual, due to the minimum distance, tangible things involved in the system of continuous and uninterrupted interaction, which in turn refers to mythological thinking.

Secondly, a characteristic feature of the lexical composition of Latvian folk anecdotes is the rarity of the high degree generalization words. This observation is correlated with the remark of Matiss Kaudzitis (1848–1926) about the low level of "our newspaper industry," as justified by the fact that "prior to the appearance of the newspaper *Peterburgas avize* (1862–1865), such words as "politics," "religion," "culture," "library," "manifest" were not familiar to Latvians. The nomination "a human" is virtually non–existent, although in the texts relating to the early 20th century and predominantly circulated in the urban environment, the occurrence of indefinite generalizing designations is noticeable, to give examples: "one man" (3: 563), "one chap" (3: 363), "one girl " (3: 364), "one doctor" (3: 363), "one mummy" (3: 362), which indicates an increase in rationality and, accordingly, the ability to abstract, mainly among Latvians living in or near the city. However, a well–known generalization does not eliminate the social determination of the nominated persons—by gender, age, social status, occupation, place in the kinship, ethnic and local affiliation. All the said above points to the concreteness of, in this case, the concept of man, which is uniquely mythological thinking. Specifically, the world perception does diminish the anthropological capacity of a human, it makes it difficult to understand and approve the human essence of any social–specific individual. The lack of typified names against the presence of a considerable number of personal names and nicknames also testifies to the concreteness of the mode of thinking manifested in the analysed texts; for example, "Karlis, Liba and Spritis were sentenced to a year in prison" (3: 217); "The Jew goes for a walk with his son Meiskaya" (3: 248); "Yury, tell me" (3: 416); "Some tailor named Gold" (3: 23); "When Dizkarlis (Baron of Dundaga) was driving down the road" (2: 27); "Janis Biezums was called a Siberian eater" (3: 531); "A baron, who was called Black Peter, due to a very dark complex-

ion, lived in Talsi" (3: 89) and etc.

Personal names, and even more so nicknames, expose the narrowness of people's circle of communication and the frequency, regularity of contacts in it, resulting in poor distancing that complicates the emergence of reflection and rationality, the ability to understand and behave consciously and meaningfully, providing for immediately reactive behaviour.

The noted concreteness of the worldview is justified by the very rare use of adjectives in Latvian folk anecdotes, which is the third feature of the lexical thesaurus of these texts. Adjectives in their essence commonly relate a certain quality of things, phenomena, states, actions and, therefore, necessitate a certain distance between the observer, the speaker and the object of observation or description. It is crucial for the "author" of any text (oral or written) to be "placed out" of that world which is a precondition for the text to be an object of reflection, generalization and evaluation. In the studied texts of Latvian folk anecdotes, though rare, nevertheless, adjectives are apparent; more commonly, they express a direct impression—a characteristic of a human's detected impression, commonly associated with judgement of his appearance; for instance, "Beautiful hence lazy daughter" (2: 142); "A terribly beautiful girl" (2: 104, 105, 111); "One angry wife" (2: 531); "His bride is said to be very lazy" (2: 111); "That Levenstein was a crazy gentleman" (2: 71).

Such definitions testify to a fundamental feature of mythological thinking—the incomplete isolation of a human from the surrounding world and the narrowness of the circle of social communication, correlated with it. Frequently recurrent adjectives acquire a stable typological character, indicating the tightness of the said circle, in which, due to spatial proximity, there is a very weak interest in the other as a human.

Still another, fourth feature of the lexical thesaurus of Latvian folk anecdotes is the "abnormal" function of parts of speech. Thus, the nouns, particularly those referring an ethnic community, commonly function as an adjective. For example, "A boy asks German boy, "What's your name?" (2: 80); "Once one German landowner was walking round the house of the servants" (2: 94); "Russian soldier" (2: 178); "German madam" (2: 58). Ethnonyms functioning as adjectives point to the inclusion of an individual into community, affiliation to which determines his quality and the very existence. Thus, the individual "I" equals, on the one hand, the ethnically coloured "we," however, on the other hand, it does not dissolve in the socio–ethnic whole, meanwhile preserving its singularity. At the same time, "we" appears not as an organic whole, but as a set of units.

Such conception of man and of his correlation with different levels of social

communities, embodied in a language and, therefore, leading to the layer of the unconscious in the system of consciousness, demonstrates a narrow distance between the individual and the world in which he resides.

However, the ethnonyms functioning as adjectives not only refer a human community, perceived as peculiar and distinct (an ethnonym is always a sign of alienation), but also provide a qualitative description of certain phenomena and institutions—time, administration, army, including language: "The time of the Russian rule" (3: 377); " During the German occupation" (3: 386); "During Russian occupation" (3: 172); "Russian and German soldiers" (4: 173); "The German language" (3: 430–431); "The Latvian language" (3: 429) and etc. This again demonstrates the concreteness of world perception and indirectly testifies to a very deep penetration of the German and Russian origin into the tissue of Latvian life. It is noteworthy that in all such cases, while preserving the mentality of Latvians, nouns–ethnonyms in the function of adjectives should be translated into Russian by nouns in the genitive plural rather than by adjectives; however, this would not be in line with the norms of the Russian language and would not correspond to the mentality of Russians.

In turn, adjectives, as well as participles, often function as nouns–anthroponyms, for example: "The baptised" (2: 255); "The eldest" (3: 431); "The youngest" (2: 388, 431); "The righteous / The unrighteous" (3: 523), "The beloved" (3: 242); "The convicted" (3: 477), etc. At the same time, certain qualities, positions, states "get frozen, transforming into a designation of the holder of the said quality. A human in such case is presented as the qualitatively definite and flat, while the concrete, temporary, situational turns into supratemporal, essential and substantiated.

Another characteristic feature of the composition of nouns in the analysed texts is the relative rarity of deverbal nouns derived from the verbs referring physical actions, for instance: "sleeping" derived from "to sleep," "eating" from "to eat," "running" from "to run," "persecution" from to persuade" etc. Such deverbal nouns are generalizations that testify to a human's ability to get abstracted from the situations of human behaviour observed by him and to separate the very action from the doer. It is noteworthy that such word usage is apparent in the texts recorded in Riga and its surroundings. However, there are far more frequent deverbal nouns anthroponyms in which the insolubility of the action and the doer is being manifested, e.g., "a knitter" (3: 438); a teacher" (3: 431); "a traveller" (3: 438); "an eater" (3: 432); "a singer" (3: 403), "a gamer" (3: 432) etc. This recurrently demonstrates the significance of the mental attitudes of mythological thinking in the Latvian worldview system. Moreover, rather poorly reflected by the humanities in Latvia, neither cognized by a broad audience nor transmitted by linguistic forms, they retain their

strength in the mentality of modern Latvians, manifested in their socio–political and speech behavior.

Conclusion

The analysis of the lexical thesaurus of Latvian folk anecdotes has revealed the mythological mode of thinking that is the basis of the mentality of Latvians. It is characterized by incomplete isolation of a human from the surrounding world and the resulting concreteness. Such features of the mythological worldview demonstrate the narrowness and density of the sphere of human contacts, which was characteristic of the life of Latvians in the territory of Latvia.

Acknowledgements

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Semantics of Religious Festivals in Latvian Childhood Memories in the 20th Century

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Abstract   The paper focuses on the semantics of religious festivals in the Latvian childhood memoirs of the 20th century. It is based the autobiographical portrayals of childhood in Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš' *Baltā grāmata* (White Book), Annas Brigadere's *Dievs. Daba. Darbs* (God. Nature. Work), Jānis Klīdzējs' *Cilvēka bērns* (A Person's Child) and Vizma Belševica's *Bille*. The choice of looking at these memoirs specifically was determined by the factor that they originated in different historical periods of the 20th century, i.e. they provide an insight into the transformations of the semiotics of childhood memories, which have been dictated by the historical period. The semantic fields in the works of the reviewed authors differ, especially if we compare the childhood memoirs which toook place prior to World War II (Jaunsudrabiņš and Brigadere), with the memoirs that took place later (Klīdzējs and Belševica). Up until the mid-20th century, childhood semantics were founded on the literary tradition of the late 19th century in the memoirs written up by the Latvian authors,—home and the rural environment as indicators of a happy childhood. Authors, whose memoirs are sourced in the second half of the 20th century, came to experience World War II. The childhood semiotics in 20th century literature encompass typological similarities and differences which have been determined by the authors' experience, and which have been gained in different times and spaces. A child's existence in real time and space is their own individual experience, and in the same way, each author's artistic world's time and space category reproduction forms are individual. However, all the analyzed works have a more or less religious context typical of them, which are revealed by stories about celebrating religious festivals.

Keywords   autobiographical memories; reminiscences of childhood; memoir literature; religious festivals; childhood semiotics

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Festivals, which are a religious community's instrument for creating consolidation and solidarity, are an important component of religious practice. The rituals, which are conducted during the festivals, perform not only a religious function, i.e. bringing the sacred epistle to life, but also a social function: consolidating the group and creating special connections between the group's core (the leader or leadership) and the group members. At the same time, these festivals also have a direct influence on a person, as individual religious experience is gained through them, enriching a person's range of experience and leaving a more or less long-term impact. Consciously or unconsciously, individual religious experience also finds its expression in literature. In other words, writers include their personal experience, ascribing this to literary characters, in their works. A writer's personal experience is supplemented freely through fictional characters, whereas, it is much closer to experience that has really been lived through in autobiographical works. In this article, we will focus on childhood memoirs, in which the author's individual religious experience, gained at religious festivals, is reflected. This is an attempt to respond to the question what are the fields of semantics of religious festivals in the Latvian childhood memoirs of the 20th century? The article is based on the works of four authors, which most strikingly characterize the previous century's childhood memoirs.

In the late 19th century, and especially in the early 20th century, the theme of childhood gained a stable position in world literature. Several European writers graphically declared the intimate introspection (Romanovska 20-21): Walter Benjamin's *Berliner Kindheit um Neunzehnhundert*, Rainer Maria Rilke's *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge* and Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*. Adult, i.e., the author's view on what they have lived through or experienced in their childhood, reconstructing a child's point of view, reflecting what has happened from the *inside*, from the positions of the child, who, being self-aware, does not divide oneself from the world, but sees oneself within the world, is at the centre of attention in these works.

There is a widespread view that the popularity of the theme of childhood in the early 20th century was determined by Sigmund Freud's (1856–1939) psychoanaly-

sis, i.e. by his idea that childhood is the determining stage in a person's life, which significantly influences both the psyche, as well as consciousness (Freud, 1923). Freud emphasized that a child is a full-fledged person, and under his influence, research on the child as a social being came to the fore in the early 20th century. The interest of academic psychologists in the child also facilitated a look back at one's childhood in literature. The reminiscences of childhood also became a powerful source of inspiration for writers around the world, also including Latvia, where descriptions of autobiographical memories and stories about childhood experiences with a focus on adventures, were created. One of the important semantic components of these texts was religion, particularly the religious festivals, respectively, a child's contact with sacred time and space and individual religious experiences.

Childhood Memoirs in Latvian Literature

Literary texts with autobiographical elements, which Jēkabs Zvaigznīte (1833-1867), Doku Atis (1861-1903) and Jānis Poruks (1871-1911) have included in their works, can be considered to be the beginnings of the portrayal of childhood memoirs in Latvian literature. They are compositions of varying artistic quality, in which some event experienced, or thing that has been lived through, by the authors themselves during childhood has been interwoven into the plot. Even though the works by the authors mentioned cannot be considered to be autobiographical compositions, they have provided the stimulus for the development of the portrayal of childhood in Latvian literature.

We can mention the works of Anna Brigadere (1861-1933), Antons Austriņš (1884-1934), Jānis Grīziņš (1900-1941), Aspazija (1865-1943), Ernests Birznieks-Upītis (1871-1960), Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš (1877-1962), Lidija Pērļupe (1904-1962), Jānis Širmanis (1904-1992), Jānis Klīdzējs (1914-2000) and Vizma Belševica (1931-2005) as important contributions by Latvian authors to the reflection of childhood memories. They are autobiographical portrayals of childhood, of which several are considered to be the highest achievement of the writer's creative artistic work: Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš' *Baltā grāmata* (White Book), Annas Brigadere's *Dievs. Daba. Darbs* (God. Nature. Work), Jānis Klīdzējs' *Cilvēka bērns* (A Person's Child) and Vizma Belševica's *Bille*. In this article, we will focus specifically on the works of these 20th century authors, as they contain the most vivid memories of childhood in Latvian literature. The study of these is included in school programmes and their value has also been recognized in the 21st century. The choice of looking at these memoirs specifically was decided by the factor that they originated in different historical periods of the 20th century. Therefore, they provide an insight into the

transformations of the semiotics of childhood memories, which have been dictated by the epoch.

Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš' *Baltā grāmata* about the adventures of a boy called Jancis was published in 1914, even though most of it was written in the summer of 1910, when the author was relaxing in the countryside—at Nereta, where he had spent his childhood (Jaunsudrabiņš 343). Individual portrayals were published in the press from 1911. The author wrote the book's final pages at the beginning of World War I, which was not, however, a disruptive factor in his creative plans, as the author intended to write a hundred brief portrayals of his childhood, which he also achieved at that time. It should be noted that Jaunsudrabiņš' memories of childhood were also supplemented by the author's own illustrations, created in a specific style. His work differs markedly from previously created memoirs: there is an absence of heightened sentimentalism, glorification of childhood or an imagined romantism in *Baltā grāmata*. Literary critics, with a Marxist bent, liked Jaunsudrabiņš, who was considered to be a realist as his work reflected working people's childhood world. Andrejs Upīts (1877-1970), for example, wrote: "[…] his short stories take us into the world of the servant's child, the more lyrically or dramatically inclined portrayals show scenes of the joys and troubles from the lives of working people, where there is a role not just for the little adventurer himself, but all of the surrounding, realistically viewed world" (Egle and Upīts 761-762) (the translation is by the autor here and onwards). On the other hand, others expressed negative criticism, for example, Kārlis Dziļleja (1891-1963) maintained that children are not really very fond of the portrayals in *Baltā grāmata* (Dziļleja 104), but he had specific objections to the illustrations. Another critic called them caricatures, as they were not natural and tended to lean towards a decadent futuristic direction (Jaunsudrabiņš 1920: 18). Jaunsudrabiņš responded to this criticism: "[…] I learned how to draw like that from children myself, and, if one or another drawing in this book is not sufficiently childish, then my rather brief preparation for this work is to blame" (Jaunsudrabiņš, "Par bērnu zīmējumiem" 18). Jaunsudrabiņš' target audience for this book was children, to whom he wished to reveal what he had experienced and gone through himself, with the goal of educating the younger generation. Each individual story uncovered the development of a boy's understanding of what is good and what is evil. The book has, however, gone beyond the narrow boundaries of didactic literature, as it is a message incorporated in poetic language, exceeding the author's own plans. Jaunsudrabiņš' poetic narative has been cinematized in the film *Puika* (director Aivars Freimanis).

The first part of Anna Brigadere's trilogy of childhood memories *Dievs. Daba.*

Darbs reached readers in 1926, the second part was published in 1930, and the last part of the book in 1933. The texts of Jaunsudrabiņš and Brigadere have "the liberating recollection of a rural childhood [which] is in sharp contrast to the constrictions of urban life" (Skultans 541) in common. The main character, around which Brigadere concentrates the activity in her plot, is the servant girl Annele. The book reflects her life at a farmstead in a servant family from the ages of about 4 to 15 years. Like the work of Jaunsudrabiņš, Brigadere's childhood memories also are composed from separate of narratives. They are quite short stories placed in a chronological order. In other words, childhood memories are characterized by separate *flashes* of memory, which the author has recorded without trying to create a unified plot line. Soviet literary critics tended to emphasize Brigadere's social origins: there wasn't any real basis for banning her works as she had come from working class. Furthermore—during the 1970s, the literary character of Annele, as a drawing, had found a way onto a chocolate bar, becoming widely recognized in this way, especially among those who loved sweets... Even though Brigadere's childhood memoirs *Dievs. Daba. Darbs* were not banned and fragments were included in school textbooks, the title of the book was changed to *Triloģija* (Trilogy). The change of title was the needed to avoid the name *Dievs* (God) on the cover of the book, as the Soviet authorities promulgated atheism and religion was considered to be the opiate of the masses. Even though the book was used for didactic purposes, Brigadere's childhood memories are not didactic by their nature, as *Dievs. Daba. Darbs* is an adult author's message to an adult audience about her childhood. The fact that it is not children's literature, is graphically confirmed by its sentimentally philosophical pathos, which would be unable to captivate a young reader. It is significant that Brigadere has given her work a subtitle *A Book for Young and Old*, inconspicuously indicating in this way that this text can be understood by reading the book together. The author made no claims about returning to childhood and speaking the language of a child. In other words, her intention was not to create children's literature. The childhood memories of both Jaunsudrabiņš and Brigadere had an important social role. As recognized by Skultans, "although both writers had long since moved to Riga, their preoccupation with, and idealization of, their rural roots and the dissemination of their writing through school textbooks helped to shape a national identity, proud of its peasant heritage" (Skultans 541).

Up until the mid-20th century, "the imagery of childhood in rural nature" (Silova 222) dominated in Latvian children's memoir literature, as only very few writers or poets had not spent their childhood in the countryside. The "merging of self, nature and farm" (Schwartz 46) are also typical of those childhood memories reflected

in the works of authors in exile after World War II.

Jānis Klīdzējs' book *Cilvēka bērns* (1956) stands out particularly among the childhood memoirs of authors in exile. Salceviča's view is that "in the rich Latvian exile literature, he stood, as if aloof, beyond the schools and small schools, remaining faithful to himself, his style, his range of themes, his Latgallian and Catholic soul" (Salceviča 2012: 198-199). Klīdzējs belongs to that generation of writers who rapidly entered Latvian literature in the 1930s but was among those exiled in the 1940s. However, a confident positive pathos still dominates in his works. *Cilvēka bērns* is an epistle about life at a rural farmstead in eastern Latvia (Latgale) in the 1920s, where a 7-year-old boy, Bonifācijs, is at the centre of the plot. It is noteworthy that *Cilvēka bērns* was created in 1950s, when Klīdzējs lived in California and studied clinical sociology. A religious tone is present in Klīdzējs' childhood memories as Catholicism dominates in Latvia's eastern region and has a powerful influence. From the author's memories, it can be sensed that he has received critical reproaches about them: "Very liberal and sceptical groups start talking about the need for religious renewal. It was only just 10 years ago when this kind of thinking was almost taboo. If, at a reception for younger or middle-aged intellectuals, someone were to mention the importance of religion in the rainbow of human existence, the whole group would feel shocked, almost to despair: how could such an idiot turn up among our group of enlightened people?" (Klīdzējs, "Kādēļ es rakstu")

It is possible that the world portrayed in his book is markedly sunny and sweet out of nostalgia for his homeland, or perhaps influenced by the Californian climate. There are only weddings in *Cilvēka bērns*, but no funerals, no alcoholics in the family or among relatives, nobody is slaughtering any animals, children are not overworked, and it is quite normal that a young boy talks to a Catholic priest one on one, on an equal basis. The relationship of the book's main hero Bonifācijs with God is distinctly mercantile. By taking flowers to crucifix, there is hope that He will be more lenient about the knife which was *inadvertently* taken. In Bonifācijs' adventures, much is dependent on how he is able to organize things with the saints. In the child's understanding, each saint is responsible for some specific sphere. For example, Saint Anthony regulates the volume of rainfall. In the world created by the author, those who have friends *up top* have more success. A particular feature of these memoirs is the warm-hearted humour which is present in the language of almost every charater. As Klīdzējs lived in the USA, his childhood memoirs were not available to readers in Soviet Latvia until 1981. After the release of the book in Latvia, his childhood memoirs received such acclaim, that a film called *Cilvēka bērns* was made (director Jānis Streičs).

Even though Vizma Belševica's *Bille* continues the childhood memoirs' tradition in Latvian literature, its tone is different, as the traditional notion about childhood as being an idealized happy period of life, has been changed. As opposed to the previously reviewed works, the activities in these memoirs take place in an urban environment—they are the memories of a girl in the city, in which tragic sociopolitical and psychological conflicts of the period are reflected. These memoirs lead the reader through intense turning points in history: the fall of democracy and the establishment of an authoritarian regime in Latvia (1934), the Soviet occupation (1940), World War II on Latvian territory (1941-1945) and the first post-war Soviet decade.

The core of the plot in Belševica's childhood memoirs is formed by a story about the adventures of Sibilla Gūtmane or Bille, a girl from the Rīga working class suburb of Grīziņkalns. The author brings together colourful events in the girl's life: in her family, in the courtyard and in the countryside with her girlfriends, as well as with her teachers and schoolmates, neighbours and people met by chance. At the same time, it is a message about the end of childhood: the experienced horrors of war, what was seen and heard about those killed, people exhausted by hunger and heavy work (prisoners of war and those displaced to the Jewish ghetto) leaves an indelible impression in Bille, raising many issues about the absurd world order and lost values, about human nature and the choices that are made. The memoirs include the post-war Soviet period: joy about the end of the war is overshadowed by the dual morality of Soviet ideology, the subjection of the creative process to the dictates of ideologically *correct* themes, and the suppression of one's individual voice and subjective experiences. Bille is an inquisitive and lonely child who has acquired early self-dependence and been toughened by life. Even though these childhood memoirs are formed by individual stories unconnected within the plot, as is usual in Latvian literature, it is an artistically unified work, as each event described in the particular separate story concludes with Bille's new experiences, an evaluation of the situation and a wrap-up of what she has learned. Belševica had ended up being monitored by the KGB, with her books not being published in Soviet Latvia. *Bille* was first published in the USA (1992) and in Latvia three years later after the collapse of the Soviet regime. Belševica's *Bille* is a striking and unpolished portrayal of childhood memories, which has become one of the most popular works of this genre, gaining the recognition of both readers and critics. The film *Bille* (director Ināra Kolmane) was made based on the motifs in the book.

Reflections of Religious Festivals in Childhood Memoirs

Latvian authors' memories about the recent past, i.e. childhood, are alive, but are

simultaneously also partial and selective, which is why childhood memories are similar to a leadlight window compositionally, with each separate element having its own colour. A unified leadlight drawing, or the story created within its images can only be seen using external light. In Latvian literature, this external light is mainly the reflection from a childhood spent happily in the countryside, which is overlaid with an adult perspective: the first hurts and difficulties which one has during childhood have wounded, but at the same time, enriched one's experience.

Religious festivals have a special place among these selective memories. The childhood memoirs selected for analysis include memories about the first festivals that were experienced, usually connected with some event on the religious calendar. Authors' intention has not been to provide a precise description of a festival or to explain its semantic significance. However, the reader can gain an insight into the festival process, as well as to understand the significance of the festival, obviously through the prism of the writers' childhood memories.

A story from Jaunsudrabiņš' *Baltā grāmata* called *Sestdienas vakars* (Saturday Night) includes the author's memories of contact with the sacred, characterized by several of the young boy's feelings: cleanliness (on Saturday evenings people head for the *pirts*-sauna) and peace (everybody is resting after a hard working week). The young boy's religious experience is portrayed rather poetically: "My mother and I sat up in bed and prayed together. Then I clearly felt that God placed his hand over my eyes and slowly stroked my forehead. I opened my eyes to see him. Nothing. Darkness. Only the windows shined like sheets of white paper" (Jaunsudrabiņš, "Baltā grāmata" 34).

Whereas, in the story *Lieldienas* (Easter), the author has described the traditional Latvian swinging on swings at Easter and the egg battles, highlighting this festival as the awakening of nature. References to the Christian Easter experience are not included among the the main hero's feelings. In this way, the author has recalled the emotions of this festival, which are characteristic specifically to children.

Memories of the Sunday celebrations are included in the *Baznīca* (Church) story, with the central Sunday event being attendance at the church service. The young boy Jancis had been longing to go to the church for a long time: "When learned to say the Lord's prayer, I was allowed to go to church with mother. Up until that time I had to be satisfied with climbing up the hill and seeing the white tower with the red roof, and I could hear the ringing coming from afar on peaceful Saturday evenings" (Jaunsudrabiņš, "Baltā grāmata" 119). Memories of the first visit to the church include a description of the colourfulness of the space in a dynamic form: the author has chosen to portray his experience of the contact with the sacred space

in the form of an intensive dialogue. The dialogue between Jancis and his mother is made up of short questions, and answers that are equally short, about some colourful item visible within the church. In turn, the sound of the organ at the Sunday church service is described as the greatest of all the experiences: the simultaneously experienced fear and fascination have been fixed in the author's memory. In other words, the sacred in Jaunsudrabiņš' interpretation is *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* as it was described by Rudolf Otto (Otto 1917).

In the story *Jāņi* (John's Festival) the portrayal of the celebration of the summer solstice begins as follows: "It was a peculiar evening and an even more peculiar night" (Jaunsudrabiņš, "Baltā grāmata" 159). It should be added that the celebration of this festival has been inherited from the traditional Latvian religion and continues to be celebrated in Latvia nowadays too. The author remembers the emotions from his childhood very well, even though he mainly describes the *Jāņi* traditions, with the key word being *peculiar*. The author provides quite an accurate ethnographic description about how the summer solstice was celebrated earlier in Latvia, but the young boy's experience of the festival is at the centre of the story—the effort in waiting for the sunrise and trying not to fall asleep (in Latvia, the celebration of *Jāņi* concludes along with the sunrise).

The memories of the celebration of the winter solstice are reflected in the story *Ziemas svētki* (Winter Festival or Christmas). Jaunsudrabiņš begins his story by highlighting the long waiting: "Is the winter festival still a long way away? How many weeks? How many days? Three more weeks. Only a week and a half now. Five more days. Three days. Tomorrow already! They are here" (Jaunsudrabiņš, "Baltā grāmata" 315). In the writer's memories, the festival is highly awaited. Prayers on the evening of the festival and fortune telling are included in the description of the Winter Festival, but the winter solstice's traditional mask parade (*ķekatas*) is described as the main event on the ensuing day. The author remembers this as a succession of colourful and funny activities which are an inseparable component of this festival.

The story *Jaunsgads* (New Year) follows as a surprise, which in contrast to the Winter Festival or Christmas, has remained in the memory of the author firstly for its atmosphere as a Christian festival: "[...] on New Year's morning and we sang and prayed to God, as Christian people should. But on the previous evening, entering the new year, we were pure pagans. Then we had a completely different God, a different religion" (Jaunsudrabiņš, "Baltā grāmata" 333). The author has wanted to emphasize that traditional Latvian religious customs were still practiced during his childhood, which were not in opposition to Christianity, but existed very well alongside

the world of the Latvian peasant. The pouring of fortunes (fortune telling by pouring melted tin into water) was portrayed as the main celebratory element of New Year. However, the juxtaposition of Christianity and Latvian traditional religion is already the author's view as an adult, and is not included in the description of the young boy's attitudes.

A story called *Maija svētdiena* (Sunday in May), included in Brigadere's childhood memoirs *Dievs. Daba. Darbs*, reflects a child's first contact with sacred time and space. Sunday is a special day for Annele: she is not required to do any herding work and can go visiting with her parents. Her enthusiasm is so great that it seems that "she is just bursting with energy" (Brigadere 50). Having picked some wildflowers, Annele is about to snap some birch branches, but she is admonished by her father: "Think about the fact that this is also a child of God, just like you. A living creation that feels pain just like you. [...] Don't snap them. Never waste little trees for no reason. Let them grow, so they can gain joy in God's sun" (Brigadere 50). In Brigadere's interpretation, the child is introduced to the sacral space in relation to nature, in which a tree is a child of God, as it transpires, and God's sun shines over everything. In the child's interpretation of the world, the unity of the microcosm (human) and the macrocosm (nature) is marked: everything is unified. Having understood this, Annele notices that "father has eyes like the sky" (Brigadere 51). Respectively, her attitude to those close to her changes through contact with the mysterious unity of the world and she notices that everything is different: "Why is today like something that has never been before? Annele thinks. And comes up with the explanation. This is because today is Sunday. The forest, flowers, the blue sky are Sunday, father and mother are Sunday. Their hands are Sunday. There is no work in their hands. There is no haste in their legs" (Brigadere 51). In this way, the author leads the reader from the sacral space into sacral time—into Sunday. In the Christian tradition, Sunday is a holiday, it is a day that should be devoted to God. This is why Brigadere remembers that her mother, having sat by the side of the road, converses, to the wonderment of the girl. Not with her or with her father, but with someone else. Anna Brigadere indicates clearly, that in the child's understanding, prayer is a conversation with God. In addition, the girl is surprised how her mother describes God, when reciting a psalm, *The Lord is my Shepherd*. In a masterful way, the author reflects the rural girl's lack of understanding of the comparison of God with a shepherd. Having only just come into contact with the mysterious power unifying the world, Annele wonders how God has turned out to be a shepherd. Having grasped the mysterious, the girl cannot accept that God could be a common shepherd, and she sees him in her imagination in poetic images: "His coat is like

flakes of foam with hems of blue sky. He is gigantic, gigantic, gigantic. His gilded wing tips slide above the forest. When he flies over, the meadow bursts into endless flowers and a sunny field. But he's looking and searching. What is he searching for there? Well, if he is a shepherd, then what else than his flock" (Brigadere 51).

It is notable that in Brigadere's childhood memoirs the contact with the sacred occurs in nature. Annele's religious experience does not come about from visiting a church, but by listening to her mother's Sunday prayer by the side of the road. The secrets of nature revealed by her father lead her into the sacred space, which she then begins to see in all its splendor. Whereas, sacral time is described as a balance: "Then there is peace. And then there is Sunday. The blue sky is Sunday, the forest, meadows, flowers, birds, father, mother—everything is then Sunday" (Brigadere 53). Brigadere portrays Annele's return to the secular space masterfully, as the girl's poetic fantasies are suddenly interrupted: "Mother has stood up, shaken and tied her scarf. "Well, have you rested your legs?" asked her father. 'You don't want a drink?'" (Brigadere 54). In this way, the author draws a fine boundary between the sacral and the profane, as well as illustrating her inkling about this boundary in her childhood. In reading this story, we notice that Brigadere has revealed a deeply personal experience, which we can define as intimate introspection.

It should be emphasized that Brigadere has not described a visit to church on a Sunday, because the sacral space in her memoirs is not associated with the church. The description of an experience gained at church is quite brief in the story *Dieva galds* (The Table of God of Lords Supper): "[...] in the church, on that sacred place behind those white railings, where gold vessels stand on a purple blanket, covered by gold-fringed cloths. Candles flicker on both sides, while in the middle, the Saviour is staring and waiting for the people with open arms" (Brigadere 110). It is easy to notice that objects define the sacred space in the author's memories.

In the story *Jāņi* (John's Festival), Brigadere reveals her childhood memories about celebrating the summer solstice in the countryside. The author has included the weaving of garlands as an important element in the celebration of this festival: the girls look for oaks and try to reach the branches so they can weave them into a garland. The next element—the sounds of the *Jāņi* songs across the fields. This is because special folk songs are sung in Latvia during the celebrations for this festival with a refrain typical only to this festival (*līgo, līgo...*). In this story too, Anna Brigadere reveals what she has seen herself, as the information, in a way, is suddenly cut short—there is no account about the lighting of the bonfire, about dancing and singing until the sunrise, about eating the *Jāņi* cheese and drinking beer. The most important thing in these memories is unstated—little Annele was obviously so tired

that she fell asleep, and she did not experience the celebration of *Jāņi*, which usually takes place until sunrise. Obviously, this nuance of childhood memories can only be understood by those readers who have a good knowledge of Latvian culture.

In the story *Ķekatas nāk!* (The *Ķekatas* [the Mask Parade] are Coming!) Brigadere remembers celebrating the Winter Festival, which is firstly described as the "endlessly awaited" (Brigadere 87) festival. This commences with finishing off any jobs and decorating the house, which is the main sign that the festival has arrived. The festival meal began after the family returned from the *pirts-sauna*. The quiet nature of Christmas Eve is highlighted among Annele' feelings: "The first festival feeling embraces everyone like a mildly trembling wave. Nobody speaks loudly. There is just quiet talk and smiles" (Brigadere 87). In contrast, the next day has remained in the author's memoirs for its loudness, as the mask parade arrives (*ķekatas*). Brigadere describes the Latvian cultural tradition in quite some detail, and the story concludes with the girl's regret that the festival is over: "The great wave has flowed away, Christmas is over, and it seems that it has torn a chunk out of her heart, so sorry for her, so sorry" (Brigadere 91). There is a portentous nuance in this message—the author does not remember Christmas as a celebration of the birth of Christ, but as a Latvian traditional cultural festival. There are not the usual Christmas semantics and attributes of today in her childhood memoirs.

The story *Kad pūpoli zied* (When the Pussy Willows Flower) includes a small reference to *Pūpolu svētdiena* (Pussy Willow Sunday), but the author has not described the celebration of the festival. In the memories, she has spent some time on the Bible story about how Peter denied Jesus. The tradition of reading the story about Christ's suffering, which prepares one for Easter and explains its meaning has been highlighted, but the celebration of Easter is not included in Brigadere's childhood memoirs.

Memories about the celebration of religious festivals are not included in *Cilvēka bērns,* Klīdzējs' childhood memoirs, in contrast to the previously examined works from Jaunsudrabiņš and Brigadere. The author's selective memory has ignored the themes favoured in the previously examined childhood memoirs: the celebration of Christmas, Easter and *Jāņi*. Festivals are merely reference points in time, for Klīdzējs, eg., in discussing an event, he adds that it took place shortly before Easter. It is also pointless looking for descriptions about Sundays. The author explains the boy's attitude to Sundays as follows: "Boņs liked Mondays better than any other days, right from the beginning, because Mondays were also the beginning of something. When grandfather started some jobs, such as tree planting, fixing the fence around the house or clearing stones from the fields, which he could not do

without the assistance of Boņs, he always [discussed] these jobs in advance, and always added: 'We will start on Monday'" (Klīdzējs 214). The impact of the cultural environment needs to be considered in understanding why the boy had such an attitude towards Sundays. Klīdzējs spent his childhood in eastern Latvia, or Latgale, where Catholicism dominates. The Church's request to avoid working on Sundays and to dedicate this day to God, i.e, to take part in a church service, was strongly observed in his childhood. Some people went to church, but others remained at home and rested. In other words, in the understanding of a child—they did nothing. Sundays were not described in Klīdzējs' memoirs, as they seemed boring to the boy. Monday, however, always came with some new work, events, misunderstandings or incidents. In other words, Monday meant a return to life. Quite paradoxically, in not describing Sunday, the author has actually described it: it is such a sacred day that life stops on that day.

Klīdzējs' childhood memoirs are a succession of dynamic stories, at the centre of which is 7 year old Bonifācijs, or Boņs, who is getting to know the world, through his involvement in the life of a rural farm and gaining his first life experience. Firstly, this is experience concerning relationships, which come about through contact with family members, neighbours and strangers. Secondly, it is the experience of relationships with the metaphysical world, where the author's selective memory has special significance. Boņs has a discussion with Saint George, his protector, has hopes of seeing the Virgin Mary and talks to the Saviour, when he has done something bad or if he needs advice. Klīdzējs has successfully balanced the horizontal and vertical dimension in his memories, allowing them to overlap as well. In other words, the sacral is present together with the profane. This creates a special enthusiastic presence and the sense of an uninterrupted festival, which the author has not wanted to intensify any further in telling us about the celebration of some other festival. In other words, in Klīdzējs' memoirs, each day and every new event is like a festival, which encourages the experience of something special: "Then you finally start speaking with God—or at least you think that you have to discuss everything, which you cannot know or understand yourself, with God himself..." (Klīdzējs, *Cilvēka bērns* 249).

As in Klīdzējs' work, no descriptions of religious festivals can be found in *Bille*, Vizma Belševica's childhood memoirs. However, the author has not shied away from memories about celebrating festivals, as secular festivals have remained in her selective memory, eg., the celebration of the proclamation of the Republic of Latvia prior to World War II, has been preserved in her selective memory, in her story *Valsts svētki* (National Celebration) and *Dzimšanas diena* (Birthday). Belševica's

experience of religious festivals in her childhood has not been as special events, as in her family, a critical attitude towards religion dominated. The author has revealed this in her story *Dieva meklēšana* (Searching for God), in which there is a description about how the little girl, Bille, wants to go for a walk with her grandmother, who tends to wander into churches. Even though the author has not mentioned that the walks take place on Sundays, this can be understood by what happens in the story's plot. In addition, the the author's experience over several Sundays is reflected in this story and can be understood from the story's plot. There is already criticism of religion, expressed by Bille's mother in the first sentence of the story, where she remarks to the grandmother: "It would have been better to take the child to paddle in the pool at Grīziņkalns" (Belševica 45). *Searching for God*—is how Bille's mother describes the walks and their venturing into churches on Sundays. In this way, Bille has developed an idea about various Christian denominations: "[…] if the Salvation Army is banging drums and singing somewhere, grandmother and Bille stop by the group, listen and even join in the singing a little. If the doors to some church, be it Catholic, Lutheran or Baptist, are open, they go inside to look and listen. They sing with the Lutherans as well, but not with the Catholics: the latter have choirs singing upstairs in the church, singing beautifully, and generally everything with the Catholics is beautiful and mysterious" (Belševica 45). It is surprising, that the only things in the author's memory that have remained from the Orthodox Church, which she has not entered herself, only having had a look from the outside, are religious items: "The gates are directly opposite and in place of the gates there is this long narrow building with a glass window. Through the window, there is Jesus with his hand raised in blessing. The long face and the long palm with thin fingers are painted, but the surroundings are all gilded, star-like, with strands of small pearls. Wonder why it's like that?" (Belševica 47). The author has written how Bille's gaze lingered on the church with the "blue and green towers. They are roundish, like a black radish with the root in the air, only the root terminates in a branched cross. The crosses shine in the sun in a way that dazzles the eyes" (Belševica 47). Belševica has maintained the enchantment of an unattainable at that time, sacral space in her memories, which has been reinforced by the singing of a deep male voice, which could even be heard outside the church (Belševica 48), even though the words could not be understood by the girl (in this way the author makes it understood that the singing in the church is in Russian). The reason why Bille is not allowed to enter the Orthodox church, is explained by her grandmother's sharp retort to the girl's invitation to enter and to listen to the singing: "My legs won't carry me there! But they are Orthodox! That's how they trick people to go inside with their angelic singing! And in the

end? Nothing!" (Belševica 48). The author has not immediately revealed the source of this attitude, although the explanation follows at the end of the story, when her grandmother talks about what her family had experienced: "A bearded parish priest has set himself up in the rectory and declared that everyone who crosses over to the emperor's religion will be given land by the emperor. But my father and mother were servants with many children, and they really wanted land so they could work for themselves and not for others, to live like people and maybe even to educate their children. Mother was immediately fired up to move over to the emperor's religion. Father had his doubts, however, and said that all the land in the district already belonged to somebody. Will that Russian church be measuring it for them from up in the clouds? But but mother said no and no! […] Isn't it all the same, whatever district it is? […] Well, father didn't have any say in family matters anyway, everything was always how the wife wanted it, and so they moved over to the Russians. […] then they went to the parish priest to ask for the land that was promised. The parish priest said that the church was looking for it. As soon as it is found, it will also be provided. […] the land wasn't granted, and it turned out that father was right" (Belševica 51-52). This story clearly reveals, why there are no memories about the celebration of religious festivals in Belševica's childhood memoirs: her forebears had been disillusioned by the politicization of the Orthodox Church, and furthermore had tried to use religion itself for secular goals. When this was unsuccessful, a critical attitude towards the Orthodox Christianity had become rooted in the family, which was strengthened even further by their rejection by the Lutherans, as "the Lutherans would not accept them back. They either didn't want them, or the Russian government had forbidden it" (Belševica 52). It can be understood that a critical attitude towards one religion had grown into a denial of religion, including the rejection of religious festivals. We can assume that Belševica has no memories of celebrating religious festivals, because they were not celebrated, or were marked in such a poor way, that they have disappeared from the author's memory.

The Semantic Fields of Religious Festivals

In the previously analyzed childhood memoirs of Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš, Anna Brigadere, Jānis Klīdzējs and Vizma Belševica, a conceptual semantic approach was applied which allows for conclusions to be made about the connotative meanings of the semantic components in these literary texts. As explained by Rinkeviča, "childhood semiotics are a system of signs which encompass associative components or signs characterizing childhood themes associated with the concept of childhood. Their establishment and systematization open up opportunities not only to go deeper

into a discursive analysis of childhood themes in the works of Latvian writers, but to also establish typological similarities and differences" (Rinkeviča 10) in stories about childhood.

Several common and different connotative meanings, which form specific semantic fields, have found their place in the selective memory of the reviewed authors in the stories about religious festivals experienced in childhood. First of all, the peace which characterizes the sacral period of Saturday evenings should be mentioned in Jaunsudrabiņš' memories, and in Brigadere's story about Sunday and Christmas Eve. Secondly, the noisiness which is typical of traditional Latvian cultural festival elements (swinging, the mask parade and fortune telling) is outlined: Jaunsudrabiņš has highlighted this in his memories in talking about the celebration of Easter, *Jāņi*, the Winter Festival or Christmas and New Year, and Brigadere in portraying *Jāņi* and the Winter Festival or Christmas. The third semantic field relates to the sacral space, i.e. the church, where there is a particular surprise, which in the interpretation of Jaunsudrabiņš is the contact with the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans.* In Brigadere's story, surprises are illustrated by the strong order of religious objects, copied by the girl as she plays in the meadow and creates her own church, while in Belševica's memories, surprise is created by the singing of the Catholics and Orthodox. We can divide off the presence of Christianity as the fourth semantic field, which Jaunsudrabiņš has interwoven into the story about participating in a church service on a Sunday and in the story about the celebration of the New Year, Brigadeve—in the story about going off visiting on Sundays and Pussy Willow Sunday, while in Klīdzējs' childhood memoirs, Christianity is like a background against which the young lad's experiences take place.

As can be seen, the semantic fields in the works of the reviewed authors differ, especially if we compare the childhood memoirs which took place prior to World War II (Jaunsudrabiņš and Brigadere), with the memoirs that took place later (Klīdzējs and Belševica). Up until the mid-20th century, childhood semantics were founded on the literary tradition of the late 19th century in the memoirs written up by the Latvian authors,—home and the rural environment as indicators of a happy childhood. Authors, whose memoirs are sourced in the second half of the 20th century, came to experience World War II, and Belševica goes into quite some detail on this. Her childhood memories are centred mainly in the war period, which is why festivals, including the celebration of religious festivals, have not remained in the author's memory. Obviously, these events pale into insignificance against the background of World War II. Whereas, in the case of Klīdzējs, the author's experience of emigration, which is present in his childhood memoirs, needs to be considered,

as the Latgale rural farm is the centre of the world for him, i.e., the space where it is as safe as being in his mother's lap (this is why there are frequent references to the presence of the Virgin Mary in the book).

We can conclude that childhood semiotics in 20th century literature encompass typological similarities and differences which have been determined by the authors' experience, and which have been gained in different times and spaces. As pointed out by Lotman, a person who exists in a cultural space inescapably creates an organized spatial sphere about him/herself (Лотман 334). A child's existence in real time and space is their own individual experience, and in the same way, each author's artistic world's time and space category reproduction forms are individual. However, all the analyzed works have a more or less religious context typical of them, which are revealed by stories about celebrating religious festivals.

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The "Alien" within "One's Own" in the Twenty-first Century Latvian Literature: On the Material of Dace Rukšāne's Novel *Russian Skin*

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Abstract   The paper is aimed at analysing the novel *Russian Skin* (2020) by Latvian prose writer Dace Rukšāne and focuses on the problem of self-identification, transformation of woman's identity under the impact of political and social changes in the context of a binary opposition "one's own—alien." Within the frame of everyday life in Soviet Latvia, this literary work reflects and brings to the forefront the specificity of the inclusive identity, when the opposites "one's own" and "alien," in the result of interaction, are seen not as dualities but rather as a new wholeness embodying both opposites. Via the theme of partner relationships, so characteristic of this writer, the author employs the model of intimate relationships between two outwardly incompatible worlds—the world of the main heroine of the novel (a Latvian) and that of her partner (a Russian), representative of the colonizing power, to symbolically show not only the existence of two causal world principles, but also the possibility for the two outward opposites' merging into a new entity characterised by inclusivity. This is just the mother—a bearer of a new life—, who strives to create "one's own" (a new-born) from the "alien," and who, due to transformations in self-identity, becomes the embodiment of the "alien" among "one's own." The novel is the interpretation on the issue, widely discussed in Latvia in the context of preserving national identity, concerning the development of hybrid/ inclusive/ multiple identities, and on factors responsible for this (invasion, occupation, ethnic relations, interaction between cultures etc.).

Keywords   cultural memory; identity; Soviet past; Latvianness; Russianness; literature of self-reflection

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Introduction

Seeking for self-identification in the contemporary literature is related to the topicality of the reflection on the past within today's context and to marking alternative developmental variants of the future. The novels on national history and peculiarity of processes and events of the past published during recent decades in Latvia have several functions. Along with their own artistic inherent value, they contribute to the re-evaluation of the past, to strengthening of patriotism, shaping the civic consciousness, and, among other things, are involved in the social construction of ethnic and national identity, and in revealing discursive manifestations. In the attempt to find answers to the question "Who am I?," the narratives about "self"/ "one's own" approach problems of how the individuals create their self-identity and in what way the categorization of "others" is carried out. The process of identity construction includes interaction: the conceptions about oneself and about others develop during interactions under the influence of social reality and values and norms existing in the society, and in the result of the subjective experience as well.

The Soviet occupation (1940-1941; 1944/5-1991) and the imposed Russification had essential consequences not only for the structure of state management, but also for the human consciousness. This is confirmed by the notion of the "unburied (Soviet) past" fixed as painful memory in collective mind (Etkind 182). The issue about a collective memory and identity was brought to the foreground, when Latvia was on the way to restoring its sovereignty (the last decades of the twentieth century), and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, within the context of openness, blending of cultures and globalization, when in the national cultural policy several significant decisions for the renewal and maintenance of national cultural heritage as well as for preserving national and ethnic identity were adopted. One of the supportive plans was related to the publication of a unique series of novels *Mēs. Latvi-*

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ja. 20. gadsimts [We. Latvia. The 20th Century], based on studies of documents and testimonies of the epoch, and issued in the framework of the programme *Nacionālās identitātes veicināšana* [Promotion of National Identity] supported by the National Culture Capital foundation (Kacane and Romanovska). The idea of creating a series of historical novels was given by Gundega Repše (b. 1960), winner of the Baltic Assembly Award in literature, after the publication of a story collection *Mēs. 20. gadsimts* [We. The 20th Century] (2011) (Žolude). To initiate the discussion within the frame of Latvia's centenary celebrations on the processes of self-identity development and on multiform and multi-layer impacts of historical, political and social events upon Latvian national identity and culture, several novels[1] telling "about us ourselves, about how a Latvian has dwelt under the shade of different historical events, what he has felt, how he has survived or—on the contrary—has perished both bodily and spiritually" (*Laimes kods* 33-34) were published starting from 2013 and onwards. Although the novel *Krieva āda* [Russian Skin] (2020) by writer and publicist Dace Rukšāne (b. 1969) formally is not included in this series, content-wise it relates to the ideological nature of the series and depicts the life on the occupied territory of Soviet Latvia during the 1950-1960s—the time under Nikita Khrushchev[2] when initial steps in de-Stalinization were taken.

The new postcolonial literature creatively develops the theme of relationships between "one's own" (colonized people/ nation) and the "alien" (colonizers' people/ nation). "One's own" is given a positive connotation in most cases, while many aspects of the "alien" carry a negative connotation: "The 'Other', by definition, lacks identity, propriety, purity, literality. In this sense, he can be described as the foreign: the one who does not belong to a group, does not speak a given language, does not have the same customs; he is the unfamiliar, uncanny, unauthorized, inappropriate, and the improper" (Al-Saidi 95). Thereby, the depiction of the "alien" culture and its representatives in a caricatured and stereotypical way is facilitated (Costa; JanMohamed). Although it is fiercely criticized by the deniers of a postcolonial theory, "[p]ostcolonialism is a manifestation of the desire for the acceptance and understanding of otherness [...]" (McGillis and Khorana 15). In addition, at comprehending events

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1 Osvalds Zebris' *Gaiļu kalna ēnā* [In the Shadow of Rooster Hill], Guntis Berelis' *Vārdiem nebija vietas* [Words Were of No Use], Pauls Bankovskis' *18*, Inga Gaile' *Stikli* [The Glass Shards], Gundega Repše's *Bogene*, Māris Bērziņš' *Svina garša* [The Taste of Lead], Inga Ābele's *Duna* [The Rumble], Andris Akmentiņš' *Skolotāji* [Teachers], Nora Ikstena's *Mātes piens* [Soviet Milk], Andra Manfelde's *Virsnieku sievas* [The Officers' Wives], Kristīne Ulberga-Rubīne's *Tur* [There], Laima Kota's *Istaba* [The Room], Arno Jundze's *Sarkanais dzīvsudrabs* [Red Mercury] etc.

2 N. S. Khrushchev (1894-1971)—the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1953-1964) and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers (1958-1964).

of the past and re-assessing national historical memory, in this type of narratives the analysis of the "alien" is mostly orientated towards self-identification, namely, the perceptions about "oneself" (one's people and nation) develop through the understanding about the "alien." The "other" is then a social construction, which helps the establishing of the own identity (Zenelaga and Goga). Focusing on the "alien," which due to various historical and political events influenced and to a great extent determined a life model, identity and self-confidence of another nation, create a deeper understanding about the "self" and history of one's own nation: "[…] the construction of the O/other is fundamental to the construction of the Self" (Ashcroft et al. 156). In this way, the ethnocentrism of postcolonial literature manifests itself and "codifies and preserves the structures of its own mentality" (JanMohamed 19). In its turn (self)identity in this context may be defined as "a set of values, assumptions and meanings that guide an agent's self-interpretations, […] and a mode of differentiating self from other" (Todd).

Rukšāne, became known in Latvia's literary space mainly through her literary works exploring the theme of feminine sexuality and intimacy. She "emphasizes woman's dependence on her sexuality, thereby achieving a long-unseen popularity phenomenon in Latvian literature" (Cimdiņa 96). In the 90s of the twentieth century, the author composed basically poetry, but at the beginning of the twenty-first century Rukšāne realized herself in writing plays[1], stories[2] and novels, as well as in translation[3] and journalism. In 2007, a feature film *Nerunā par to* [Don't Speak about It] directed by Una Celma was produced, where, to reveal "psychological qualities of women on the Soviet territory" (Burve-Rozīte 3), motifs from two Rukšāne's works—the debut novel *Romāniņš* [The Little Love Affair] (2002) and her second novel *Beatrises gultas stāsti* [Beatrice's Bedtime Stories] (2002)—were employed. The author's works provoked discussions, "but the reasons for them are the depicted sex episodes rather than the axiological nature of the novel" (Ceplis 59).

The center of Rukšāne's attention has always been a female and her personal life story, usually depicted in a quite open manner, and frequently using a letter and diary form as a supplementary aid. The author's protagonist is constantly seeking for something—trying to understand herself and her place in this world, she realizes herself in work and in the status of mother, desperately tries to meet the ideal

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1   E.g. *Rīt atbrauks Florinda* [Florinda is Coming Tomorrow] (2001); *Es tev nepateicu visu* [I didn't Tell you Everything] (2003).

2   *Ķīpsalas putni* [The Birds of Kipsala Island] (2009); *Mīlasstāsti* [Love Stories] (2015).

3   E.g. Translation of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* (1996) for the staging in Daile theater (2003) by D. Rukšāne, book version in Latvian by D. Rukšāne and P. Prauliņš (2004).

spouse, actively changing partners. Rukšāne is interested in a woman who "likes to challenge old stereotypes, destroy the balance, endangering it by the unpredictable zig-zags of the primeval passion" (*Romāniņš* 49) and "to do everything that comes into her head" (*Beatrises gultas stāsti* 11).

Peculiarities of the Novel's Narrative

The novel *Russian Skin* stands out against a backdrop of other writer's works and appeals to a reader not so much by sensual peripetia, love triangles, but rather by its historical and documental orientation: it offers a panorama of life in Latvia of the second half of the twentieth century (harbor city Liepāja) and reveals the context of the Soviet power more in detail. In this novel, Rukšāne fully expresses herself as a psychologist and historian—an explorer of minute details and a master of disclosing them. The focus of the novel is on the life story of two women (mother Emīlija and daughter Meldra)—the struggle for a survival under the harsh World War II (WW2), postwar (Soviet) conditions, losing her first husband for mother and father for a daughter, marrying to get out into the world, seeking for their innermost self, work and, of course, falling in the abyss of romantic and sexual experience, specifically—mother's forbidden love for a Russian (a representative of the Soviet power) and finally—milestone transformations on all levels of life.

Though the two women depicted in the novel reside together for a long time, they seem to be living in different temporalities—two parallel lives in two parallel worlds and, almost never coming into contact with one another: "The whole Meldra's life passes alongside with mine like the tram rails, practically without any point of contact […]" (*Krieva āda* 64). Mother devotes very little time to her elder daughter, and though she is fully aware about her negligence, sexual desire, lust, and passion outside her marriage gain the upper hand. Within this context, the sensual code brought into foreground in Rukšāne's novel is of major importance, since it always appears when Emīlija is characterized: the emphasis is laid on some parts of a woman's body (skin, neck, collar-bone), scents (smell of the skin, parfume *Cuir de Russie*—a distinguished oriental fragrance with a strong character—a symbol of the past memories, sensuality, fusion of masculine and feminine energies, as well as a link with Russia and the Russians; the image of the sea that symbolizes not only vastness and cyclic changes and natural rhythms, but also yearnings for adventure and freedom (mother's passionate meetings with her lover in a cabin not far from the sea), the theme of swimming when "hair like waves, the back like sand, but hands like fishes" (*Krieva āda* 16), also watching Henrik Ibsen's (1828-1906) symbolic play *The Lady from the Sea* (1888) that stands for the concept of *New Woman*

crucial in *fin-de-siècle* literature; epithets, metaphors and repetitions of lexemes related to horses and horse-riding (rider's waxed leather boots, a sweaty and foamy horse, a mare with its tail sideways, "mares' time"[1]).

The daughter, a calm and practical person by her nature, painfully suffers the dearth of mother's attention and tries to accept the duties assigned to her: she helps her stepfather in building work, brings up her stepbrother and stepsister—mother's illegitimate children (the fact the elder daughter finds out only several years later), she studies, starts her own family, gives birth and raises children, helps her husband to forget horrors he had experienced in *cheka*[2] cellars, and self-realizes working in a good position.

The differences in world perception between mother and daughter are revealed not only by the lack of a cordial communication between them, but also in priorities of life goals, including spatial priorities. Mother's dream has always been the life in the urban space—initially in the capital Rīga, then at least in Liepāja, but not in the countryside where consumer goods and food-stuffs are in short supply. The utilitarian aspect is also the reason why she agrees starting a family with a man she does not love. In turn, the daughter from her first marriage, which broke down due to tragedies and deaths experienced during the war, is a child of nature who has always cherished the dream to dedicate her life to exploring the world, animals and birds, around her. In this respect, Meldra's attempts to observe the life in a white tail eagle's nest even being far from the countryside is worthwhile mentioning as this strong interest in nature is proven and emphasized again in the end of the novel, when the young woman leaves the city as a place of living for the countryside. This binary opposition "civilization" (urban world as an ideal environment for a mother) vs "nature" (untouched by a human's hand and the rural environment as an ideal environment for a daughter) is stressed in the novel again by the above image of the eagle, this time made of metal, on the car belonging to mother's second husband Vilis. Daughter's attempts to grasp the world around her and mother's controversial nature are revealed also by their choice of literature. If mother reads *A Room of One's Own* (1929) by Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), one of the most important modernist authors of the twentieth century, then daughter focuses on the work of juvenile literature known for its lofty idealism and vivid imagination *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* (1906; 1907) written by representative of Swedish Romantic revival Selma Lagerlöf (1858-1940), the first woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature (1909). If the character of moth-

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1   "Mare's times" stands for female sexual instinct, the power of sexual desire, impulse and lust.

2   *Cheka* (Russian)—Soviet political secret police organization (officially known as All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution, Profiteering and Corruption).

er is a version of the *femme fatale* archetype—a feminist ideal of the New Woman that emerged in the late nineteenth century decadence and Modernism literature, then her daughter is portrayed as having more traditional female role than that governed by sexuality: she is concerned with hearth, home, husband, children, and native land, her femininity is the confirmation of her national identity and belonging. According to Jones, appropriate behaviour and "proof of patriotism" are defined by woman's gender performance and feminine qualities that include "'softer charms' and 'modest virtue' of sensibility" (Jones 299).

The Cultural-Historical Background of the Depicted Events

The strained relationships between mother and daughter as well as differences in their world perception and characters allow the author of this novel to describe the most essential events of the middle and the second half of the twentieth century in Latvia, showing their complex, controversial and unpredictable nature: "This war and chaos have ruined so much—people without the past, only with their destinies" (*Laimes kods* 40). Similarly, the writer ironically indicates that today the past of the Latvian nation has already become a myth, which requires reassessing: "This [French] perfume has become a legend. A unicorn. A total myth, like the whole past of our ancestors" (*Krieva āda* 221). Alexander Etkind, historian and cultural scientist, focussing on the impact of Soviet terror on cultural memory, emphasizes that either the true or the mythical prevails in human's consciousness depending on a specific historic situation and the ideology of ruling power and power of ideology, thus "[b]orders between myths and truths tend to shift and curve from one political position to another and from one generation to another. These movements of truth in the space of memory comprise, in their own turn, an important part of cultural history" (Etkind 189-190).

Latvian author in her novel expresses the historical aspects through the feeling of loss, through the loss of freedom and destruction of the foundations of national culture:

> […] in a comparatively recent past we experienced the Second World War as well as more than 50-year-long occupation and the life in a totalitarian and communist state. During these years we had to live through the loss of almost all our freedoms and through an intensive and targeted destruction of the Latvian nation and culture. The Latvians were murdered, exiled to Siberia, and in turn, great masses of people from other republics of the USSR were settled in Latvia, and they enjoyed here economically and culturally more privileged

life than the local population (*Laimes kods* 16).

In *Russian Skin*, the life of both mother and daughter is determined to a great extent by the historical and political events in the country—WW2, post-wars years, life in Soviet Latvia (the date of the epilogue is 1983). The narrative offered to the readers is a peculiar return in the past which is compared by the author with Emīlija's looking into the mirror: "This is only a moment. A moment of honour to the past [...]. She glances into the mirror and sees herself young. [...] Mother does not hear this, she is overtaken by mares' time [the passionate past]" (*Krieva āda* 7-8).

The description of the plot is given as a sequence of two narratives written in the first person, when a flow of events is provided as a fragmented string from different—mother's and daughter's—perspectives. This allows the reader to look at one and the same events from different standpoints and, by relating them to one's own experience, assess them more objectively. Mother's and daughter's life stories re-echo in destinies of other Latvian inhabitants (the Latvians, Jews, Russians mentioned in the novel) and are oriented towards having a resonance among the people belonging to the state and historical reality of that time. The author managed to achieve this aim by studying archive materials and periodicals, and via a survey conducted among the Liepāja people, including her own mother (Pusnakts šovs septiņos). The novel is dedicated to her parents and grand-parents, emphasizing the significance and influence of history upon destinies of three generations of Latvian families.

The many historical events made an impact on Emīlija's life: the disappearance of her first husband Peter in the war, birth of a child, threats of being exiled to Siberia ("[people] were taken away, even children suffering from pneumonia" (*Krieva āda* 11)), burning down of her house, death of her mother and brother, moving "from one house to another, from one neighbour to the next, often having only a small place on the floor to sleep on" (*Krieva āda* 9-10), hard physical work "in the mire of the collective farm" (*Krieva āda* 16), as well as the job in the canteen and laying the table for banquets in Soviet Liepāja. Due to the impact of these events, a woman has to give up her great dream—to become a perfume master-chemist, because the immediate need to earn means to live on makes her choose a different (cook's) profession.

Her elder daughter's first knowledge about the past is based on the experience of her mother and her aunt: "[...] I know that there was war when I was very small, that people were shot dead like roebucks, that we have luckily escaped [...]" (*Krieva āda* 26). Though the consciousness of the naïve child still has fear of being sent to

Siberia, "[…] where bears and wolves live and eat people" (*Krieva āda* 19), mother's stories about that time have not always been open and expanded enough, and therefore the daughter often feels confused—she is not even sure whether her father has indeed died and whether her mother has ever loved him. The girl lives in the idealized world to escape the duties imposed by her mother. Though she had not yet been able to systematize the information obtained independently, and in her mind characters from myths (Romulus, Rem, Apollo, Artemis) coexist with those encountered in life or seen in the neighbourhood (Spridzānu Sandris and Raimonds), as well as with famous political figures (Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev), nevertheless she gradually arrives at the understanding of the causal relationships and the fate of Latvia and its population. In her early childhood, she is influenced by the Soviet education system and for a while believes in the bright future of communism: "[…] all would smile and laugh—would run to work with joy, goods in shops would be free of charge. Wow—that would be life! […] I am happy, I, too, am building communism. I am the future of our country. A Soviet child" (*Krieva āda* 59-60). The novel, in retrospective, reveals transformations and the development of self-identity of young people of that time. Daughter's perceptions about the Russian nation in the novel are shaped mainly by listening to hostile stories of her friends and other persons who shared their views. The protagonist starts to participate in an illegal artist group, and they secretly meet to read and discuss literary works under the ban (for instance, they read prohibited in the USSR romantic novel *Doctor Zhivago* (1958)[1] by Boris Pasternak's (1890-1960) published in the US). This is the way how the young girl shapes her perceptions about a family life and about the past of Latvia which has made a significant impact on many people's destinies (including her own). Later, when she already is a wife and mother, she is full of hate for the Soviet system. A major factor for that—in KGB[2] cellars her arrested husband is tortured and his political position is influenced. She is also filled with hate for her mother who has 2 children from her Russian lover, and who starts a new family with another Russian after the first one has died in a tragic road accident. Unlike her mother, who has lost her way in the labyrinth of life, Meldra is able to cherish her dreams and, adhering to her own principles, she strives for fulfilling them.

"One's Own" and the "Alien" in the Novel

In the publicistic book *Laimes kods* [Code of Happiness], Rukšāne maintains that

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1   The novel won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1958.

2   KGB (Russian)—*Komitet gosudarstvennoj bezopasnosti* or Committee for State Security was the main security agency for the Soviet Union from 1954 until 1991.

the Latvians are united "not only by a common geography, but also by traditions, history and mentality." In author's opinion, the dismal and reserved nature of the nation has been shaped by "the ruthless history of occupation years, and by the changeable and often severe weather" (*Laimes kods* 6-7).

The novel *Russian Skin* deals with the issues of national identity and holds a debate on "one's own" and the "alien." These problems become obvious through the nuances of relationships between the Latvians, Germans, Russians and representatives of other ethnic groups fixed by Rukšāne. The novel is permeated by the theme of Latvia's occupation, stressing the disaster brought by both the German and the Russian army and political leaders. As the author comments in one of her interviews, the novel shows mainly one city (Liepāja) "where those army units came in, which extremely degraded that environment around themselves and were not the best example to show what the representatives of other nations should be" (Kušķe).

Worth mentioning is the fact that German soldiers, sometimes called "fritzs," (*Krieva āda* 14) are those who during WW2 gave food to a young mother, who had given birth to a child in the city cellar and whose husband had got lost in the war while serving in the Soviet army, so that she could survive. The author sketches also a shocking example of Germans' violence while she describes finding the Jews' scalps hidden in the seat of the main heroine's family car of the post-war period, which makes them immediately drown the car in the lake. At the same time, she reveals complicated and very painful aspects of Latvia's history when Latvian men were forced to serve in the SS[1] units—Latvian legion and which they did in the hope to restore Latvia's independence, similarly as the heroine's second husband did. By looking back to the segment of Germans' rule and actions in Latvia, the author depicts complicated individual's and nation's state of being "in-between" two powers. Delving into the process of self-analysis, the heroine questions herself if having a sexual relationship with Latvia's invader (the Russian) equals to that with another invader (the German) and if that "treason" can and will ever be accepted, justified, and forgiven: "in German times we [women] hated those who [began intimate relationships] with 'fritzs'" (*Krieva āda* 57).

The Russian aspect (as emphasized in the title) dominates in the novel and is highlighted in many and different variations—mentioning the historical personalia (grand duke Dimitriy Paulovich Romanov), the Soviet realia and trade marks (Moscvitch, Volga, New Year, Father Frost and Snow-White) and locations (Moscow, Leningrad), and on the level of characters (Emīlija's first lover—a party member

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1   SS units—German army divisions that were built up from non-German peoples. Latvian SS Volunteer Legion was formed in 1943 by Hitler's order.

and communist Vitaliy, the second lover—gentle and silent Sergey, her friend Valya and others).

Benedikts Kalnačs maintains that "on a psychological level, disagreement with Soviet power always remained in place and generated feelings that can be attributed to colonial sensibilities" (Kalnačs 261). Throughout the whole novel, the Russians are referred to "state leaders" (*Krieva āda* 11), "communists" (49) and "occupants" (29), since they make people live in the "confounded Soviet Union" (55) and "under the Russians' thumb" (66). In the war time, the Russians are described as "loudly bawling and laughing" (13), but under the Soviet power they are defined "the plague" of Latvian nation (49). Rukšāne lists several Soviet time realia outlined in the background of mother's and daughter's love stories—grown-ups' and school-children's work on the collective farm, political propaganda to educate the Soviet youth, censorship and counteraction by literati-dissidents, arrests and harsh interrogations in the KGB cellars, replacement of religious holidays with secular celebrations, string-pulling, queues and the like.

The ban on holidays, and consequently on Latvian culture and Latvianness, during the Soviet period, and people's resistance to this ban and attempts to secretly celebrate religious (e.g. Christmas) and national (e.g. November 18—Proclamation Day of the Republic of Latvia) holidays are essential aspects in the characteristics of this period: "Nobody says anything about holidays, but everybody knows all the same" (*Krieva āda* 75). It seems quite interesting that a Latvian woman Emīlija does not tell anything about celebrating religious holidays to her Russian lover, member of the Communist Party, who occasionally visits Soviet Latvia and whom she otherwise adores. Keeping silence about this is provoked for fear of being punished and publicly condemned, thus "other" is not domesticated:

> I did not tell Vitaliy that our family celebrated Christmas—silently, with the dark curtains drawn, so that nobody could see the lighted candles. A girl, Meldra's classmate, had revealed that their family attend church and celebrate [Christmas]. Meldra was really upset and told at home that the director had sent for the poor girl and her parents were asked to school, and then the girl was pushed in front of the classroom and deeply humiliated, and other children were sternly told to avoid getting involved in the matters of these religion obsessed people. Soviet people have the New Year and that's that. No Christmas Old Man, there is Father Frost and Snow-White. (*Krieva āda* 73)

Under the Soviet conditions, the celebration of St. John's Day/ Līgo also was pro-

hibited, but that day was used for the propaganda of international ideas: "We mingle among the celebrants of St. John's Day—they are the Russians, Ukrainians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Belarussians. All celebrate, all together" (*Krieva āda* 120).

It has been argued that identity is essentially not static but "dynamic construction of the self as a mental construct" (Oyserman et al. 69-70), thus "self-identity is a never-ending process" (Zenelaga and Goga 140). While discursively approaching literary works, it is important to take into consideration "self-perceptions of identity change" (Carter and Marony 256), the same as "the feeling of knowing oneself" (Oyserman et al. 70). The modifications of identity is the result of changes in the social and political environment, as well as various conflict situations (Todd). Consequently, the reasons for such change are often to be found "on macro-level contexts"—in the past, specific historical eras and events (Oyserman et al. 69; Sharma) and in impressions that store autobiographical memories (Verplanken and Sui 1504). In this context, identity, the same as cultural memory, may be interpreted as "a living realm which changes with history" (Etkind 189). Therefore, it is of great significance to record and analyse both the reasons for such a change and its consequences (including those depicted in literary works reconsidering the past events).

The events unfolding in the novel lead to gradual transformations in Emīlija's identity and attitude toward others: from a deep hatred against the Russian "occupants" who had done great harm to her, her family and Latvian nation and had made a disastrous impact on Latvia's identity, culture and character ("There was nothing in that shit-Russia, when he was a small boy, but we had our own state. With butter, caviar, salmon and lampreys, damn it!") (*Krieva āda* 57) to the understanding that she not only accepts "otherness" (although instinctively determined by her vital necessity to give birth to a child from her "own" Russian[1]), but also expects some acceptance and understanding from the representatives of "one's own," i.e. the Latvian folk:

He is a party member, communist. […] I want him. He wants me. He is a Russian. (*Krieva āda* 33)

HATRED, LUST, REFUSAL

[…] I hate myself. I am not able to resist you, you damned skin of the Russian!

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1   The theme of a forbidden love, betrayal and love triangle is developed in one more novel by Rukšāne – *Kāpēc tu raudāji?* [Why did you Cry?] (2003), where the Soviet ideological and social life context is offered (memories about deportations to Siberia, cult of leaders, ban on using the national symbols, shortage of food stuffs, and the like), though not to such extent and in so many details as in *Russian Skin*.

(57)

SELF-HATRED, PASSION, REFUSAL

I wish that the Russian soul would pour into me, that the Russian blood would course in my child, that I would be the mother who allows the wonder of great love to come into the world. Of such great love that I don't give a damn that Vitaliy is a Russian! Such love that is above the plague of 'vankas' and 'dunkas.' (86)

ACCEPTANCE, LOVE, PROMINENCE

[…] I have two small Russians at home. Only I don't know why they are babbling in Latvian, and why they don't have horns and tails, why they are quite normal children, and they even don't kick a dog. (156)

SUCCESSION, MATERNITY, "OTHERNESS" WITHIN ONE'S OWN

I wish Meldra would understand one day that the Russians are not only the evil, they, just like us, are extremely different—along with merciless chekists, communists, along with such beasts as Stalin and such idiots as the husband of Vilis' sister Zaporin, there exist also Vitaliys, Sergeys, Valyas—absolutely normal, nice people having the same dreams, hopes and attitude to life like us. (198)

PLEA FOR ACCEPTANCE AND UNDERSTANDING

The change in Emīlija's attitude results from her physiological instincts rather than from mind, and even the painful memories cannot stop it, on the contrary, by time this grows even stronger. Her lover attracts her by his beautifully smooth skin which is fragrant, with waxed boots, horse's neck and tobacco (a reference to the exclusive Chanel parfume *Cuir de Russie* used as leitmotif in the narrative) while that of her husband's—skin of a Latvian—seems disgusting and unacceptable for the woman (refusal of Latvianness).

It is important to note that the pencilling *cuir de russie*[1] by Līga Ķempe (b. 1975) on the book cover of the novel effectively supplements the narrative. It represents a pale female in the Latvian national dress and "jewelled" crown of Bārta district (Kurzeme region in the western part of Latvia) (the national code of Latvia/ "one's own"). Although she is looking straight forward into the distance and has only placed her palm onto the mirror glass, her profile picture is depicted as her reflection in the mirror with such striking differences as a flushed face, a tear dropping from her eye (a physical response to the extreme emotional state – anxiety, perplexity, embarrassment, anger, disappointment, fear etc.), and an element of Russian

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1   See the penciling on wood (2019) and the book cover in color in the artist's personal webpage: http://ligakempe.lv.

national dress *the kokoshnik*[1]—a halo shaped female headwear on her head (Russion code/ "the alien" that has become a part of one's own). "National costume is one of the symbols closely connected with national cultural heritage and ethnic consciousness" (Karlsone 134). The headwear, both in Latvian and Russian cultures, is the cornerstone of the female folk costumes that originally symbolized the marital status: a crown in Latvia was worn by young single women, whereas *kokoshnik* in Russia—by those having entering into the marriage, i.e. on the one hand, they reveal a woman's life cycle and the change of her status, a transition from maidenhood to motherhood, from innocence to maturity, on the other hand, the symbolic change of the headdress from that belonging to the Latvian to that also belonging to the Russian in the general framework of the double which involves mirror symbolism points out to revisiting and re-evaluation of the past that has irreversibly influenced the self and provoked transformations of self-identification. If Emīlija's Russian lover as the representative of the "other" is not domesticated, the woman does surrender to some type of foreignization.

Thus, having once been born and belonged to the category of "one's own" (Latvian), the mother's figure emphasizes a human existence outside a single identity frame and eventually poses as the one including "otherness" within "self." A wholeness embodying apparently incompatible opposites is presented as an example of inclusive identity and cultural fusion. Although the modified identity was perceived as a potential threat to "one's own" and risk for the preservation of Latvianness in the circumstances affected by Soviet ideology and Russification, nowadays this complementary and non-exclusionary phenomenon (termed as "hybrid identity," "double identity," "multiple identity," "hyphenated identity," "shared identity," "glocal identity") is a typical feature of in-betweenness of a modern human (Kacane et al.; Kacane and Romanovska).

Conclusion

The narratives of contemporary Latvian writers about the Soviet era in the history of Latvia are attempts to reconstruct the social reality and interpret collective traumatic experience and memories. In order to recover from trauma and the feeling of guilt that are based on memory, "looking back" on the dramatic events of the past and on everyday life in general, as well as resolving of disputable problem issues (also in relation to national identity, multiple/ inclusive identity, belonging a. o.) are

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1   *Kokoshnik* is one of the most iconic and intricately decorated items of Russian national costume that is associated with holiness of a woman who overcomes many life difficulties, her piety, and diligence (Thu 208).

promoted. By focusing on the individual dimension within the frame of the context of trauma and love (sexuality) and by reflecting historical events through a specific image, use of metaphors and symbols, in the novel *Russian Skin*, Rukšāne projects the dimension of collective memory and identity, which impacted by the external events (occupation, events of WW2, ethnic contacts etc.), undergoes significant transformations. Bearing in mind the fact that individual's world perception and socialization are to a great extent determined by such factors as the objective social structure, emotional identification with "others" important for "one's self," and self-identification (Šūpule), the writer enters into discussion on the changeability of identities and reveals reasons for and types of the appearance of inclusive identity in Soviet Latvia's everyday life. The novel belongs to the range of those literary works and conceptions of literary theories which define identity as a socially constructed phenomenon and which is liable to undergo modifications, resulting from multiform everyday interactions and individual's experience. The construction of individual's identity occurs in a constant correlation with the identity of other individuals. Regarding a narrative as a socially cultural phenomenon and tool through which structuring of human's relationships with the world around him and specificity of individual's thinking are revealed, the novel does not reproduce the past, but sooner interprets it by synthesizing crucial categories of time—the past, present and future, as well as by relying on such sciences as history, literary theory and psychology.

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Translation Reception of Matter-of-Fact Romance by Charles Reade in Russia in 1850–60s

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Abstract   The present article focuses on the literary activity of a Victorian writer Charles Reade; in particular, it deals with the peculiarities of reception of his matter-of-fact-romances in Russia in the 1850–1860s. The main objective of the research is to study genre characteristics, poetics and aesthetics of a matter-of-fact-romance and its Russian translation reception in the indicated decades. During the 1850-1860s, three novels of the given genre were translated into Russian, one of them twice. In the paper, one of the three novels is studied by means of historico-literary and typological methods; a comparative analysis of the original with the Russian translation is conducted as well. The matter-of-fact romance "Hard Cash" (1863) was translated into Russian a year later after its publication in England. The translated version was published in the established literary journal "Otechestvennye zapiski" [Native Notes] (in volumes 152, 153 and 154) in St. Petersburg. A comparative analysis of the Russian translation of "Hard Cash" with the original reveals that the Russian version represents a professional literary translation having retained a distinctive Reade's writing style. Meanwhile, it is notable, that the anonymous author[1] of the Russian translation interprets some psychological and moral issues along with relationships of the main heroes in his own way, sometimes exaggerating the tragedy of the narrative; in general, such translation "liberties" do not distort the main meaning

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1   Conducting the present research and working with the library archives and other documentary sources, the authors of the given article revealed only one translator who worked on Reade's novels—E. N. Akhmatova, a famous Russian translator, writer and publicist of the XIX century. It is known for certain that she translated a matter-of-fact romance "It's Never Late to Mend" and a reformist novel "Put Yourself in His Place". In the mid-1850s, it was a common practice for Russian translators not to mention their names when publishing Russian translated versions of foreign literature, especially if the authors of the originals were referred to the so-called "second-rate" writers who worked to satisfy the needs of mass readership.

of the original.

Keywords　Charles Reade; matter-of-fact romance; translation reception; poetics; aesthetics; Victorian fiction; mass literature; mass readership

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Introduction

Charles Reade (1814-1884) is one of the brightest representatives of Victorian fiction, who found his vocation and popularity in the novelistic genre, becoming a true master of genre synthesis, productively comprising genre features of historical, social, sensation, detective, adventure novels in his literary works and presenting serious topics and problems of the Victorian society in the entertaining and comprehensible form.

In the period of his literary popularity in his homeland, Reade wrote a number of novels representing various modifications of the given genre: a matter-of-fact romance—he was the founder of this particular genre form[1], a sensation novel[2] and a historical novel[3]. Reade attracted the focused attention of Russian literary translators exactly during the years of his profound genre search in the field of novel aesthetics and poetics, in other words, the same two decades: the 1850s-1860s. As the researchers put it, "even before Alexander II became Tsar of Russia in 1855, demands for reform and modernization had become increasingly insistent. With his ascent to the throne, the enactment of those demands became a reality. Alexander II's Emancipation Reform of liberated over 23 million serfs, giving them the rights of citizens and launching the decline of the power of the aristocracy. This reform was followed by judicial reform, military reform and other transformations that shook Russian society from top to bottom" (Matveenko et al. 118-119). In that regard, it is necessary to highlight that the indicated decades refer to the establishment and development of the Russian novel, both classic and belonging to mass literature.

1　In Russian literary criticism, this genre definition is not often used whilst the Reade's novels are mainly classified as social or sensation ones. References: Ivasheva V. V., 380-384; Anikin G. V., Mikhal'skaya N. P. 257–269.

2　Ch. Reade, along with W. Collins, was among the creators of a sensation novel in the Victorian fiction.

3　Within the context of the aesthetics and poetics of a historical novel, Reade created a reformist novel as a specific modification of the genre.

Moreover, the interest to Reade's novels in Russia is also determined by the writer's striving intention to comprehend the peculiarities of a realistic narration as well as to incorporate new principals of depicting an action and a reality into mass literature. In this context, it is possible to claim that Reade presented the concept of fact, both real and literary, and the problems of fiction and literary truth associated with it in a new light. These above-mentioned aspects were definitely coincident with the tendencies of the Russian literature, both classic and mass. A Russian publicist I. A. Gurvich commented in this connection: "The dependence between the establishment of realistic principles and the formation of Russian classics, its rapid flourishing, was undeniably striking. However, the same circumstances caused the blossom of general fiction. Realism gave the top priority to the vitality criterion, a direct word about reality, apprehended in all of its aspects, fundamental and particular, stable and temporary, and this could not help enhancing the role of the current literary work. Since a belletrist has the ability to "draw from life", since an "ordinary talent" is capable to be receptive to the "burning issue" swiftly, to survey the surroundings, to describe vividly the variety of faces, activities and contexts. Wherein the "discovery of the world" takes place, the belletrist is most often ahead" (Gurvich 22).

Literature Review

Charles Reade's literary heritage was studied in the past and has been vigorously investigated by British and American theorists of literature nowadays. The corpus of foreign criticism and bibliography of Reade's writing is quite large. In this regard, it is sufficient to recall only the most significant works of English-speaking scholars, which became fundamental for the authors of the present paper in studying the receptive history of Reade's matter-of-fact romance of the 1850–1860s in the Russian literature of the same period.

A. Ch. Swinburn, an English poet, equated Ch. Reade and his literary activity with the masters of the Victorian fiction, George Eliot and Anthony Trollope. A. Ch. Swinburn, giving a detailed consideration to the topics, motives and problematics reflected in the most famous novels by Reade, commented his own view on the English writer's work in the following way:

> The brilliant industry of Mr. Reade, his vivid and vehement force of style, his passionate belief and ardent delight in the greatness of his calling, would have conferred a certain kind of interest on a literary figure of less serious pretentions to regard. < > Whether he was or was not a man of genius—whether his genius, if he had such a thing, was a wide or narrow, deep or shallow, complete

or incomplete—became at once, for the moment, a matter in some quarters of something like personal controversy. (Swinburne 271)

W. J. Dawson, a writer and a literary critic, wrote in his monograph "*The Makers of English Fiction*":

Reade's long apprenticeship to dramatic art taught him many things—which are invaluable in fiction. He has the keenest eye for situation. He gets to the point at once. His dialogue is terse, brisk, epigrammatic, and is sharpened into constant brilliance. (Dawson 169)

One of the most important foreign sources devoted to Reade's literary work is the monograph by a modern American scholar and researcher R. Fantina (2010) "*Victorian Sensational Fiction. The Daring Work of Charles Reade*", it is completely dedicated to the literary activity of the writer, his creative search, poetics and aesthetics of his novels. Adding them to the history of the "Victorian fiction", the investigator does not narrow them down to the level of the so-called "low-quality" dramatic reading and, actually, he is far from interpreting "classic" and "mass" literature as absolutely opposite in meaning and value for the development of the literary process. In this context, Fantina notes:

Often maligned by critics, sensation fiction was a controversial genre that emerged primarily in England in the mid-nineteenth century, and much of Charles Reade's work fits comfortably into its often vaguely defined parameters. The widespread critical abuse of sensation fiction often took an ideological turn as the genre presented stark challenges to Victorian notions of propriety. (Fantina 11)

One of the most significant aspects for the present research refers to Fantina's approach to the study of Reade's novelistic writing (a matter-of-fact romance specifically): the researcher considers the characteristics of a matter-of-fact romance through the prism of scholarly papers by M. Foucault, a famous French philosopher of the 20th century. Fantina focuses on Foucault's works written during the period of the philosopher's special emphasis to the issues of politics and power, violence on their part against a person and a person as an integral part of history with his inner freedom: "Mental Illness and Psychology" (1953), "Madness and Civilization" (1961), "Discipline and Punish" (1979). Among other things, Fantina claims:

Both Reade and Foucault ultimately make use of "true" documents in an effort to transform their contemporary realities. Reade's novels can serve as a complement, and sometimes as a corrective, to Foucault's ideas; whereas Foucault writes abstract historical genealogies of the prison and the asylum, Reade highlights specific material details of the workings of these institutions. (Fantina 41)

Finally, a collection of essays "*A companion to Sensation Fiction*" under the editorship of P. K. Gilbert (2011) should not go unmentioned as a learned treatise which contributed to the present paper. T. Bragg's article is completely dedicated to the study of Ch. Reade's writing. In his article, T. Bragg states:

> Given the impermanence of Reade's achievements, one might be excused for forgetting that his novels were among the most popular examples of sensation fiction, or overlooking that he achieved this success less by bringing his much-vaunted factual veracity than by bringing a thoroughly masculinized energy and tone to the genre. (Bragg 294)

Genre Characteristics of a Matter-of-Fact Romance by Ch. Reade

Among other works, Reade's matter-of-fact romance became especially popular and sought-after in Russia in the 1850-1860s. Being the founder of the genre under consideration, Reade gave the name a "matter-of-fact romance" to his pieces of writing upon his own initiative. Most English-speaking scholars extensively use this literary term in their treatises. Suffice to mention T. Bragg and R. Fantina:

> Reade's compulsive reading and collecting of newspaper clippings fed his style of sensational realism, a fiction that consciously endeavored to present dramas of everyday life, an intention reflected in the subtitles to so many of his books: "A Matter-of-Fact Romance" and "A Story of Today." (Fantina 163)

> Charles Reade's two best-known novels—the sensational historical romance "The Cloister and the Hearth" (1861) and the melodramatic critique of private lunatic asylums—"Hard Cash" (1863)—both feature the same subtitle: A Matter-of-Fact Romance. Reade appended this same subtitle to no fewer than six of his fourteen novels <…>. For Reade the appellation indicated a method as well as a literary product: a "fiction built from truths" whose construction depended on gathering, sifting, and judiciously extracting the most relevant data from the wealth of mass-media sources available to the mid-Victorian reader.

(Bragg 293)

In the 1850–1860s, three matter-of-fact romances by Reade were translated into Russian: a matter-of-fact romance "It's Never Late to Mend" (1856)[1] was the first to be translated; "Hard Cash" (1863) was translated into Russian a year later after the publication of the original in England; "Foul Play" came out in 1868, its Russian version was published in the same year.

A particular scientific challenge in the study of the Russian reception of the novels under consideration represents the aesthetics and poetics of a matter-of-fact romance explaining their relevance to the Russian literature of the 1850–1860s. Most Western literary scholars (Coleman J., Bragg T.) consider Ch. Reade as the founder of this genre modification while Russian literary critics and scholars hardly ever use this genre definition qualifying Reade's matter-of-fact romances as social or sensation. For instance, a Soviet and Russian literary critic V. V. Ivasheva[2] determines them as: "… the novels depicting facts, which took place in reality, but going off the commonplace events and incidents" (Ivasheva 380).

Above all else, it is essential to gain insight into Reade's ideas about the fact and its functioning in a literary work as well as the conjunction of the fact with the concept of "truth" in literature. The peculiarities of Reade's work with the facts and the ways of expressing a fictional truth, which largely determine the originality of the given genre model, its relevance in Russia during the specified period and the key characteristics of Russian translations of the matter-of-fact romances are also worth considering in the present article. Highly appreciating the "proven facts" established on his own as well as the documented information about the events, the participants of these events, the place and time when the events occurred in real life, Reade consistently and purposefully took them as a basis of his novels. In his matter-of-fact romances, the writer endeavored to use the interdependence of the real-life facts and the perception of the author who created a fictional work, the duality of a literary fact capable of consolidating the features of the external world, fixing its figurative nature and affecting the organization of the stylistic harmony. In the first turn, this regards the truth of the hero, his life and the context of its course, which, in the opinion of a Soviet and Russian theorist of literature M.M. Bakhtin,

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1   "It's Never Late to Mend" was the first Reade's novel written in the framework of the genre model under discussion; the novel was translated into Russian twice being published almost simultaneously in different literary journals.

2   V. V. Ivasheva was a famous Soviet and Russian scholar who contributed much to the study of English Philology being one of the founders of the so-called native "Anglistics."

is at the same time the fiction truth of the author, followed by the multiplicity of meanings enclosed in the literary work (Bakhtin 32-49).

Reade comprehends the essence of a human character in his own way: his heroes depend on mysterious and unpredictable twists of fate and, at the same time, they are determined by specific social factors such as origin, financial situation, real-life everyday circumstances and people surrounding him. In this regard, working over the images of his characters, Reade extensively uses the principle of typification, which implies the representation of the hero as a person who is typical socially, psychologically, and morally. Consequently, the system of characters in the matter-of-fact romances includes representatives of various social strata. All these aspects are definitely intended to provide the reader with an extremely detailed and reliable picture of social life: in addition to farmers, landowners, priests, sailors, the reader is acquainted with thieves, prison guards, patients of private lunatic asylums, etc. The heroes' interconnection and relationships are formed up according to the laws of social medium and history but at the same time-in conformity with the canons of a sensation novel, where social issues, heroes and their interaction, above all, obey the concepts of an adventurous narrative. At the same time, the heroes' behaviour, actions, character traits and personality development are depicted in a commonplace daily routine; their outside world is represented in domestic, sometimes naturalistic circumstances[1]. However, the events, in which the heroes participate and their personalities reveal normally occur against the background of bright romantic scenery, in the atmosphere of exotic distant countries and play of chance representing a genre feature of a sensation novel.

Furthermore, Victorian literature is rooted in the enlightenment ideology, promulgating the writer's active influence on the castigate vices. Ch. Reade was primarily known among his contemporaries as the author of literary compositions reflecting the abuse, corruption and injustice in the social institutions of Victorian England requiring social reforms. To a great extent, the writer gave the top priority to the rigorous investigation of a true-life incident, which later became the plot of his novel. Hence, it is thought that, the image of an author-narrator comes on the scene in the novel taking the position of an omniscient proselytizer, who penetrates into the essence of reality through personal comprehension of the specific facts. The author-narrator appears at all levels of the narrative, starting with depictions of the outside world and the events occurring in it, and ending by author's arguments and the ability to "foresee" the world of thoughts and feelings of his characters. Reade

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1   This is especially notable for descriptions of prisons and insane asylums, tortures and abuse in social institutions.

entirely implemented his enlightenment attitude towards the active educative impact of the literature on the society by means of not only the revelation of its vices, but also turning to the moral, ethical and psychological problems of the society and its particular representatives. At the same time, the writer associated his understanding of the authenticity and realism of the literary image with posing the questions concerning morality and psychology of the person depicted in his novels.

Reade's genre searches definitely corresponded to the genre processes arising in Russian mass literature of the 1850-1860s since the Russian fiction developed in parallel with Russian classics that, in its turn, focused on the needs of a higher readership. The "second-rate" Russian authors kept on exploring the experiments of the "natural school"[1] considering the facts, introducing then-current everyday life material into classic literature, opening a new concept of human nature, his relationships with the outside world, the dialectic of inner, personal, mysterious, unique and unpredictable, mental and spiritual in humans in the form acceptable for unsophisticated readers. The formation of Russian both classic and mass prose of the indicated time, turned out to be extremely consonant with the questions about the "literary fact", "literary truth" of depicting a person in literature. It should be noted that Russian prose was no longer conceivable without the author's fixation on the epic integrity and versatility of the narrative, considering life through the dialogue of a person with his social environment, history, nature taken in the fullest detail. Ch. Reade solved the above-mentioned problems in his own way, creating a specific genre modification of the novel—a matter-of-fact romance, to which such a profound interest was manifested among readers in Russia in the 1850–1860s.

Comparative Analysis of the Russian Version of "Hard Cash" with the Original

Let us turn to the problems of reception of Reade's matter-of-fact romance in Russia by carrying out a comparative analysis of the matter-of-fact romance "Hard Cash" with its Russian translation version. The novel "Hard Cash" was published in England in 1863 in the literary journal "All the Year Around", which came out under the editorship of Charles Dickens. The publication of "Hard Cash" gave rise to a number of scandals in the upper-class society and there were some grave causes for that: Reade debunked vicious treatment with patients in the private insane asylums as well as corruption in medicine, politics and the legal system of Victorian England, which allowed healthy people to be hidden in the private asylums.

1　"Natural school" was a Russian literary school that appeared in the 1840s being widely known as a "school" of N. Gogol, I. Turgenev, N. Nekrasov and some other outstanding Russian writers.

Reade had been working on the novel under study since 1858: In 1858, Reade took a personal interest in the case of a young man named Fletcher who had escaped from a private asylum. Fletcher, whose parents were both dead, had been certified insane by two doctors at the behest of relatives who wished to cheat him of his inheritance; his case was thus much like Alfred's in "Hard Cash." <…> Reade hired his own doctors to examine Fletcher, and they certified him as sane. Largely through Reade's effort, the case went to court, and Fletcher was eventually restored to society (Fantina 64).

In the preface to "Hard Cash" Ch. Reade specifically focused the readers' attention on the "true facts" reflected in his work:

> "HARD CASH" … is a matter-of-fact Romance—that is a fiction built on truths; and these truths have been gathered by long, severe, systematic labour, from a multitude of volumes, pamphlets, journals, reports, bluebooks, manuscript narratives, letters, and living people, whom I have sought out, examined, and cross-examined, to get at the truth on each main topic I have striven to handle. (Reade 14)

In "Hard Cash" the author places special emphasis on the moral, ethical, psychological meanings of facts, their details and specifics in consequence of which the novel brings in the new topics: the generation gap, the problem of insanity (so relevant to the Russian literature of the 1860s, both classic and mass). Reade interprets the themes of love and friendship in a new light providing an opportunity to estimate not only the reliability of the fact, but the author and heroes' attitude, their set of views and values, the aesthetic diversity of "literary truth." Consequently, in the matter-of-fact romance the intensification of tragic elements is observed from the very beginning combined, however, with happy end, which is a distinctive feature of the genre model under consideration. Typical heroes, determined, primarily, by their social origin, upbringing and circumstances distinguishing Reade's first matter-of-fact romance "It's Never Late to Mend," are definitely present in "Hard Cash": Edward Dodd, Alfred Hardy, Dr. Samson, Hardy Sr., such minor characters as heavily embroiled in corruption doctors and members of the Hospital Supervisory Commission, insane asylums staff, etc. At the same time, the centre of balance in the narrative shifts to the contradictory characters: Mistress Archbold, Julia Dodd, Jane Hardy etc. The author-narrator takes the same contradictory position in relation to the heroes. These circumstances undoubtedly drew attention to the "Hard Cash" in Russia in the 1860s, when the literary process was characterized by an intensive

search in the field of character analysis. According to the Soviet and Russian theorist of literature L. M. Lotman: "… the literary plots that developed into stable social-eventive generalizations in the 1840s., suddenly manifested the ability to undergo a modification, their inner dynamics and content revealed in their historical relativity" (Lotman 352).

As a result, exactly in the 1860s, the Russian prose, primarily, "classic", began to convert socio-historical problems: crime and punishment, poverty and wealth, into philosophical and ideological directions, identifying them with the complicated nature of a person and his attitude towards society and himself.

In Russia the "Hard Cash," translated into Russian under the title "Tyazhy-olye den'gi: roman, osnovannyj na faktah" (Hard Money: a Novel Based on Facts), was published in one of the most established literary journals—"Otechestvennye zapiski" [Native Notes] (in volumes 152, 153 and 154)—in 1864, i.e. almost simultaneously with the publication of the original in the author's homeland. In 1865, the novel was republished as a supplement to the same literary journal. This fact undoubtedly emphasized the popularity and relevance of Reade's literary work in Russia.

The Russian translation of the "Hard Cash" represents a detailed interpretation of the original version maintaining the author's style and conveying the pressing social, moral and psychological problems of the source text to the Russian reader. In addition, the Russian version of the novel reflects Reade's attitude towards the multiplicity of meanings of the "literary truth", the ambivalence of the author's viewpoint concerning the characters endowed with contradictory personal traits. The most crucial forms of conveying all the above mentioned, both in the original and in the translation, are reflected in letters, internal discourse of the characters and dialogues along with a realistic vividness and detailed routine descriptions. The title of the novel "Hard Cash" was translated quite similar to the original; besides, an anonymous translator added his own genre subtitle: "novel based on facts," emphasizing the organizing role of the literary fact and the literary truth for the genre model of Reade's work. The original version consists of a preface and 55 chapters. The Russian version includes, aside from the preface, 57 chapters: the first chapter is divided into two. The first one describes a boat race among Cambridge, London and Oxford Universities, in one of which the main heroes Edward Dodd and Alfred Hardy were studying at that time. The second chapter of the translation is dedicated to the scene where Julia Dodd (Edward's sister) becomes acquainted with Alfred; later that watershed meeting grows into deep feelings between young people. Thus, the translator emphasizes two main plot and theme lines,

simultaneously developing in the novel. The third of the novel, devoted to the bright and dangerous sea adventures of Captain Dodd, is translated to the fullest extent[1]. The author of the Russian translation completely retains the sequence of chapters devoted to the maritime epic of Captain Dodd as well as the development of the love story of Julia and Alfred and the description of the social contexts in which the love story is developing.

Let us consider the preface in greater detail, since at this particular part of the romance the reader gets acquainted with the main characters: the Dodd family and Alfred Hardy. Reade goes into detail in describing Mrs. Dodd, a highly descended lady, and a brief story of her unequal match with the captain of East India Company, David Dodd, their children Julia and Edward, Alfred's sister Jane and Alfred Hardy himself. The remarkable thing is that, introducing the heroes to the readers, the author-narrator describes their appearance, character traits, and their inner world. In this regard, let us analyze the following fragment:

Hard Cash	*Russian translation, "Otechestvennye zapiski" ("Native notes")*	*Sumtsova and Aikina's translation*
Edward, then, had a great calm eye, that was always looking folk full in the face, mildly; his countenance comely and manly, but no more; too square for Apollo; but sufficed for John Bull. His figure it was that charmed the curious observer of male beauty. He was five feet ten; had square shoulders, a deep chest, masculine flank, small foot, high instep. To crown all this, a head, overflowed by ripples of dark brown hair, sat with heroic grace upon his solid white throat, like some glossy falcon new lighted on a Parian column (Ch. Reade 18).	Эдуард имел большие спокойные глаза, смотревшие всем прямо в лицо; черты лица его были красивы и мужественны, немножко грубоваты для Аполлона, но очень удовлетворительны для Джона Буля. Статная фигура его поражала всякого ценителя мужской красоты. Он был пятивершковый, широкоплечий молодец, с крутой грудью и маленькой ногой, с высоким подъемом. В довершение всего, голова, осененная темными волосами, сидела на белой, словно выточенной из каррарского мрамора, шее. (Ch. Reade vol. 152 3).	Edward had big calm eyes looking straight in people's faces; his facial features were handsome and manly, a little bit coarse for Apollo but very sufficed for John Bull. His noble figure impressed any connoisseur of male beauty. He was a five-vershok, broad-shouldered regular fellow with a deep chest and a small foot, high instep. To crown all this, his head, shaded with dark hair, sat on his white as if carved from Carrara marble, neck.

We can see a rather detailed translation obviously made by a professional translator. However, the translation has been evidently adapted for the Russian

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1   Only once the translator divided one of the chapters of the maritime epic into two chapters: in the original version, it was too long being full of specific nautical terminology complicated for perception of an average Russian reader.

reading public: the expression "His figure" has been translated as "His noble figure", although there is no adjective "noble" in the original. Emphasizing Edward's strength and loftiness, forming readers' sympathy for his image, the translator further calls him "regular fellow", evoking associations with a Russian epic hero, which is also omitted in the original. We can also note Russification in interpreting the units of measure: in the original, Edward's height is "five feet ten inches", while in the translated version he is "five-vershok."[1] At the same time, it should be pointed out that all the details of the hero's appearance were conveyed by the translator, including comparisons with Apollo and John Bull. The translator has only omitted the comparison of the set of the character's head on the solid white neck with a falcon's figure sitting on a porcelain column. Although the technique of describing the character's appearance through comparison with an easily imagined natural material remains in the translation, the "strength" of the neck is compared with marble rather than porcelain; moreover, the original identifies its type "Parian," the translation specifies the variety of marble "Carrara marble."

Reade presents dramatic and even tragic portrayal of human destinies and relationships between characters in the novel against the background of the fatal obsession of some characters with money and enrichment. The literary work under consideration is overlaid with financial concerns; the matter of money becomes the main reason for social, psychological and personal conflicts. In the romance "Hard Cash," this is money that interferes with Julie and Alfred's wedding, as well as the banker Hardy's tragical loss of his favourite daughter. Jane, the only living soul who Hardy Sr. feels affection to, is the victim of her corrupt father's machinations. The heroine faces an awful tragedy: she dies at the hand of James Maxley who has lost his mind along with the money invested in Hardy's bank. Let us compare the description of the fatal meeting of Jane and Maxley:

The tragic episode describing the death of Hardy Sr.'s daughter has been translated into Russian with certain peculiarities that appeared at the behest of the translator. First of all, the word "grizzly" is interpreted as "covered with mud" in the Russian version, while this adjective has the following meanings: gray, gray-haired or horrible, dreadful. Reade himself uses this particular adjective as if comparing Maxley with a grizzly bear that is distinguished by a vicious temper. However, in the scene of the attack on Jane, the translator compares Maxley to a wild beast, while in the original the phrase "wild beast" is omitted. Jane dies from her injuries. So Richard Hardy was punished for his numerous sins, including his role in the lives of his own children: he caused the death of his beloved daughter and broke the

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1   "Vershok" is an out-of-date and out-of-use Russian unit of measurement.

Hard Cash	Russian translation, "Otechestvennye zapiski" ("Native notes")	Sumtsova and Aikina's translation
Now Maxley was coming down the road, all grizzly and blood-shot, baited by the boys, who had gradually swelled in number as he drew nearer the town. Jane was shocked at their heathenish cruelty, and went off the path to remonstrate with them. On this, Maxley fell upon her, and began beating her about the head and shoulders with his heavy stick. The miserable boys uttered yells of dismay, but did nothing (Reade Ch. 83).	В эту минуту по дороге шел Макслей, весь в грязи и крови, преследуемый целой ватагой мальчишек. Джени была поражена этим диким зрелищем и пошла к ним навстречу, чтоб унять ребятишек. Но Макслей бросился на нее как дикий зверь и принялся безжалостно колотить ее по голове и плечам своей тяжелой палкой. Мальчишки подняли страшный гам, но ничем не помогли несчастной девушке (Reade Ch. vol. 153 284–285).	Right here Maxley was walking along the road, covered with mud and blood, followed by a whole band of boys. Jane was impressed at this savage scene and made a move towards them in order to quieten the kids down. But Maxley attacked her like a wild beast and began to beat her mercilessly on the head and shoulders with his heavy stick. The boys raised a terrible hue, but did nothing to help the poor girl.

fate of his son, on top of all sending him to an asylum for the insane. The fact is, that after returning from the voyage, Captain Dodd invests 14.000 pounds that were hard-earned and recovered from pirates in Hardy Sr.'s business; and Hardy quickly takes the money denying the fact he got it from Dodd. Young Hardy begins his own investigation into the loss of money belonging to his beloved's father, and directly accuses his father of stealing it. Moreover, the young man asks him too many questions about his own 5.000 pounds (inheritance from his deceased mother) which suddenly disappeared from his fund. However, the doctors bribed by Hardy Sr. find Alfred insane and send him to a private psychiatric hospital. Thus, the author introduces an acute conflict between a father and a son, who profess opposite systems of values, beliefs about a human being, etc. This conflict will subsequently lead to a complete break in their relations. It is well-known that the topical issue of complex relationships between fathers and children is reflected in the Russian classic novel of the second half of the 19th century, in the works of I. S. Turgenev ("Fathers and Sons"), L. N. Tolstoy ("War and Peace"). However, the reverse side of the problem in the Russian classics is the issues of the continuity of generations, the concept of history, which is not reflected in the romance by Reade, the author of the second series, who appeals to a less sophisticated reader. The plot twist described above introduces current social problems associated with the description of private psychiatric hospitals in Victorian England and the abuse of their workers towards patients, as well as the outright corruption of the Hospital Supervisory Commission members.

In the Russian translation of the novel, the social narrative is represented in detail, without compressions and reductions. What is more, on the pages of the romance, Reade introduces the reader to the tragic stories of various patients who, like Alfred, became victims of the intrigues of their own relatives hunting for the inheritance of the unfortunate. Thus, Alfred's particular story is presented as typical, characterizing the general vice of Victorian society. Let us analyze the following fragment of the original and its translation:

The translation of this episode is a high-quality interpretation of a fragment of the original, conveying the tragedy of the situation happening to perfectly healthy Alfred in a psychiatric hospital. The particulars of the author's description also convey the revealing pathos of the narrative. The translator has interpreted some details and fragments of the description in his own way: for example, the narrator characterized Alfred as not poor, but unfortunate. In the translation, such a detail as an isolation cell appears; the "unhealthy"—actually healthy residents of the clinic are locked there. The silence in the isolation cell is defined as deathly, dead (in the original version: All was sullen silence). The striking of the clock told Alfred not about the greed of his father, but about the criminal mercenary spirit of all those who acted with his father; time destroys the last shadow of hope in the hero (not "last chance," as in the original version). In the fragment under consideration, such an interpretation brings an emphasized high degree of tragedy in the hero's situation: he appeared to be a victim of his father's financial machinations.

Unmasking the rules prevailing in asylums is also accompanied by a psychological comprehension of the theme of insanity. In this respect, the storyline of the relationship between the senior nurse Mistress Archbold and Alfred is especially indicative. Mistress Archbold holds a specific place in the gallery of female images created by Ch. Reade in the novel. She is a bright and sexy woman full of contradictions with deep uncontrolled passions in her soul. An American literary critic Vicinus M. not only accurately names the characteristic features of the heroine, but also rightly notes the functions of this image in the romance: "a secondary figure, bordering on villainy, who embodies female rebellion" and who allows an author to depict the heroine as "an unsullied angel while still portraying women's energy and anger" (Vicinus M. 133). Mistress Archbold is in love with Alfred who becomes the hero of her fantasies; gradually her appetence, fueled by the games of her own consciousness, develops into a painful passion verging on insanity. On the one hand, the author turns Mistress Archbold into Alfred's defender, who supports him in difficult situations and often saves the young man from terrible torture. Alfred, constantly beaten and handcuffed by the keepers, for the first

Hard Cash	Russian translation, "Otechestvennye zapiski" ("Native notes")	Sumtsova and Aikina's translation
Once in a madhouse, the sanest man is mad, however interested and barefaced the motive of the relative who has brought two of the most venal class upon the earth to sign away his wits behind his back. And once hobbled and strapped, he is a dangerous maniac, for just so many days, weeks, or years, as the hobbles, handcuffs, and jacket happen to be left upon him by inhumanity, economy, or simple carelessness. Poor Alfred's cries and prayers were heard, but no more noticed than the night howl of a wolf on some distant mountain. All was sullen silence, but the grating tongue of the clock, which told the victim of a legislature's shallowness and a father's avarice-that Time, deaf to his woe, as were the walls, the men, the women, and the cutting bands, was stealing away with iron finger his last chance of meeting his beloved at the altar (Reade Ch. 715).	Попав в сумасшедший дом, здоровый, сильный человек признается всеми за сумасшедшего, и для этого достаточно приговора одного из его родственников, как бы корыстны ни были его виды, и свидетельства двух представителей самого сребролюбивого сословия на свете, которые, без ведома несчастного, одним почерком пера лишают его разума. И лишь только этого человека сковывают и запирают в карцер, он становится во мнении всех опасным сумасшедшим, бешеным, и это продолжается столько дней, недель или годов, сколько он остается скованным, благодаря бесчеловечности, экономии или забывчивости смотрителя. Крики и мольбы несчастного Альфреда были очень хорошо слышны во всем доме, но на них столь же мало обратили внимания, как на вой волка в отдаленном лесу. Гробовое, мертвое молчание не прерывалось ни одним звуком, только бой часов говорил бедной жертве безмозглого законодательства и преступного корыстолюбия, что время, столь же жестокосердое к его мольбам, как эти стены, эти люди, эти оковы, неудержимо летело вперед, уничтожая в нем последнюю тень надежды встретить свою невесту у алтаря (Reade Ch. vol. 153 358].	Once in a madhouse, a healthy strong man is recognized being mad by everyone, and for this it is enough to get the verdict of one of his relatives, no matter how selfish his views may be, and the testimony of two representatives of the most money-minded class in the world, who, behind the back of the unfortunate man, make him mad with a stroke of the pen. And, as soon as this man is shackled and locked up in the isolation cell, he becomes, from all accounts, a dangerous maniac and this continues for just so many days, weeks or years as he remains shackled due to the inhumanity, economy or forgetfulness of the warden. The cries and prayers of unfortunate Alfred were well heard throughout the house, but they were paid to as little attention as to the howl of a wolf in a distant forest. The deathly, dead silence was not interrupted by a single sound, only the chime of the clock told the poor victim of brainless legislation and criminal greed; the time, as cruel to his prayers as these walls, these people, these fetters, flew uncontrollably forward, destroying the last shadow of hope to meet his bride at the altar.

time felt relief from his physical suffering thanks to the senior nurse. But, having confessed her love to Alfred and having received an utter refusal from the young man who remains faithful to his bride, Mistress Archbold turns into a vengeful fury and completely loses control of herself:

Hard Cash	Russian translation, "Otechestvennye zapiski" ("Native notes")	Sumtsova and Aikina's translation
"I'll drive you mad," she hissed this fiendish threat out between her white teeth, "Ay, sir,—she said,—hitherto your reason has only encountered men. You shall see now what an insulted woman can do. A lunatic you shall be ere long, and then I'll make you love me, dote on me, follow me about for a smile— and then I'll leave off hating you, and love you once more, but not the way I did five minutes ago (Reade Ch. 952).	– Я вас сведу с ума. До сих пор, милостивый государь,— продолжала она, шипя, словно змея,—ваш рассудок, ваш мозг имел дело с мужчинами. Теперь вы увидите, на что способна женщина, когда ее оскорбят. Скоро, очень скоро вы сойдете с ума, и тогда я вас заставлю любить себя, пресмыкаться у моих ног, следовать за мною всюду, как собачонка—и тогда я перестану тебя ненавидеть и снова стану любить, но уже не так, как две минуты назад (Reade Ch. vol. 154 381).	"I'll drive you mad. Until now, worshipful sir", she continued, hissing like a snake, "your reason, your brain, has encountered men. Now you will see what an insulted woman can do. Soon, very soon you will run mad, and then I will make you love me, grovel at my feet, follow me everywhere, like a dog-and then I will leave off hating you and will love you once more, but not the way I did two minutes ago.

The condition of a nurse working in a psychiatric clinic has been conveyed in translation, like in the original, thanks to the introduced details. Exaggerating the emotional intensity of the narration, the author, and after him the translator, describe Mistress Archbold's love as a passion verging on a severe mental disorder. Unlike Julia's feelings, her love for Alfred is dominated by sensual attraction. Her behavior goes not only beyond the social norm, she is pathologically assertive, hisses like a snake, does not control her words and actions, in fact, she is in an affective state. The fragment is translated into Russian almost literally, except for the phrase "follow me about for a smile," which is interpreted as "follow me everywhere, like a dog." By doing so, Mistress Archbold tries to humiliate Alfred even more. The woman cannot appraise the reality and the consequences of her behavior poured out on Alfred whom she already sees turned into a madman, falling in love with her at her will, creeping at her feet, following her everywhere, like a dog. The real and

the desired are mixed in her mind. In this regard, the actions of Hardy Sr. are very close to the behavior of the nurse. Being greedy of gain, he declares his son mad for the sake of money. By a twist of fate (and by the rules of emplotment in popular literature), David Dodd finds himself not only in the same asylum with Alfred, but also in the same ward, according to the Archbold's order. During the fire started by one of the clinic's patients, Alfred and David escape from the asylum. David strives for the sea and Alfred for his beloved Julia. The young man manages to rehabilitate his name, expose his father's machinations and return the "hard cash" to the Dodd family. In the final chapters of the romance, justice triumphs: Hardy Sr. is bankrupted and exposed, Alfred and Julia join in marriage, David Dodd returns home. In the spirit of the poetics of the sensation novel, "Hard Cash" gets a happy end preserved in translation. The story of the emphatically hardly probable sea adventures of Captain Dodd and his crew, associated with dangerous clashes with pirates and the fight against the sea, and aimed at retaining the reader's interest, is preserved in it and conveyed in full.

Conclusion

Thus, a comparative analysis of the matter-of-fact romance "Hard Cash" by Ch. Reade with its translated version showed that, in general, the Russian interpretation of the work is a detailed, professional, literary translation. The chronotope of the work is fully preserved: first, the action takes place in the provincial town Barkinton, then in the South Seas (the sea epic of Captain Dodd), then the development of the action is moved to London. Events in three private psychiatric hospitals have been interpreted in detailed. It can also be noted, that in a number of cases related to the conveyance of moral, psychological problems, strengthening the tragedy of the narrative, the author of the Russian version made changes that, however, did not distort the main meaning of the original and its focus on the mass reader.

In conclusion, we also note that, from novel to novel, the efforts of translators working on the translation of matter-of-fact romance are increasingly subject to the complete conveyance of the social problems of the originals, the methods of depicting reality proposed in them, the mechanisms of the embodiment of "literary truth" by the author's work with facts, documents and enrichment of their semantics and functions. Meanwhile, in order to adapt the original version to the perception of the Russian reader, it was acceptable to resort to Russification, compression of difficult-to-understand fragments representing intricate legal proceedings, detailed descriptions of the life of prisoners in British jails and patients of private psychiatric hospitals, bank and medical reports full of narrowly specialized terminology. Also,

the translators' focus was on the author's synthesis of the "matter-of-fact" and artistic fiction realized in this genre modification of the novel. The attention of the Russian reader was invariably drawn to the characteristic features linking the originals of Ch. Reade's matter-of-fact-romances with the sensation novel genre, with the traditions of romantic aesthetics and public awareness ideas about the educative, social role of literature in society. All this was of great importance for the history of Russian literary translation, Russian translated literature, primarily mass literature; it served to form the "ideal reader" of fiction and to prepare him to perceive classic literature, which undoubtedly influenced the history of the Russian literary process in the second half of the 20th century.

Acknowledgment

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Bilingualism and the Figures of Postcolonial Speech: Cultural Transfers of Modern Ukrainian Prose

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Abstract   Bilingualism is described as a communicative space in which official and alternative speech, imperial discourse, and anti-colonial resistance coexist. The tension between them creates the ground for numerous figures of postcolonial speech. It is characterized by a subversive, self-revealing tone, a hidden pathos of debunking the respectful attitude to the language of the colonizer. It is also about the maturation of Ukrainian literature in the national language in terms of hybrid identity, the integration of the upper circle of society in the imperial circles. The asymmetrical relationships between identifying oneself with the empire, the plots of official careers, official biographies, independent language behavior, and mental space are traced. The divergence between following the distorted national and psychological Little Russian identity and the historical memory of ethnic roots, the place of origin of Ukrainian statehood, and the connection with ancient traditions are revealed. The phenomenon of marginality appeared in the crossing of these components, with an almost inseparable center and periphery. They constantly cross and create the phenomena of diglossia, multilingualism, speech interference. The interaction of the donor language and the recipient language is based on the principle of transfer, recognition, assimilation on the margins of the discourse of power and its transformation into speech with opposite meanings. The complex language map of Ukraine illustrates the permanence of imperial policy, which only changed the forms of its presence in the subordinate territories and according to the conjuncture moved the assimilation boundaries towards complete absorption, appropriation, or apparent demonstration of ethnic identity. The application of the transfer methodology allows us to understand the complexity of nowadays integrational processes in Ukraine in the context of the cultural and historical situation of the first half of the XIX century.

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Introduction

Bilingualism becomes a political and ideological factor due to the relationship of domination and subordination, the polarization of cultural superiority and inferiority. The granting of various statuses of the official imperial language with a flexible and developed lexical and grammatical structure and seemingly limited and suitable only for every day using local dialect causes a dramatic conflict of culture. It becomes the key to understanding the Ukrainian colonial situation, a component of the thesaurus of an era. Bilingualism does not involve the parity of two languages, but oppression, enslavement, and a kind of truncation and reduction of the authentic language to the dialect. It is not only a matter of tsarist policy and a side view, and a superior attitude to ethnically assimilated territories, but also of the voluntary imposition of an imperial yoke and, as a consequence, the production of a half-hybrid identity.

Not only isolated declarations of non-literature features of the Ukrainian language, such as the well-known dispute between H. Kvitka and P. Hulak-Artemovskyj or the lamentation of   P. Kulish about the underdevelopment of vocabulary to denote abstract concepts ("how to express in Ukrainian about objects foreign to the people"), but also the recognition of the extraterritoriality of national culture and words, the attention to them of the higher circles of society equally invested in the colonial paradigm. E. Hrebinka describes some spaces of using Ukrainian language in St. Petersburg circles:

Petersburg is a colony of educated Little Russians. All the places present, all the academies, all the universities are flooded with compatriots, and when

determining a person for service, the Little Russian pays special attention to how un homme d'esprit... the Empress rides four horses, and our two Little Russian Cossack cameras on her heels. The Emperor often, they say, jokes with them in the Little Russian language. (Hrebinka 566)

Of course, this passage with the term "colony" clearly outlines the boundaries of Ukrainian as another one, distinguishing it as an ethnic touch on the general imperial map. The pathos of subordination and awareness of the place of *one-self* culture in the allotted circle of society is embodied as a typical colonial narrative. The assertion of the presence of Ukrainian, the need for its development and implementation in writing, the prose is nothing more than an inversion of the widespread use of the Russian language. Peter Barry indicates:

This linguistic difference amounts to a sense that the linguistic furniture belongs to somebody else, and therefore shouldn't be moved around without permission. Some post-colonial writers have concluded that the colonizers' language is permanently tainted, and that to write in it involves a crucial acquiescence in colonial structures. (Barry 129)

The National Narrative: Speech Interference, National Identity, Imperial Discourse

This state of things was characterized by internal conflict and tension, so it was to "explode" one day in several opposing anti-colonial tendencies. Peripheral zones of culture must move to their nuclear depths, the imaginary dialect ("Little Russian dialect") demonstrates a reception shift in the metropolitan consciousness and is nothing more than an inversion of deeply popular authentic living language. The canon of Ukrainian prose is created with this living language, embodied in a kind of ensemble of *The Little Russian Stories Told by Hrytsko Osnovyanenko'* (Малороссийские повести, рассказываемые Грицьком Основьяненко). They have got special value. Because Kvitka found adequate correlations of the art object and theme with the way of expression, expressing its denotative properties in the language. The word becomes textured due to the saturation of folk rhythmic melodies and the sound of the emotional tuning fork of the Ukrainian soul. The author proved that "you can be touched by the Little Russian language." And in a review of the book Hrebinka emphasized: "Having read now *The Stories* by Osnovyanenko, we feel sorry for those who do not know this language. They are deprived of true pleasure" (Hrebinka 473). The way to national literature through the development

of stylistic norms, harmonization of language grammar with the grammar of human behaviour, the use of language tools to study the differences of *the native* picture of the world reproduces the logic of postcolonial thinking. Language as a decoding state of dependence captures the transition *from adaptation to mastery*, when "the colonial writer is an independent 'adept' in the form, not a humble apprentice, as in the first phase, or a mere licensee, as in the second" (129).

Such liberation of the word from the burden of secondary nature, emancipation towards the individual, non-normative development of its aesthetic qualities makes intercultural dialogue the basis of postcolonialism. In other words, the colonial situation *is transferred* to the level of its interpretation with subsequent use in the anti-colonial position. The dialectics of this process was formulated by M. Pavlyshyn: "Anti-colonial strategies are united by the structure of negation—shifting upside down—the former colonial arguments and values" (Pavlyshyn 227). However, this "rearrangement" is not just an action of inertia, but an almost tectonic shift with several positive consequences. It is as if the capture of the colonial-imperial into the orbit of the national, the consistent debunking of the state of dependence through the language, and its deconstruction, reversal in ruthless and all-consuming speech discourse. According to the Polish researcher D. Kolodziejczyk, the transfer is

> first of all, the gesture of freedom—emancipation from the need for an exact copy (colonial mimicry) to the comprehension of the ability to exist in language—to comprehend the difference through which language (imperial) remains independent." The point is that the language of the metropolis, which "becomes a means of expression in the (post) colonial cultural space, ceases to be the property of the empire. (Kolodziejczyk 26)

Thus, even political and ideological conflicts are transferred into a space of creative rethinking, and their critical passion is softened by cultural intentions, play, multi-vector projections, and a multitude of interpretations.

There is the effect of transfer in this removal, within which the Ukrainian language detached from ideology and applied to the reproduction of Ukrainian realities, and therefore conventional and largely distorted Russian language coexist based on creative competition, controversy, in the field of the asymmetric relationship between language and reference space. This middle and marginal status of Russian speaking strategy among Ukrainian writers of a culturally peripheral phenomenon allows us to denote the same adaptation as a background for intercultural dialogue. Many works of literary critics (B. Bakula, Y. Barabash, P. Barry, Homi K. Bhabha,

O. Hlotov, T. Hundorova, M. Ilnytskyj, D. Kolodziejczyk, M. Shkandriy, O. Feduta) are devoted to the problem of interference and bilingualism in the thesaurus of this period. They investigate the mechanisms of decoding and unmasking the word of the empire in the territories of the suburbs. The writers resort to them inside the text in very colourful imagotypes, continuously mocking the Little Russian phenomenon as a distorted model of national behaviour and mocking Moscow influence as anti-behaviour, as a personification of strangers and enemies. These oppositions are widely embodied in Russian-language texts of Ukrainian prose, creating a zone of semantic turbulence, the division between the subject and the means of its reproduction. It turns out that the emblem of the imperial as negative is presented in its language, which is made possible by several parody techniques and a kind of surzhyk, an idiolect of this language. A gap in which postcolonial dissent, subversive tools of subtext are growing up is formed at the break of the literary norm and the purely mental deformation of language at the grammatical level. Such a duality of unattractive coverage of the imperial within its rhetoric was not only an Aesopian language, a hidden communication but also it strengthened and concentrated anti-colonial pathos.

Kvitka-Osnovyanenko's prose is a very characteristic phenomenon from this point of view. It contains parodies and stylizations that determine the "politics" of the text, the type of intertextual interaction with images and works of Russian literature. The first Ukrainian prose writer used the method of secondary modelling of plots and stereotypes known in literature and fixed in the public consciousness, thus creating superstructures of meaning, controversial artistic decisions. Therefore, this is not fiction or minor texts in terms of art. It is a programmed text strategy, which would allow extracting a deep national content from several skillfully glued literary masks and game intentions. *Letters to Publishers* (Письма к издателям)*, Letters to the Luzhnitsk's Elder* (Письма к Лужницкому Старцу)*, Invited Guests* (Званые гости)*, Evstratiy Myakushkin's memoirs* (Мемуары Евстратия Мякушкина) were built on the unmasking method. Their inherent feuilleton principle only emphasizes the controversy and difference from the texts of a similar direction in Russian literature. No wonder the problem of the author's attribution, *especially about Luzhnytsk's Elder* (Письма к Лужницкому Старцу), is too relevant and weighty precisely concerning the distinction between text and denotation, text and intertext, the original and ironically written copy. Kvitka parodies not only the innocence, helplessness and incompetence of Falalej Povinukhin (Фалалей Повитухин) but also the proto text of M. Novikov's *Letters of the Falalej* (Письма Фалалея) as a codification of the nobility ignorance.

Double controversy becomes a favourite technique of play at the reference and communicative levels of the work, acquiring the features of metatextuality as a very flexible strategy of comparisons, statements and objections, the search for differences and similarities. Evstratiy Myakushkin (Евстратий Менушкин) composes the instruction for a "fashionable" novel, which should be a parody of the trivial rhetoric of the literature written at that time, in particular, the Gothic novel and examples of its imitation in Russian literature. However, the author of the memoirs also becomes the object of parody. Playing on the border of denotation and signification at different levels of reception shows excessive attention to the sphere of textuality. The visible and the invisible, the declarative and the hidden, art object and context, and its peripheral zone coexist there. A separate group consists of works focused on the direct depiction of colonization. They are *Holovatyj* (Головатый)*, The Foundation of Kharkiv* (Основание Харькова), *Tatar Raids* (Татарские набеги), *1812 in the Country* (1812 год в провинции). The postcolonial state of these works is derived with the dual identity, belonging to the world of the colonizer and the colonized, which causes "the fluid and unstable nature of personal and gender identity, the shifting, 'polyvalent', contradictory currents of signification within texts'' (Barry 129). The narratives with a propaganda component, without ambiguities but with a monologue on behalf of the authorities shown in *The Letters to Kind Compatriots* (Листи до любезних земляків), *The Indefinite* (Бессрочный) are naturally excluded from this circle.

E. Hrebinka is a very interesting example of a controversial vision of history so far within the imperial horizons. He artistically elaborates and obscures an episode *Colonel Zolotarenko from Nezhin* (Нежинский полковник Золотаренко) from *The History of the Rus'* (Істоpiз Русів) with romantic colours and frequently uses the folk epic in the description of Cossack heroics in *Tchaikovsky* (Чайковський). Critical intentions break through idealizing Potemkin as a historical figure. He was shown not only in the palace and ceremonial life but also in the private chamber. Against the background of the inconsistency of the mercantile St. Petersburg reality with the patriarchal ideology of the period of the empire's formation, the strategy of its debunking in *The Seeker of the Place* (Искатель места) is revealed. Shevchenko's novels appear as a powerful array of not so much anti-colonial orientation but *deconstructions of the colonial*. The development can be traced from self-interpretations of his works *The Mercenary* (Наймичка), *Varnak* (Варнак), *The Princess* (Княгиня) to polemics at the genre level with sentimentalist forms of imperial graphomania in *The Walking with Pleasure and Morality* (Прогулка с удовольствием и не без морали), hidden behind the academic presentability and grandeur of his-

torical lamentations and reflections in *The Artist* (Художник), significantly different from Russian literature interpretation of the phenomenon of unhappy consciousness on the background of the tragedy of the serfs in *The Musician* (Музыкант) and demoralizing soldiers in *The Unfortunate* (Музыкант).

The adaptation of the Russian-language style to reproduce the Ukrainian realities generated by the empire was for the writer not only a "zigzag in his personal and creative destiny, an island in the Ukrainian-speaking sea" (Barabash 240), but also a real transfer with complex *diglossia* as dynamic unbalanced bilingualism. The experience of colonial practices and emigration confirms numerous examples of the coexistence of languages on the principle of functionality, depending on the scope. According to the unwritten rules of language were divided into poetic and prose, male and female, dead ("sleeping") and living, conversational, with new literary norms. The most productive transients are singled out in this whole spectrum of interactions and oppositions. According to N. Azarova's observations, transitions to a foreign language occur much more often in prose than in poetry, perhaps because it is more suitable for speech mimicry, creating the unity of the expression and the image. Besides, all realistic literature is based on this similarity, the inertia of which can be overcome only in the experiments of the new prose of the twentieth century. Apparently, for mimicry, writers resort to shifter words, or "transfer words,""ambiguous" words, that allows writers to "overcome language boundaries and to be in different languages and between them simultaneously (Azarova 261).

Cultural Transfers, National Concepts, Imagological Projections

These words become concepts and definitions of national and cultural complexes in the literature, recognizable territorial markers. The toponym "Little Russia" (Малоросія) used by Ukrainian and Russian writers does not have a clear terminological definition but arises due to the historical association with the tradition of naming small primary, autochthonous, and large peripheral territories, neighbourhoods (oppositions "Little Hellas"—"Great Hellas,"metropolis—colonies). Through Byzantine mediation, this tradition migrated to the toponym of the Kyiv state as "Little Russia" as the centre, and "Great Russia" as the northeastern periphery. Over time, historical semantics have been overshadowed by a pejorative connotation. As Y. Barabash notes, " the phrase 'Little Russia' (Малая Россия) retained a specific secondary nature and subordination in the imperial consciousness, which could not fail to provoke and still provokes a counter-reaction" (Barabash 577). However, the ideologically deformed toponym is firmly and permanently entrenched in the public consciousness as a frontier feature of remote subterritories of "imaginary commu-

nities,"constructed on the imagological principle. The derived ethnonym "Little Russian" becomes synonymous with secondary and inferiority, as M. Hrushevskyj said "the spiritual slavery,"the syndrome of adaptation and integration into imperial structures. E. Malanyuk in his essay *Little Russian identity* (Малоросійство) proposed an exceptionally successful formulation in terms of the mechanisms of colonization and enslavement, deformation of national consciousness from within:

> This type is nationally defective, mentally and spiritually crippled, and—in consequence, sometimes,—racially. In our Motherland (the main historical deposit of this human type) it has acquired a particularly pathological and not so simple character as, at first glance, it would seem. Due to that course of historical time on our land, the type of Little Russian became (at least in towns and cities) mass, and worst of all, traditional. And we must assume that the methods of so to speak *Little Russian production have been developed in Moscow for more than a century, and the system of those products has a solid, so to speak, scientific base*. (Malanyuk 30)

Of course, a consistent tradition of understanding Little Russian identity as an amorphous national hybrid, an ugly twist (by Y. Barabash, D. Dontsov, V. Lypynskyj, M. Khvylovyj, E. Malanyuk, I. Dzyuba, E. Sverstyuk, M. Ryabchuk, and others) provoked precisely by its imperial representation, the negative meanings embedded in this glued concept. Language takes a decisive part in the "production" of the imagological projection of the national image, inherited for enchantment and enslavement, sanctioned by the empire. Language is a metaphor for political actions and ideological influence, an agent of transfer and the imposition of a completely legitimate status of an ethnic branch. The pejorative meaning becomes possible in the conditions of diglossia as a linguistic asymmetry as bilingualism. "Bilingualism allows us to re-conceptualize a category that is absent in the native language. Bilingualism allows us to tear off the category itself and turn it into some speculation and abstraction" (Azarova 267). The amplitude of the term "Little Russia" as a political metaphor extracted from the historical semantics of the empire is quite wide: from neutral word usage and admiration for marginal exotics to ironical and indulgent tonality and even caustic ridicule of national weaknesses. We can find these shades of meaning in the prose of the first half of the XIX century.

Imperial imagology designed and transplanted the image that fully corresponded to its horizon of expectation to Ukrainian consciousness. Such a cultural transfer was fully in line with the "geographical" guidelines for territorial and intellectual

occupation by demonstrating a pretended cultural exchange. The voluntary acceptance of Little Russian identity, and, as a consequence, seduction by imperial privileges reflects the dialectic of labile expansion, carried out in the stream of "overlapping territories, intertwined histories" as E. Said would say. The effect of weaving, imposed on domination, subjugation, relentless control determines the essence of imperial policy.

> Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings. (Said 42)

Of course, behind this imaginary concept, a balanced, well-thought-out and structured on the political, ethnic, religious and cultural levels, the integration of Ukrainian elites was in the highest aristocratic circles.

The duration of the creation of signs of the secondary stage by convincing imperial rhetoric, accentuated by E. Malanyuk, is also confirmed in the substantiation of the complex multilevel transformation of "Mazepas" into "Little Russians" by the Viennese historian A. Kappeler. Consistent co-optation of the Cossack elite into state institutions and convergence with the dynasty led to acculturation and erasure of ethnic differences. Integrated on the principle of political loyalty, the newly formed Little Russians approached the highest pyramid of power, ceased to be the opposition, and, conversely, were the first to maintain an imperial image in a system of concentric circles. Such migrations within the empire confirmed the "attractiveness of ascending the line of assimilation" (Kappeler 15). Let us recall the artistic texture of Gogol' recreating this "movement" to the fair of imperial vacancies, contrasting "old national, simple-hearted and at the same time rich surnames" "to those low Little Russians who tear themselves out of tar, traders, fill the chambers and public offices like locusts, tear the last penny from their fellow countrymen, fill St.Petersburg with snitches, finally make capital and solemnly add to their surname ending the syllable -ov instead of -o" [Ukrainian surnames often end in -o, e.g. Shevchenk**o**, and Russian surnames frequently end in -ov, e.g. Krylov] (Gogol 15).

Therefore, according to A. Kappeler, the concept of colonialism does not exhaust the essence of Ukrainian-Russian relations and characterizes rather the permanent state of co-dependence of the metropolis and the periphery. "An important difference from the colonial countries of the West is that there was no division into the imperial Russian ruling class and non-Russian lower classes in the class-based

Russian Empire… Ukraine was also not a classic colony of the Russian Empire. There was no spatial, cultural or racial distance, nor was there any legal discrimination against Ukrainians compared to Russians" (Kappeler 16). Despite the polemical conclusion of the scientist, it should be remembered that the empire is a rather complex formation, which does not always coincide with the concepts of the dominant nation and colonization. It not only appropriates others but also provides places for the "location of culture" of other peoples in its territory. Although, as it turns out, this is also a form of influence and appropriation. The semiotics of empire as a deliberate arrangement of signs, cultural significance and mapping has a special effect on the literary process. According to O. Ilnytskyj,

> imperial culture does not involve a zero-sum cultural game, which is constantly played by Ukrainian and Russian critics and through which cultural values and writers (Somov, Hrebinka, Kvitka, Gogol and others) should be included in either one or the other "nation,"and the "nationality" itself is interpreted only in contradictory binary schemes. This approach, of course, leaves no room for the national fluidity, ambiguity or uncertainty that was the hallmarks of the empire. (Ilnytskyj 22)

Mapping the Empire as the Way of Attribution to Others

Thus, it is precisely those gaps and boundaries that create enclaves of cultural interactions and map the empire as a mosaic text. It becomes an analogue of transnational geopolitical formation with alternate changes of rigid subordination by fragile and labile redefinition, and weakening of hierarchy. In this sense, the empire was a *melting pot,* or a *salad bowl*, in which despite all the mixing and integration there are still infusions of the *different and non-national*, not assimilated by the hegemonic discourse. It follows that "imperial culture testifies to the existence of an early form of Ukrainian consciousness in it "(Ilnytskyj 23). It was embodied in various forms of being interested in national culture by its natives, the fashion for the Little Russian in St. Petersburg, with attempts to reduce it from the local level to the level of literary codified language. Of course, the language marker is quite indirect, because culture uses mainly *the lingua franca, w*hich represents the empire. Nevertheless, through the web of assimilation, detached from its linguistic field and conventionally associated with the Russian language, noticeable infusions of Ukrainian break through.

We distinguish literary and cultural components which are in asymmetric re-

lationships in this conflict. The resolution of this conflict is possible in the plane of the "linguistic-literary binomial" (Barabash), an extremely dialectical contradictory phenomenon embodied by Gogol'. He became a classic example of cultural transfer, in which ethnic roots and the old-fashioned atmosphere of the Cossack petty officers' environment, inherited family bilingualism of Ukrainian and Russian, distance from the motherland and formation of pro-imperial worldview and many other more or less secondary factors intersected. In other words, Gogol' repeated the scenarios already lived by his compatriots in his own life. He recreated the dominant model of life when "natural Ukrainian consciousness fatally retreated to colonial Little Russian identity in the minds and behaviour of the national nobility" (Barabash 235). Of course, this path of "national breaking of the worldview" resulted in "Gogol's conscious apostasy in relation to the native language and vice versa—in the glorification of the Russian language" (239). However, in a seemingly trivial way, he was able to represent Ukrainian culture in the general imperial territories precisely because of the "surprisingly flexible and adaptive mechanism of intralingual readjustment, selection of stylistic means to solve a particular artistic task" (236). The Ukrainian way of thinking and the creation of "wrong" Gogol's Russian phraseology manifested in syntactic constructions, the idiolect of literary language, dichotomy, counterpoint as an infusion of one language into another is the action of mental transference. It is overcoming one's foreignness in a non-native language with the acquisition of a new linguistic quality, inspiring and enriching influence (241). The mechanism of language transfer was successfully reproduced by I. Orzhytskyj. Y. Barabash refers to him substantiating the phenomenon of Gogol as an agent of influence, movement and representation of the Ukrainian worldview. As the philologist notes, "Ukrainian words and forms were pounding in that genius and unhappy mind, even when he created things that had nothing to do with the Slavic area at all" (237).

Gogol did not become a classic writer of Ukrainian literature, but he inspired it, influenced it, and became a guide for a whole galaxy of writers. According to Y. Barabash, he became one of the key figures in the history of Ukrainian literature and spiritual culture, and in the context of real dialogic relations "Russian-speaking branch of Ukrainian culture, but as a fact of Russian literature. (245). This solves the problem of disproportionate competition between a more universal culture and literature embodied exclusively in the national language. This indirectness and displacement of concepts simultaneously outline an extremely important methodological projection on which the theory of cultural transfer is based. Gogol's phenomenon is a complex process of Russian-Ukrainian cultural and literature dialogue/interaction/influence during several centuries, and sometimes confrontation (249).

A similar dichotomy is characteristic of Ukrainian writers, who used not only Russian as a direct imperial construct, but the native Ukrainian language as the strongest expression of ethnicity and identity. The coexistence of two languages in the works of I. Kotlyarevskyj, P. Hulak-Artemovskyj, E. Hrebinka, G. Kvitka-Os-novyanenko completely fit into the fragile schemes of the frontier, the turn of the century, in which the criteria of art and the literary canon were not established. Borderline historical and literary periods do not function as a consistent change of paradigms, but as a fundamentally nonlinear system of readjustment and aesthetic reorientation with a continuous search for new art forms. Therefore, unsteady transients are best attributed to the synergetic study of "games on borders and with borders" (M. Schmitz-Emans). The connection between them is traced in fragmented structural elements, which create intermediate aesthetic phenomena. The turn of the century emphasizes "halftones,""intermediate" variants, "artistic and stylistic hybrids" that form an amalgam type of writing (according to the classification of I. Limborskyj). Even internally related compounds and mutually objectionable tendencies persist in this eclecticism. The type of connection is conventional but rather dissipative and selective between them. It also allows us to restore the ancient semantics of the center and the periphery, to consolidate the contrasting meanings of the essential and the secondary through the cross method. Thus, amalgam as a manner of writing, the quality of the art is the key to break false stereotypes and, perhaps, deconstructing imperial ideology at the aesthetic level. It is not only about the interaction between sentimentalism, pre-romanticism, romanticism and classical realism, but also about the attraction and conditionality of the artistic process by the nation-centric Baroque culture. Amalgam types of literature select what they need from past eras, adapting it to their historical conditions and socio-cultural context. I. Limborskyj notes that

> these types did not become so widespread in the Renaissance Western European individualist mode, but developed the idea of "variability "of the individual, belonging to the corporate consciousness, which was supplemented by the occasional tendency to postulate the idea of nation-centred isolation. (Limborskyj 11)

These guidelines are updated with the greatest force in the border periods, because "a radical restructuring of the macrostructure of artistic thinking in the ways of establishing a new canon occurred" (11).

This duality contributed to bilingualism as an imperial polytheism, which caused the splitting of the linguistic personality of the Ukrainian writer into several

incarnations: family communication, the public image in their community, imaginary or real self-presentation outside region (correspondence and live contacts with Russian writers). In addition, the performed social roles often did not correspond to the high purpose of asserting identity and writing in the national language. There was a gap between them that was filled with excessive attention to Russian literature or coverage of Ukrainian topics and realities in Russian. M. Zerov substantiates the concept of provincialism of writing at the initial stage and connects it with specific social groups—the provincial nobility, middle-ranking officials, the village clergy. According to the scientist, both the nobles (Kvitka, Gogol Sr., Hrebinka), and government officials (Hulak-Artemovskyj, Kukharenko, Dumitrashkiv), and the clergy (Pisarevskyj, Olexandriv, Korenits'ky) were "small provincial audience,"capable of reproducing only people's life. These were the manifestations of regional autonomy, regionalism, conservatism, "local patriotism" combined with inclusion in a supranational formation in the circle of imperial culture. This synthesis sometimes proved to be productive in terms of dialogic interaction, in the transfer of Ukrainian themes into Russian literature, helped to enrich the linguistic norm with dialects, to solve the extremely important question of imperial identity through fake multiethnicity. O. Borzenko notes:

> Considering this situation in terms of cultural colonialism, we can talk not only about subjugation and resistance but also about a very productive experience of interdependence and symbiosis… Speaking figuratively, the "Ukrainian soul" influenced imperial culture significantly, especially at its stage of supranational life. (Borzenko 24-25)

Such duality, the hesitation between the native and the foreign, the home and the world, the private and the public created a zone of tension between the desire to preserve the authenticity of culture and the hidden denationalization, the loss of identity. This intermediate situation was exacerbated by the fact that Ukrainian society was stratified between the Russified and Polonized gentry, Cossack petty officers, clergy and peasants, the only owners of old patriarchal values, not subjected to external influences and unification. There was a rather rigid division between the official written culture and the speaking tradition accumulated in the people's memory. Influenced by Herder's ideas, this conflict was resolved in the literary codification of Ukrainian consciousness in several languages. The asymmetry between the subject and the means of its creation pushes productive cultural models of the frontier, such as the Ukrainian school of Polish romanticism, the Ukrainian

branch of Russian literature, and others. The presence of Polish and Russian narrative traditions is also noticeable in Ukrainian prose (Kvitka, Hrebinka, Kulish). These phenomena of transfer reveal the colonial situation from the bilingual point of view, and sometimes polylingualism which is a reflection of the relationship between the centre and the periphery.

The Ukrainian language map of this period shows territorial dialects, the value of common speech in the formation of literary norms, marking political processes with *surzhyk*, geographical discoveries, development and settlement of new places, border neighbourhoods of various kinds. The interaction of language norms and anti-norms, lexicons of different levels of subordination occurs on the principle of circulation, Brownian motion of language elements, as a result of which idiolects, new varieties and combinations of donor language and recipient language are born. The final approval of a new rule is still far away, there is always a void or the formation of surpluses, which are constantly in motion and prone to development. In this case, Sloboda Ukraine is an example of such a language transfer.

It is characterized by a colourful local language as a product of the cross-connection of many regional dialects. The policy of colonization contributed to the creation of Polish and Russian languages mixed with Ukrainian words. The influence of these language hybrids was so powerful that "even immigrants from Russia switched here to the local version of the Russian language with Ukrainian words" (Sherekh 411). The local Ukrainian elite willingly Russified in exchange for noble titles and positions. Complete Russification did not take place, especially because the old people showed a special sentiment towards their native language. We should not forget that the idea of national revival, first formulated in the concept of messianism and associated with the discovery of a new quality and wider expressive possibilities of the Ukrainian language does not disappear from Kharkiv romantics' minds.

The peculiar exclusivity of Sloboda Ukraine with its mixing and crossing influences allows us to notice the enclave in it, within which parallel plots of "German conquest of territory,"Polish-Latin presence in writing and culture in general, and the most powerful main dialogue, where "Ukrainian and Russian plots of Kharkiv literature are generally mixed" (Ushkalov 90). At the same time, this unity is not stable as provided by the laws of the transfer. And later it begins to disintegrate by distancing the two pieces of literature against the background of the popular in Europe at the time the idea of identity, ethnic differences, the individuality of national self-expression. As if deliberately created at the turn of the XVIII-XIX centuries, this rage broke down, playing its explosive role in the emergence of modern

Ukrainian literature. L. Ushkalov considers this fusion of pieces of literature with the founding of Kharkiv University a manifestation of imperial policy. It marked the beginning of "national self-knowledge" because in the wake of early romanticism the new Ukrainian literature was born in Kharkiv" (94). This circumstance led to the fact that from the second half of the 1820s Russian literature in Ukraine ceased to play the role it played in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The transfer shift that led to the independent literature is formed by many factors: German idealist philosophy, Herder's national-historical doctrine, typological proximity of Rousseau intentions to the psycho-emotional world of the Ukrainian simple peasant. It is not just about a new starting point in the history of writing, but also about the formation of a fundamentally different paradigm of thinking, based on the historical development of organic art forms. D. Chyzhevskyj summarized this set of factors:

> Modern literature, mainly Russian and Polish, religious problems and German philosophy lead them (Kharkiv romantics) to consider the problems of the philosophy of history, and ethnographic interest, especially Sreznevskyj, brings them directly to study and fascinate Ukrainian folk poetry. (Chyzhevskyj 372)

The internalization of history naturally affected linguistic processes in the literature. The use of the common speech and its regional features had an ideological and cultural meaning, it became a sign of belonging to the national movement. The common speech without grammatical and logical correctness is precedent in the author's text, in opposition to the official speech trained by the empire. It was a strategy that was reduced to "later inclusion of the common speech in the collective memory not only in the status of literature but also national" (Borzenko 54).

Conclusion

The theory of nation and narration explains the Ukrainian-Russian bilingualism, manifestations of diglossia, multilingualism, which developed in the first half of the XIX century. By analogy with the classical model of resistance to colonialism, the language of the empire becomes an instrument of veiled national struggle in Ukrainian literature, and a counter-discourse used to break down stereotypes and developed imperial images such as Little Russian identity. The subject of speech speaks from the standpoint not of domination, but of enslavement, and discursive appropriation and cultural assimilation. However, Ukrainian literature develops asymmetrically instead of Western European pieces of literature. It seems to avoid acute political issues, and global topics by actualizing the language factor, instead

of resorting to a kind of escapism, the inner life of characters, ethical issues integral from corporate and Christian morality.

The revival of the resources of tradition, Cossack heroism which became an indirect source of anti-colonial resistance occurs against the background of idyllic serenity and limited worldview of the domestic sphere. Accentuation of speech participants optimizes communication, therefore, helps to identify the human sphere in it. Creolized variants of a language in which the binary oppositions of Saussurean linguistics are only auxiliary against the background of unpredictability and multidimensionality of human behaviour are being created. The anthropologization speech contributes to the understanding of various models of nation-building and rather flexible identities. At the same time, the cultural situation of bilingualism reaches the level of metatext. It is explained by the ways of self-determination of Ukrainian literature, the emergence of the national language against the policy of unifying a special version of the Russian language, subversive and anti-canonical to imperial writing.

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Material Objects as Promoters of a Resistant Subjectivity: The Creation of an Alternative Space in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "Imitation"

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Abstract   This article explores how Nkem, the female character in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's short story "Imitation" (2009), builds a resistance space from where she exalts her subjectivity and rebels against an oppressive marriage that voids her. Her physical and mental paralysis is mainly triggered by an absent and distant husband called Obiora, who forces his wife into a materialization process that translates into Nkem being gradually infected by the fakeness and voiceless condition of the art pieces that he brings home from Nigeria. Consequently, she is commoditized and turned into one more imitational art piece in Obiora's collection, stressing her immobility and dependence on her husband. However, the originality and uniqueness of the African Ife bronze head that Obiora brings with him at the end of the story trigger Nkem's reflection, leading her to also recognize her own value. Through the projection of her subjectivity on the original African art piece, Nkem takes advantage of her in-betweness as a Nigerian in the United States and her house's interstitial status to create a "third space" where she can redefine herself outside the patriarchal ideology that Obiora epitomizes, as well as retrieve the African identity she had lost during the reterritorialization process undergone in her white American neighborhood. The redefinition of her relationship with the surrounding African items and the consequent appropriation of the space that this implies empowers her, since "territoriality is a primary geographical expression of social power" (Sack 5) and our identities and self-definitions are inherently territorial (Agnew 179).

Keywords   resistance space; Adichie; third space; identity; materialization process

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Introduction

The concept of space as closely attached to identity and power has been broadly explored in academia. Whereas the negotiation of a subcultural and alternative identity within a hegemonic order has been closely attached to the need of winning a space, of marking out and appropriate territory (Clarke et al. 45), Ludger Pries approaches "space" as a concept that "not only refers to physical features, but also to larger opportunity structures, the social life and the subjective images, values and meanings that the specific and limited place represents to immigrants" (Pries 40), adding that "space is thus different from place in that it encompasses or spans various territorial locations" (67). In addition, scholars such as David Robert Sack and Gillian Rose inform the connection between space and power. Whereas the former claims that "territoriality is a primary geographical expression of social power and […] the way in which a society and space are related (Sack 5), the latter understands "territoriality" as "nothing more or less than a claim to control people by controlling an area" (Rose 100). Thus, identities, to be strongly defined and empowered, need of a spatiality that allows their development.

Along these lines, Gillian Rose argues that "identity is how we make sense of ourselves, and geographers, anthropologists, and sociologists, among others, have argued that the meanings given to a place […] become a central part of the identity of the people experiencing them" (Rose 88). He adds that "one way in which identity is connected to a particular place is by a feeling that you belong to that place," claiming that this place needs to conform a space "in which you feel comfortable or at home, because part of how you define yourself is symbolized by certain qualities of that place" (89). Indeed, Homi Bhabha understands these "in-between spaces" as sites that "provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood- singular or communal- that initiate new signs of identity" (Bhabha 1994:1). Bhabha draws upon Victor Turner's idea of liminality, together with its symbolic registers (rite of passage, limen, communitas, etc) to claim that the symbolic registers are located on the ritual, to explain the vexed, non-dualistic and shifting nature of identity in the modern world.

Accordingly, the influence of territoriality on identity politics and power relations leads to the consideration of *space* as a site for resistance. In this respect,

Reece Jones coins the term "spaces of refusal" to define a zone of contact where sovereign states practices interact with alternative ways of seeing, knowing, and being (Jones 687). In those spaces, people adopt various means for avoiding sovereignty, even when the traditional response of flight is not available (Agnew 2008; Scott 2009; Jones 2012). Stanford Friedman's, Gloria Anzaldúa's, and Homi Bhabha's (1994) relevant studies about the borderland define the space that the characters inhabit as a space of resistance, a contact zone "where fluid differences meet, where power is often structured asymmetrically but nonetheless circulates in complex and multidirectional ways, where agency exists on both sides of the shifting and permeable divide" (Stanford Friedman 273). Stanford Friedman remarks that both borders and borderlands have been approached as "spatial metaphors for the liminal space in between" (273) and points at Homi Bhabha as "the preeminent theorist of the interstitial, of the examination of culture in the moment of transit" (274). Indeed, he coins the term "third space" to define "countersites" that result from the interstitial and erratic movements.

Drawing on the interconnection between identity, power, and space, in this article I explore how Nkem, the female character in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's short story "Imitation" (2009), builds a resistant space from where she exalts her subjectivity and rebels against an oppressive marriage that voids her. Her physical and mental paralysis is mainly triggered by an absent and distant husband called Obiora, who forces his wife into a materialization process that translates into Nkem being gradually infected by the fakeness and voiceless condition of the art pieces that he brings home from Nigeria. Consequently, she is commoditized and turned into one more imitational art piece in Obiora's collection, stressing her immobility and dependence on her husband. However, basing myself on the idea that objects become recipients of identity formation (Kopytoff 1986; Appadurai 1986; Watts 2011), I argue that the originality and uniqueness of the African Ife bronze head that Obiora brings with him at the end of the story trigger Nkem's reflection, leading her to also recognize her own value. Through the projection of her subjectivity on the original African art piece, Nkem takes advantage of her in-betweness as a Nigerian in the United States and her house's interstitial status (which represents an "African museum" in American soil) to create a "third space" or counterspace where she can redefine herself outside the patriarchal ideology that Obiora epitomizes, as well as retrieve the African identity she had lost during the reterritorialization process undergone in her white American neighborhood. The redefinition of her relationship with the surrounding African items and the consequent appropriation of the space that this implies empowers her, since "territoriality is a primary geographical

expression of social power" (Sack 5) and our identities and self-definitions are inherently territorial (Agnew 179). In this vein, I approach the interstitial space depicted in this short story as an "active literary space," a term inspired by Doreen Massey's concept of "activity spaces" (Massey 54), which is defined as a space "within which a particular agent operates" (54). The space that Nkem occupies constitutes an "active literary space," since it provides her with the chance to speak up and express herself freely.

The Dominant Role of Obiora.

"Imitation" was first published in *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009), a collection of short stories written by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie that mainly explores the lives of Nigerian women and their struggles as wives, immigrants, and victims of religious or political violence. In my view, the female protagonist in "Imitation" (2009) undergoes an identity transformation process that leads her to a resistance stance towards the patriarchal system, for she develops from a submissive and dependent wife to a self-autonomous individual who defies the impositions of social and marital boundaries. The story begins when Nkem receives a call from a Nigerian friend who tells her about her husband´s infidelity. Nkem finds out that, while she stays in the United States taking care of their children, her partner stays in their second residence in Lagos with another girl instead of travelling for business as he told her. The third person narrator guides us through the acts and thoughts that she undergoes due to this revelation. In addition, we are given access to some details of her past, such as how lucky she felt when she married Obiora, since she thought that his privileged social and economic position would offer her a new luxurious life away from the poverty conditions she suffered in Nigeria. As the story unfolds, her view about her marriage changes dramatically while leaving her innocence behind, facing reality and adopting a critical stand towards her husband. Eventually, Nkem becomes more rebellious against her marriage, which results in her decision of changing her lifestyle and moving back to their second home in Nigeria.

When it comes to examining the relevance of space and identity in Adichie's literary work, "Imitation" is one of her pieces of writing that better portrays the rearticulation of the main character's identity and the space that she occupies, as both Nkem's and her American house's transformation remain at the core throughout the narrative. As other stories in Adichie's short story collection, such as "The Arrangers of Marriage," "Jumping Monkey Hills," or "The Thing Around Your Neck," "Imitation" depicts a black African woman in a foreign land who experiences sexism, racist attitudes, and social alienation. Whereas identity and

space have been acknowledged as recurrent motifs in Adichie's literary works (Sharobeem 2015; Nwanyanwu 2017; Toyianen 2017; Lascelles 2020), this article focuses on "Imitation" and offers a more holistic analysis of this short story, as it does not only analyze Nkem's lack of own voice within her marriage, but also her identity transformation through a relation with the surrounding art pieces, and the consequent and gradual metamorphosis of her American house into a "counterspace" at a narrative level, where she regains control over her life. In this regard, the article explores the influence of the geographical and domestic space on Nkem's identity, and it also emphasizes the female protagonist's construction of her own private space, which is not really placed in the U.S or Nigeria but in her inner self, as it does not completely belong to the geographical nor the domestic. This space is not fixed or defined but experiences a continuous transformation that provides Nkem with some agency and, unlike the commoditized African art pieces, frees her from remaining static and purposeless. Even though some studies have tackled Nkem's evolution as connected to the art pieces and the theme of imitation (Egbunike 2013) and explored her hybrid identity by applying Bhabha's theory (Khaleel 2019), there is a need of further studies specifically analyzing the impact of Nkem's hybrid identity and her relationship with the art pieces on the construction of a resistance space at a narrative level.

Indeed, the title "Imitation" (2009) makes a reference to the art pieces (imitations of the originals), concretely an African mask, that her husband brings home from his journeys. The arrival of these objects to the house encourages Nkem's reflection upon their meanings, origins, and imitational nature, thus establishing bonds between the items and herself. Indeed, the important role that objects play in the formation of human identity has broadly been explored by academics such as Alison P. Watts, who asserts that "anthropologists, sociologists and literary theorists have long recognized the role of material culture in individual and societal negotiation and performance of identity politics. Items of clothing, cooking implements, religious beliefs and traditional crafts bear witness to elements of identity performance and help re-present our social identifications to the outside world" (Watts 3). As things can be powerful recipients of identity formation, Nkem's evolution towards a more independent and self-sufficient woman is hugely attached to the African art pieces that her husband brings to their house. Her inner growth completes when at the end of the story Obiora brings her an original art piece for the first time: the Ife bronze head. At this moment, she finds the courage to be critical and express herself, as if she were influenced by the authenticity and uniqueness of this object.

Arjun Appadurai or Igor Kopytoff have also studied the way in which objects become recipients of identity formation, understanding the term commodities as "things that have use [generally social] value and that can be exchanged in a discrete transaction for a counterpart […] that has, in an immediate context, an equivalent value" (Kopytoff 68). Furthermore, they claim that these commodities can be understood as storytellers, in the sense that they possess life histories that are open to individual interpretation and manipulation. In this respect, Kopytoff applies the same type of questions that are used for human beings' identity formation to the construction of biographies for things. He asserts that in developed societies "a person's social identities are not only numerous but often conflicting," which causes "uncertainty of identity," and adds that "in the homogenized world of commodities, an eventful biography becomes the story of various singularizations of it, of classifications and reclassifications in an uncertain world of categories whose importance shifts with every minor change in context" (89).

As Alison P. Watts suggests, Adichie depicts Obiora as the owner and transporter of things between his houses in Nigeria and Africa (Watts 18). In this sense, he embodies the role of the colonizer, because he decontextualizes these art pieces by not only dislocating them at a geographical level, but also at a conceptual level when he infuses them with a new meaning. Following Appadurai's and Kopytoff's terminology, Obiora diverts these commodities, understanding by "diversion" the metamorphosis through which objects are "placed into a commodity state though originally specifically protected from it" (Appadurai 16). In this light, the African art pieces that he brings to the United States undergo a process of diversion since, although some are intended to have a religious and sacred role in its original context, such as the Benin mask, they are ultimately diverted from their transcendental meaning when Obiora acquires them for a decorative purpose. By approaching his actions as acts of appropriation that make him become a dominant figure, I support P. Watts's idea that it is by means of assigning biographical narrative to the art pieces that he constructs his identity as a "specially chosen […] custodian" of the items (18). Ironically, in telling the significance of the masks to his wife, Obiora describes British (epitomizing the figure of the colonizer) as looters when he says that they stole "the original masks in the late 1800s during what they called Punitive Expedition," and that they "had a way of using words like 'expedition' and 'pacification' for killing and stealing" (Adichie 25). He also adds that "the masks […] were regarded as 'war booty' and were now displayed in museums all over the world" (Adichie 25). Thus, there is a clear parallelism between the colonizers and Obiora, that points at the latter as a collector who turns

his house into a "museum" where he "displays diverted commodities with newly contextualized significations" (Watts 19).

Furthermore, his dominant role is doubly emphasized. Firstly, Obiora and Nkem's American neighbors imitate him when they start decorating their walls with the same type of art pieces. According to the most conservative postcolonial discourse, the act of turning indigenous Nigerian objects into mere decoration is traditionally attached to Western dominant individuals (in this case, their white American neighbors). Yet, it is Obiora who assumes the role of colonizer when carrying out the African pieces of art's diversion and transforming them into commodities for possession and display. At this point, he epitomizes "the Western taste for the things of the past and of the other" (Appadurai 27).

Secondly, his role as storyteller strengthens his domineering position. Many academics and writers have approached words and storytelling as important devices for control and repression. In this light, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie asserts that "like our economic and political worlds, stories are defined by […] how they are told, who tells them, when they are told, how many stories are told" (Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story"). According to her, their relevance lies in the fact that "they are very dependent on power," and defines power as "the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definite story of that person" (Adichie). Therefore, Obiora exerts this power every time he tells her wife the story of the art pieces that he brings home, because he projects his subjectivity on the items as wells as on Nkem's imagination. As Nkem acknowledges at the beginning of the narrative, it is only her husband who makes the apparent lifeless objects look alive. Even though sometimes she doubts about what he says, she is impressed by the passion Obiora transmits when telling his stories:

> We never appreciate what we have, Obiora always ended by saying, before repeating the story of the foolish head of state who had gone to the National Museum in Lagos and forced the curator to give him a four-hundred-years old bust, which he then gave to the British queen as a present. Sometimes Nkem doubts Obiora's facts, but she listens, because of how passionately he speaks, because of how his eyes glisten as though he is about to cry. (Adichie 25)

As it happens many times in the narrative, Obiora is here assuming the role of storyteller, and by doing so, he forces a teacher/pupil relationship in which he acts as the instructor. It seems that he underlines the moral of his short story, which is that "we never appreciate what we have," to implicitly infuse his wife with the

need of appreciating her husband and the amenities he offers her. By telling his own version of the story, he also projects a subjective biography upon the art piece, and it is precisely by means of this subjective projection on the art collection that he exerts his power over his wife, imposing his own point of view of History.

Nkem as a Commoditized and "Imitational" Subject.

While this analysis establishes a link between Obiora and the figure of the colonizer as traditionally understood, a parallelism between Nkem and the objects of possession works, in my view, as the core of the narrative. This correlation can be perceived in the fact that both are diverted and "commoditized." In this sense, Arjun Appadurai claims that in many societies women are regarded as commodities. She says that "marriage transactions might constitute the context in which women are most intensely, and most appropriately, regarded as exchange values" (Appadurai 15). Obiora can also be approached as the responsible for imposing a "single story" on his wife, the same as he does with the items that he brings from Nigeria. As a result, she undergoes a dislocation process, as her husband is the only reason why Nkem moves to the United States before been partly abandoned by him. Her voice-less and dependent condition in the marital relationship highlights her passive role: Nkem picks up the mask and presses her face to it; it is cold, heavy, lifeless. Yet when Obiora talks about it- and all the rest- he makes them seem breathing, warm (25).

In this excerpt, the passivity of the female protagonist is remarked. Nkem, like the art pieces, remains speechless, and it is only by means of her husband that she acquires a voice. The connection between the mask and Nkem is evidenced through the union of both faces (maybe in a visceral desire to express), and the use of the epithets "cold," "heavy" and "lifeless," which seem to allude to a state of metaphorical death. They could also be depicting her lack of free will and autonomy while remaining in clear opposition to the epithets "breathing" and "warm," possibly related to Obiora.

As Kopytoff points out, a person can be commoditized in the sense that he/ she can be materialized (Kopytoff 65). The individual can be taken out of a certain society or group and then *re-socialized* and *re-humanized* by receiving a new social identity. Nkem is objectified after being *de-socialized* from Nigeria and *re-socialized* in America in the form of a wife in a new marital status. In this sense, Nkem becomes a possession and a decorative piece that not only is displayed in the eyes of Obiora (who has a girlfriend in Lagos and visits Nkem just on little occasions), but also in her white American neighborhood due to racial and cultural differences,

as it is shown at some points in the narrative: "…the neighbors didn´t start to ask about him until later. Where was your husband? Was something wrong?" (24), or "… her accent, her foreignness, made her seem helpless to them" (24). These sentences evidence how Obiora's actor role fosters her transformation into another art piece or commodity.

Accordingly, Appadurai and Kopytoff understand commodities as having life histories, and both claim that "the commodity phase of the life history of an object does not exhaust its biography; it is culturally regulated; and its interpretation is open to individual manipulation to some degree" (Appadurai 17). Nkem's materialization is emphasized by the analogy established between the art pieces and herself in terms of their speechless condition. The commoditization of both Nkem and the items prevent them from having a strong and authoritarian voice, which gives Obiora the space for manipulating his wife while imposing his own historical view on the art pieces. In the same way, Nkem's biography is subdued to certain cultural and social restrictions that silence her individual voice:

> They never decided that she would stay with the children- Okey was born three years after Adanna. It just happened. She stayed back at first, after Adanna, to take a number of computer courses while Obiora said it was a good idea. The Obiora registered Adanna in preschool, when Nkem was pregnant with Okey. Then he found a good private elementary school and told her they were lucky it was so close. […] She had never imagined that her children would go to school, sit side by side with white children whose parents owned mansions on lonely hills, never imagined this life. So she said nothing. (27)

The sentences that open and close this paragraph are remarkable because they stress her lack of participation in family decisions, or even decisions concerning her own life. The narrative voice tells us how she is imposed a passive role and accepts it, mainly as a result of all the luxuries that her marriage offers her and that she never imagined she would have as a low-class Nigerian girl. When at the end of the story Nkem rebels against Obiora and communicates him her decision of leaving the United States, she realizes that "he has never heard her speak up, never heard her take a stand" and wonders if the reason why he liked her is that 'she deferred to him, that she let him speak for both of them" (41).

Additionally, the interconnection between Nkem and the art pieces can be explored under the light of the theme of imitation. The contraposition of real and imitational things is constant throughout the narrative. Nkem watches the art

pieces, "imagining the originals" (26). She also wishes her children say "daddy" "to someone real, not a voice on the phone" (26). While she cuts her hair, she remembers a woman she once met, who had short natural hair without any relaxer or texturizer. She discusses with Amaechi, her house girl, how hard it is for her to find real African yams in the United States and "what Rugrats character the children mimic best" (33). As the story develops, she seems to realize about the fakeness of her life, and starts aiming for a "real" husband, a "real" dad for the children, "real" African products, even for the "real" her that was lost once she got married and moved to America:

> She does miss home […] She has sometimes thought about moving back home, but never seriously, never concretely. She goes to Pilates class twice a week in Philadelphia with her neighbor; she bakes cookies for her children's classes and hers are always the favorites; she expects banks to have drive-ins. America has grown on her, snaked its roots under her skin. (37)

The nostalgic tone adopted in this excerpt suggests that her longing for home might be partly caused by living a fake and imitational life in the United States. The need of being in contact with her "original" self is triggered by the imitational art pieces that constantly foster her reflection. For this reason, she spends her time "imagining the originals, imagining the lives behind them" (Adichie 26).

The correlation between Nkem and the African items in terms of their imitational status can be further developed, since both suffer an imposed recontextualization in America that problematizes their authenticity and, thus, their value. In the introduction to *The Social Life of Things* (1986), Appadurai argues that in premodern times it was the exclusivity what gave value to a commodity, because distances were longer, and the production was limited. However, he adds that in the current modern West, "the reproduction of objects in a mass basis becomes possible, the dialogue between consumers and the original source becomes more direct, and middle-class consumers become capable of vying these objects. The only way to preserve the function of these commodities in the prestige economies […] is to complicate the criteria of authenticity" (Appadurai 44-45). Even though, as I have previously argued, the fake art pieces that Obiora brings to the house carry an important role in the redefinition of his patriarchal dominance, their value is low in practice due to their imitational nature. Nkem can be depicted likewise, because although she constitutes one of the relevant pieces that conforms Obiora's patriarchal "museum," her value in the house or in the family is diminished through her voiceless condition

and her little participation in decisions concerning her marriage.

Similarly, her authenticity and valuable status as a woman and as a wife is questioned when she finds out about her husband's infidelity. Her friend tells her on the phone that the girl with whom Obiora is living in Lagos has short and curly hair. She adds that she has "small tight curls. Not a relaxer. A texturizer" (Adichie 22). The detail of the texturizer (used for softening thick hair) becomes relevant, since it evidences the fact that Obiora's lover imitates a type of hair that she does not originally have. Nkem decides to follow the same steps when she "picks up the scissors" and leaves "hair about the length of a thumb nail, just enough to tighten into curls with a texturizer" (28). It can be claimed that this change of style constitutes a desperate attempt to recover Obiora by imitating his lover's hairstyle, which can be translated into an urgent need for stressing her authentic and original status as Obiora's wife.

Nonetheless, despite the decontextualization of Nkem and the items, together with the consequent diversion and appropriation that they undergo, Nkem finds the chance to evolve as an individual by means of the art pieces. Kopytoff asserts that biographies for things can be constructed when applying the same types of questions that apply to human beings. He deepens into this question by claiming that in developed societies "a person's social identities are not only numerous but often conflicting," which causes "uncertainty of identity," and adds that "in the homogenized world of commodities, and eventful biography becomes the story of various singularizations of it, of classifications and re-classifications in an uncertain world of categories whose importance shifts with every minor change in context" (Kopytoff 89). In this respect, in her analysis of the story "Imitation," Alison P. Watts remarks that "social hierarchies and power differentials suggest that many 'established' object biographies and historical narratives speak in the voice of the dominant, hegemonic discourse" (P. Watts 17).

Thus, by following Kopytoff's theory, Nkem can be approached as a subject who takes advantage of the uncertainties of valuation and of identity in commodities to re-articulate the dominant biographical narratives beneath these objects. This allows her "to engage in simultaneous relationship with multiple ghosts in order to locate and embrace the biographies that best speak to and influence her identity formation process" (P. Watts 17). Indeed, Nkem takes advantage of the items that surround her, as well as the uncertainties of evaluation and of identity attached to these commodities, to rebuild the biographical narratives beneath the objects imposed by Obiora. Consequently, the re-articulation of the meanings that these objects emanate encourages the character's reflection upon them and establishes a strong bond be-

tween the objects and herself. This connection results in a mutual influence that ulti-mately leads Nkem to the redefinition of her identity and to the questioning of social borders that limit her free will.

Inhabiting a "Third Space" as a Means of Resistance.

The question of place is subtly, yet clearly, highlighted from the beginning of the narrative, and its connection with the African art pieces to foster Nkem's identity transformation has been overlooked in other studies of "Imitation." Spaces gain prominence in the story when the narrator explains that Nkem is from Lagos and an immigrant in the United States, that she lives in a suburb near Philadelphia, in Cherrywood Lane, that her husband and her have two homes, and that he lives in Nigeria and America. This last geographical duality, and the fact that Nkem feels as an outsider in America, constitute core themes in the story and point at the female protagonist as an individual in an inbetween position. Likewise, the museum as a space of possession and display, where the works from different artists and places converge, further adds revealing meaning to the way Obiora understands his Ameri-can house. Even though he criticizes British people for having stolen African masks during the Punitive Expedition and complains about a head of state who went to the National Museum in Lagos and forced the curator "to give him a four-hundred-year-old bust which he then gave to the British queen as a present" (25), Obiora behaves as them. He gets imitational and authentic art pieces from other places (Benin mask, Nok terra-cota, Ife bronze head) for the aim of possession and display, turning their house into a private museum, and his wife, into one more decorative item. In this sense, Nkem is forced to inhabit a "third space" where she is stripped of her original identity, that is, the identity that she had before arriving to the United States. How-ever, the gradual appropriation of the hostile environment she inhabits by means of interacting with the art pieces fosters her rebelliousness against Obiora, with the consequent enhancement of her own individual voice, for "identities themselves, our self-definitions, are inherently territorial" (Agnew 179) and require a space to develop.

More specifically, I approach the interstitial space that the character builds by taking advantage of her liminal condition as an "activity space" (Massey 54), that is, a space within which a particular agent adopts an active role (54). The new relationship that she establishes with the Ife Bronze Head triggers her American house's transformation into a "countersite," in the sense that it is not delimited by national or other "invisible" demarcations anymore (Ndlovu-Gatsheni and B. Mhalanga 4), and the political and social hegemonic rules that repress her

are replaced by peculiar ones. Nkem builds her own private space, which is not really placed in the U.S or Nigeria but in her inner self, as it does not completely belong to the geographical nor the domestic. This space is in flux and experiences a continuous transformation that provides Nkem with the chance to speak up. In this respect, the process of constructing her own alternative space constitutes a final goal to resist oppression. Both the art pieces and Nkem come to life and speak for themselves, thus escaping Obiora's control over them and transforming his particular "museum" into a self-autonomous space where Nkem transcends imposed boundaries and fixed identities by inhabiting what Bhabha calls "the realm of the beyond" or "third space."

It is when Obiora comes back from his last journey that Nkem's development into an empowered subject makes itself clearer. He refers to the Ife bronze head as an art piece they have to be careful with due to its originality, and Nkem answers:

> "An original," she says, surprised, running her hand over parallel incisions on the face.
> "Some of them date back to the eleventh century." […] "But this one is eighteenth-century. Amazing. Definitely worth the cost."
> "What was it used for?"
> "Decoration for the king's palace. […] Isn't it perfect?"
> "Yes", she says. "I'm sure they did terrible things with this one, too."
> "What?" (39)

This excerpt shows that, towards the end of the story, Nkem's tone becomes much more rebellious. The authenticity of the Ife bronze head and its consequent high value trigger the transformation of Nkem's attitude. It nourishes a renegade identity with a strong critical thinking, as the sentence "I'm sure they did terrible things with this one, too" suggests, and her reply produces surprise on her husband. The insertion of this authentic art piece into her house arouses her self-esteem. It also allows the redefinition of her space and, thereupon, her identity, which until this moment has been marked by the fake objects that dominate her house. Also, the king's palace that Obiora introduces in the dialogue constitutes another key space in the narrative, as it works as a metaphor of their house, where Obiora acts as the king and Nkem is once more compared to the art piece her husband has just brought. Eventually, her development into a more self-confident woman culminates when, right after talking with her husband about the new authentic art piece, she addresses him authoritatively for the first time: "I want to know when a new houseboy is hired

in my house […] And the children need you" (42).

Therefore, Adichie depicts the American house full of African art as a "dynamic space of cultural change characterized by shifting identities" where Nkem's identity is "fluid, relational, and always in flux" (Kalua 23) in relation to the imitational and authentic art pieces. Even though this space of inbetweeness brings vexation and ambiguity, it also "points up the immense freedoms which come out when contradictions are synthesized and overrun in the Third Space" (Kalua 25). As a result, the female protagonist takes advantage of her interstitial status to build a personal territory in search of a place of comfort in which she can develop herself freely. Indeed, Nkem achieves to transcend the territorial impositions that both the United States and her house (transformed into her husband's particular "museum") hinder her individual will.

Conclusion

To conclude, the repressed character in Adichie's short story "Imitation" (2009) takes advantage of the items that surround her, as well as the uncertainties of evaluation and of identity attached to these commodities, to rebuild the biographical narratives beneath the objects imposed by her husband. Consequently, the re-articulation of the meanings that these objects emanate encourages the character's reflection upon them and establishes a strong bond between the two. This connection results in a mutual influence which ultimately leads Nkem to the redefinition of the hostile space she inhabits. This confining domestic space is controlled by her husband, who imposes a materialization process both on Nkem and the imitational art pieces. Indeed, Nkem is turned into a commoditized entity infected with the objects' immobility, both physical (as they are unable to leave this space) and mental (as the stories that Obiora tells her wife about the objects attest Nkem's dependence on him when it comes to verbalizing all the items that are in their house). Eventually, Nkem is influenced by the only authentic art piece that Obiora brings from Africa in terms of its authenticity and high value. Her hybrid condition allows her to initiate the reappropriation of her domestic space that, being an "in-between space," provides her with "the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood- singular or communal- that initiate new signs of identity" (Bhabha 1).

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Transductive Convergence of Digital Humanities/Trans Media Art/World Literature

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Abstract   The singular and constant interaction of form and matter, as well as the potential and dynamism of matter, have been overlooked in material morphology theory. Gilbert Simondon's individuation theory ingeniously identifies these blind spots and defines "individual" as the consequence of the "individuation process." By revealing the potentials of a "pre-individual" that has not yet been individuated as a focus, Simondon demonstrates how "pre-individual forces" as the conditions of natural and technological existence contribute to the formation of "individuals" such as organisms, non-organisms, biological entities, and individual technical objects. The "pre-individual forces" exist temporally prior to the individual and possess the energy of the sustaining constitutive force by which the individual sustains and evolves itself. The pre-individual condition of being is an endless "resource of potentiality" from which being emerges from becoming, which is analogous to Heidegger's concept of "Bestand/standing reserve" in his "Question concerning the Technology." Once the pre-individual is conceptualized as a "metastable being" in relation to its surroundings or "associated milieu," the individual's movement is termed as "transduction," referring to an operation that generates itself by elaborating, concretizing, and structuring the surrounding area. Similarly to how deduction and induction seek to solve problems associated with an already-individuated context, transduction is a problem-solving ability. While elucidating transduction in terms of "feedback loops" within the "associated milieu" of humans, science, and technology, the purpose of this work is to apply transduction logic to the convergence of transmedia, world literature, and digital humanities in terms of aesthetics and ethics.

Keywords   convergence; transduction; individuation; pre-individual; Gilbert Simondon; feedback loops; ethics; world literature

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Introduction: Problems and Solutions: The Phenomenon of Convergence of Humans and Technology in the Era of Pandemic

There is a saying that there is nothing new under the sun. Everything was before and therefore what changes is what has already been changed. Is there anything that doesn't change? It is not an easy problem to find an answer to. So let us deal with the accessible problem first. Under the assumption that nothing in this world does not change, we begin our quest for change. First, let's consider non-living things (non-organisms) and living things (organisms) that exist as objects in this world. It seems that we need a scale of vision that requires viewing through both a telescope and a microscope at the same time, thereby zooming-in and zooming-out of the problem at stake.

When considering changes in organic beings (including animals, plants, and humans) and inorganic things, a crystal (crystalline solid) can be taken as an example of the basic unit of inorganic entities that are typically changing at the material level. A crystal is a material in which the arrangement of atoms has a spatially repeated pattern. When a liquid is cooled, the molecules move slowly, and

the molecules at a certain temperature finally begin to form a uniform arrangement and reach the state in which they cannot move around freely. Under this temperature, molecules (or atoms) are arranged in a regular manner and compose a homogeneous substance with a shape surrounded by planes, called a crystal.[1]

The maximum amount that a solid material can dissolve in a liquid is called solubility, and the solubility varies greatly depending on the type of solvent, temperature, pressure, and solution composition. Most of the solubility of a solid substance is almost independent of pressure, and especially in the case of an aqueous solution in which the solvent is water, the solubility of a solid substance depends only on temperature. The tendency of the solubility of solid substances to depend on temperature differs depending on the type of substance. A decrease in solubility due to a decrease in temperature leads to the formation of supersaturation conditions in a solution of relatively equal concentration. In the case of a supersaturated solution, crystallization such as solid precipitation may occur, so a solution in this state is called an "unstable solution." However, a solution in which no change, such as solid formation, occurs even in a supersaturated solution is called a "metastable solution." The characteristic of a metastable solution is that it does not cause crystallization by itself in the solution, but when a determinant is provided from the outside, crystal grains are ready to grow.

We have examined the natural process of crystallization of liquid solid. However, humans have engineered crystallization. In the artificial crystallization process, the target material moves to the surface of the crystal in solution, or particles are generated in a supersaturated state. This is called a "crystallization" process, and the key mechanism is that crystal nuclei are formed first generated and then crystals grow in this crystallization process. In solid physics, in general, the atoms that make up matter in a crystalline solid are regularly arranged. Therefore, it is easy to explain the electrical structure. In an amorphous solid such as liquid or glass, the arrangement of atoms is irregular and the shape can be changed freely, making it difficult to explain the electronic structure theoretically. Philip W. Anderson and Neville Mott established the theory that the electronic structure of liquid metals has a unique and incomplete energy gap, unlike the electronic structure of solid metals with regular atomic arrangement, but that the electronic structure could not be elucidated by measuring liquid metals that can freely change shape, such as mercury, sodium, lithium, and

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1   Examples of crystal are mostly minerals and metals. The structure forming the crystal mainly represents the spatial arrangement of the three-dimensional structure. The unit cell is classified in accordance with the regularity of the arrangement of atoms. A crystal is a polyhedron with planes and edges, and according to the sub-law, even the same material has different sizes of faces or edges, and has the same properties to form an angle between the crystal faces. For the overview of crystal, refer to Britannica: https://www.britannica.com/science/crystal/Structure.

potassium alloys, or just water.

In August, 2020, a research team proved "the theory of the electronic structure of liquid metal" through experiments and published it in the journal *Nature* for the first time since Nobel Prize winners Philip Anderson and Neville Mott received a Nobel Prize in the 1960s. The Nobel laureates have already presented a theoretical model of "the electronic structure of liquid metals." This new discovery goes beyond the theory of the electronic structure of liquid metals established by Philip W. Anderson, Bell Telephone Laboratories, USA, Neville F. Mott, Cambridge University, UK, and John H. Van Vleck, Harvard University, USA. Unlike the past method, this research team succeeded in measuring an alkali metal such as sodium, potassium, rubidium, and cesium on the surface of a crystalline solid called "black phosphorus." What they discovered is the electronic structure of interface between crystalline solid and liquid metal. You can see in the picture that a substance in which atoms are regularly arranged at the bottom represents a crystalline solid, and that a liquid metal irregularly distributed thereon represents alkali metal atoms doped on the surface. According to Keunsoo Kim, the leader of this research team, "The term pseudogap also appears in high-temperature superconductivity. This study revealed the cause of the pseudo-gap in liquid metal, so if it is the same as the cause of the pseudo-gap in high-temperature superconductivity, it will be an important clue for research." [1]
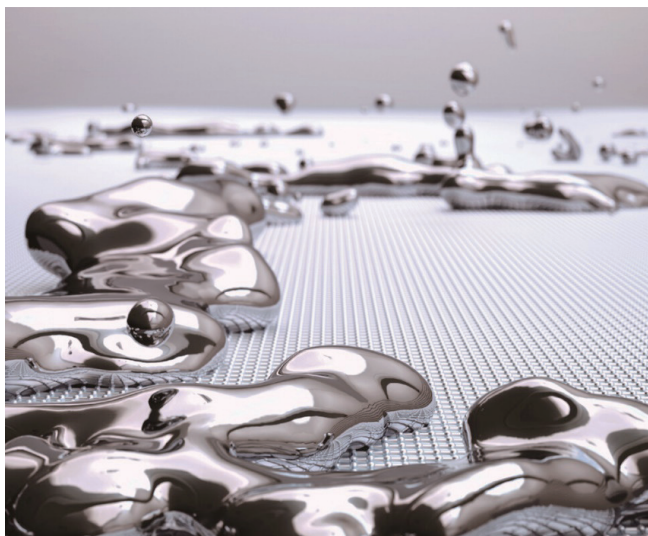
(Figure 1: Pseudo-gap in liquid metal)

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[1]   S.H. Ryu, M. Huh, D.Y. Park, C. Jozwiak, E. Rotenberg, A. Bostwick, and K.S. Kim, "Pseudogap in a crystalline insulator doped by disordered metals." *Nature* 596.68 (2021). doi:10.1038/s41586-021-03683-0.

(*An artistic representation of the interface between a crystalline insulator and a liquid metal, where a key feature of the predicted electronic structure of liquid metals was discovered.)

Superconductivity refers to a physical phenomenon in which electrical resistance suddenly disappears in a cryogenic state close to absolute Zero degrees (about 273 degrees below zero). In the film "Terminator 2," liquid metal robot "T1000" debuts, capable of regaining its shape after being shot or struck by a car. It is said that the scientists have succeeded in measuring the "electronic structure" of such a liquid metal, and that this structure was experimentally discovered for the first time in the world. High-temperature superconductivity is a mechanism in which resistance disappears at a specific high temperature. If it is realized at room temperature, power transmission is possible without energy loss. Furthermore, if the principle of this high-temperature superconductivity phenomenon can be identified and ultimately room-temperature superconductivity can be developed, it will be possible to solve the problem of maglev trains and power supply and demand. Looking at the process of discovering the properties of electronic structures and functions in crystalline solids and liquid solids, the interaction between science and technology in the process of analyzing and exploring various phenomena occurring in inorganic substances and their "associated milieu" correlation can be inferred.

Now, let us change our focus to the organisms. Take an example of blood vessels and cells inside the human body to see what happens in organisms, which is also related to human cognition ability. In 2014, Tony Wyss-Coray, a brain scientist at Stanford University in the United States and a world authority on Alzheimer's disease, incised and sutured the body of an old mouse and a young mouse to connect the circulatory system, called "parabiosis". The wound healing ability of two animals sharing the same circulatory system was studied by the method of bonding. Injuries to the muscles of old mice combined with young mice were healed much faster than other old mice. On the other hand, wounds in young mice combined with older mice were found to be produced much later than their peers. In 2016, when the brains of old mice were examined, new neurons were three times as many as usual, but the number of neurons produced in the brains of young mice combined with old mice was significantly lower than that of ordinary young mice. As a result, the old mice became more active, while the young mice behaved like middle-aged ones. The same results were obtained when plasma was injected. The hippocampus is a part of the brain responsible for memory, and it was confirmed as a result of the study that abnormal signal "transduction" was reduced in the hippocampus of young

blood transfused Alzheimer's mice, and that short-term memory and cognitive abilities were actually improved in these mice. Afterwards, Tony Wyss-Coray of Stanford University and his team collected the blood of 4,263 people aged 18 to 95 years from human subjects, selected "aging proteins" whose amount changes greatly depending on age, and published them in the journal, *Nature Medicine* (December 5, 2019). The study developed a system for estimating the age using 373 proteins whose amounts change significantly. Through the system, the amount of protein in the blood can be analyzed and the age can be estimated within 3 years of error. As a result, 1, 379 aging proteins were found and the amount of protein in the blood was found to increase in steps at the age of 34, 60, and 78. Tony Wyss-Coray said that he found a way to treat diseases caused by aging through this study: "Looking at thousands of them in plasma gives you a snapshot of what's going on throughout the body," and "Proteins are the workhorses of the body's constituent cells, and when their relative levels undergo substantial changes, it means you've changed, too."[1]

Recently, a research team from the Hebrew University of Israel conducted an experiment in which a blood vessel-making component was injected into mice with old blood vessels and published a study result in the international scientific journal *Science* on July 30, 2021, showing that aging of blood vessels leads to overall aging of the body, including bones, muscles, and liver.[2] The amount of vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) decreases, because the old blood vessels become inflamed and the amount of oxygen in the tissue is reduced, leading to aging of blood vessels, thereby failing to supply enough blood to each tissue. As a result, what they discovered is that when the amount of VEGF decreases, capillaries are significantly reduced, causing a problem with the function of mitochondria which is energy factories in cells. Based upon this scientific research result, the Israeli researchers hypothesized that blood vessels could be rejuvenated by increasing the amount and activity of VEGF, and they injected VEGF into old mice using an adeno-associated virus. As a result, the function of blood vessels in mice was partially restored, body functions improved, abdominal fat and fatty liver decreased, and muscle loss and bone loss were also reduced. The kyphosis, in which the spine curves backward, was also improved.

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1   "Stanford scientists reliably predict people's age by measuring proteins in blood." *Stanford Medicine News*. December 9, 2019: https://med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2019/12/stanford-scientists-reliably-predict-peoples- age-by-measuring-pr.html

2   "Aging Counteracting age-related VEGF signaling insufficiency promotes healthy aging and extends life span." M. Grunewald et al. Web. 30, 2021. For full article, https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abc8479.

In fact, the research team conducted an experiment on mice, a non-human organism, and applied the results to a human organism, saying, "The pathology caused by aging, such as osteoporosis, sarcopenia, and fatty liver, has greatly improved. It could be a good way." When we look at the overall experimental process, we can reflect the fact that we are in the process of analyzing and exploring various phenomena occurring in organic objects and their "associated milieu." What is significant and relevant for us, the scholars in the humanities, is to be aware of and attentive to these human effort to apply the scientific research results to the human organism through the experiment of a non-human organism, the mouse. Although it is not possible to specifically investigate and present the detailed process for a non-specialist, we are lucky to recognize the "concretization" phenomenon in which the maximization of the interrelationship among humans, science, and technology is concrete.

When we first get COVID-19, it is said that the influx of the virus immediately activates immune cells in the lung tissue. Most of these immune cells are macrophages. Macrophages recognize virus-infected cells or cancer cells and directly eliminate them through phagocytosis. This operation is a defense mechanism that responds immediately at the forefront of protecting the human body from pathogens. Although macrophages respond as an initial defense during COVID-19 infection, they damage tissues in the defense process and fibrosis may occur in the process of recovering from inflammation. Recently, it has been discovered that immune cells that block external viruses seep into the lungs from the blood during COVID-19 infection and transform themselves into a large number of attack cells. In response to this discovery, a paper by a joint research team led by Park Soo-hyung of the Graduate School of Medical Sciences of KAIST was published in *Nature* and revealed the characteristics and origin of specific immune cells that cause lung damage. It is being evaluated as a result of a study that suggests a way to control the lung damage of COVID-19 patients caused by an excessive immune response.[1]

As we have seen in the previous cases, humans are still experiencing the process of change during the period of the pandemic, and how science and technology will evolve together in response to COVID-19 depends upon the cycle of the "associated milieu" of humans, science and technology. In order to understand the process of rapid change, what is at stake is the concrete materialization and representation of detailed "associate milieu" of humans, science, and technology in

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1   Lee, J.S., Koh, JY., Yi, K. et al. "Single-cell transcriptome of bronchoalveolar lavage fluid reveals sequential change of macrophages during SARS-CoV-2 infection in ferrets." Nature Communications 12. 4567 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-24807-0

a recognizable pattern. This paper attempts to grapple with some of these practical challenges, explaining the transformation or transduction in the "feedback loops" of the "associated milieu" of humans and science and technology, as well as applying the logic of transduction to the convergence of transmedia, world literature, and digital humanities in the context of aesthetics and ethics.

Theories: Feedback Loops of Humanities, Science, and Technology: Individuation, Associated Milieu, and Tranduction

Crystallization and concretization dealt with in the preceding introduction represents the concept of individualization process related to the existence and creation of various types of individuals existing in nature and the world, such as organic and inorganic matters, plants and animals, and living things including humans. The basic model of individualization or what Gilbert Simondon termed as "individuation" begins with a physico-chemical phenomenon called "crystallization." The crystallization process takes place between the crystalline seed (germ/seed) and the milieu of the mother liquid, referring to a process in which microscopic crystal structure fragments are transformed into crystals in a supersaturated solution. The mother liquid in an amorphous state has no form yet, and a crystal seed, which can be called a seed or nucleus, grows in the mother liquid. This mother liquid is the surrounding environment or "milieu," and creates its own shape and structure. Crystallization refers to the joint work of a mission in which seeds that construct an amorphous environment and structure produce crystals through continuous interaction. As time goes by, the crystal grows and the crystal seed expands by forming its own realistic structure in the milieu. On the other hand, the surrounding environment, which remained only as a potential before the crystal seed grows, is activated when the crystal seed starts to grow, and this potential is converted into energy and becomes an environment full of dynamism, promoting the ripening and structuring of the seed. By making it possible, the potential of the seed is realized.

In the theory of material morphology, it can be said that blind spots are still prevalent: 1) the specific and continuous interaction that operates between form and matter, 2) the potential and dynamism of matter that is already in the amorphous state. Gilbert Simondon's theory ingeniously highlights these blind spots and understands "individual" as the result of "process of individuation" and considers the process of creation of the individual without presupposing the identity on which individuality is based, marking the breakthrough. According to Simondon, simple engineering or reverse engineering simply moves from identity to identity

from one entity to everything else before. Unlike reverse engineering, which deductively moves from the identity of an entity in its present state to an entity with a newly constructed identity in the future, Simondon shows potentials of a "pre-individual" that has not yet been individuated as a focus. Simondon is interested in understanding how the "pre-individual forces" as the conditions of natural and technological existence constitute "individuals," such as organisms, non-organisms, biological entities (plants and animals and humans) and individual technical objects.

He argues that it is the process of the pre-individual that governs the process of individuation. In his "The Genesis of the Individual," Simondon makes clear the importance of the individual phase in this:

> The process of individuation must be considered primordial, for it is in this process that at once brings the individual into being and determines all the distinguishing characteristics of its development, organization and modalities. Thus, the individual is to be understood as having a relative reality, occupying only a certain phase of the whole being in question--a phase that therefore carries the implication of a preceding pre-individual state, and that, even individuation, does not exist in isolation, since individuation does not exhaust in the single act of its appearance all the potentials embedded in the pre-individual state. Individuation, moreover, not only brings the individual to light but also the individual-milieu dyad. In this way, the individual possesses only a relative existence in two senses: because it does not represent the totality of the being, and because it is merely the result of a phase in the being's development during which it existed neither in the form of an individual nor as the principle of individuation. (300)

An individual can be understood as having "a relative reality" that occupies a certain stage/phase of whole being. These stages (phases/steps/stages) have the inner meaning of "pre-individual state," referring to the stages that are inherent in simple actions in which all potentials of the individual's previous state "embedded in the pre-individual state" are revealed as a phenomenon. Furthermore, individuation clearly reveals the bilateral relationship of not only the individual but also the individual-milieu. The "pre-individual forces" already exist and make possible the "emergence of individuality," which is an action force in the individual. These forces, which can be called potentialities, exist temporally ahead of the individual and constitute the individual, and have energy of the sustaining constitutive force that the individual maintains and transforms itself. Thus, the individual is always

more than itself, just as the individual human being "I" always has the potential to be more than "I," because it is an individual with lasting potential that undergoes further changes even after it has been constructed in such a fixed manner. This pre-individual force also constitutes the milieu in which the entity is located and provides another fictional potential in which the entity participates: persistent virtuality. The individual is but one stage in the process of individuation, surrounded by pre-individual powers, which are potentials before and after their emergence.

What is unique in Simondon's theory of individuation is the convergence of the individual in terms of the simultaneous tripartite existence of the pre-individual, the individualized, and the terminated individualized, reflecting Heideggerian being in tandem with Deleuzean becoming. Existence becomes something, and in the midst of becoming something, something other emerges. However, existence leaves "residue or excess" as a condition for "future becoming" in its context and milieu. The pre-individual state of being is an infinite "resource of potentiality" from which being emerges from becoming, which is equivalent for "Bestand/ standing reserve," an issue raised by Heidegger in his "Question concerning the Technology." Individuation is the process of making use of this resource. Pre-individual existence encompasses a wide range of heterogeneous forces, including the action of connections and disconnections, while implementing virtual resources, potentials, and beings in its own way. Simondon's theory of individuation is very much Heideggerian but in a different context of "ontogenesis" in his elaboration and emergence of the individual/being from becoming/the pre-individual as Simondon further poetizes:

> The opposition holding between the being and its becoming can only be valid when it is seen in the context of a certain doctrine according to which substance is the very model of being; that it corresponds to a capacity beings possess of falling out of step with themselves, of resolving themselves by the very act of falling out of step. The pre-individual being is the being in which there are no steps. The being in which individuation comes to fruition is that in which a resolution appears by its division into stages, which implies becoming: becoming is not a framework in which the being exists; it is one of the dimensions of the being, a mode of resolving an initial incompatibility that was rife with potentials" (300-301).

Simondon's ontogenetic rendering of the concept of "pre-individual" explains that becoming is a mode of existence that functions as a step out of phase through

disconnection and syncopation. Becoming produces a process of individuation by "its division into stages of disparity" that resolves itself of "an initial incompatibility that was rife with potentials" and uses some of the previous resources to make up several entities (referring to individual entities, individual technological entities, or biological entities). Being is the result of a solution to the differentiation of becoming, and individuality is a resolution/solution to the emerging differentiation.

In fact, once individuality exists, it becomes a level or a plurality of levels that were not there before in the pattern of stages (phases or steps). Pre-individual existence is "oversaturated with potential" which is a fruitful creation at the level of an organization that can utilize this power without exhausting it. Thus, an entity is created in phases, stages, steps as soon as it exists, and if it does not exist, there are no phases. Simondon's main argument is that the existence before the individual or the pre-individual is not static but unstable and dynamic. This point of instability where individuality emerges is called a "metastable" state. Once the trigger is pulled (actuated), the pre-individual generates forces acting on each other, creates tension and excess/excess, and develops a tipping point corresponding to the priming in the form of emergence, creating an uncomfortable but coexistent form of becoming. While individual being represents the cohesive substance of organisms and non-organisms that have the temporary ability to gather certain forces and work together, individuality "erupts from the pre-individual" like a volcano and integrates these tensions. This tension is not a solution to a problem, but rather a reaction or Heideggerian "questioning," a new order and organization that temporarily unifies previously sources of tension. Therefore, the individual is a mode of existence that manages rather than overcoming instability and excess, representing a phase of being, a period, and a movement. During this process of individuation, the preindividual being is in a metastable state of form-taking towards other types of constructs, and there is a constant departure from always new but usually unrealized virtualities, maintaining, to create a temporary solution. This materialistic and idealized pre-individual existence is always in a state of tension with potentiality, that is, supersaturated in a state of tension with potential.

Once the pre-individual is understood as a "metastable being" in relation to the environment or "associated milieu" of disparity and doubling, the movement is called "transduction." Transduction refers to an operation that creates itself while elaborating, concretizing, and structuring the surrounding area. Transduction transforms itself by completing dimensions, magnitudes, and directions (vectors), so that an entity can survive amid opposing and competing forces. It should be noted that the movement is through different forces. Transduction, therefore, signifies

that the entity cuts through the pre-individual state from the resources and forces of the entity's previous existence, structuring the entity itself, and creating (invents) itself. Transduction is a process in which the various transfer forces "dephase" each other and create discrimination or disparity—an issue which refers to the problem raised through the creation or discovery of a process, event, dimension or object via questioning that allows a new order to emerge at another level through individuation. Just as deduction and induction attempt to solve problems connected to an already individuated context rather than in the production process, transduction is a kind of problem-solving ability.

As we follow Simondon's logic, it can be seen that transduction is the most essential principle and modus operandi of "conversion." The process of transduction not only creates unity by temporarily gathering heterogeneous forces, but also describes the structuring of what surrounds being or substance, resulting in the creation of a domain that surrounds and enables existence and its transformation. Transduction creates a creative leap from the past and present of a pre-individual existence to an unknown future, thereby inventing new fields, regions within and in an environment that surround and make existence possible. And the transduction is based on singularity and specificity rather than general rules such as deduction and induction. Based on this logic of "eruption," such as a volcanic eruption that transforms from a dormant volcano that previously existed with a simple force to an active volcano, transduction deals with real and practical forces with subtle concreteness as a logic for the emergence of entities, objects, and processes. In short, transduction in the context of transformation can be positioned as a principle and logic of convergence, and convergence is a problem-solving ability.[1]

To understand transduction, one needs a relevant concrete and practical

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1   In his review "On Gilbert Simondon" in 1966, Deleuze praises Simondon's original theory of individuation, claiming that the new concepts established by Simondon seem to be original, striking, and inspiring. Traces of Simondon's thought can be found throughout Deleuze's work, in particular in *Différence et Répétition/Difference and Repetition* (1968), *Logique de Sens/The Logic of Sense* (1969), and in his joint work with Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus/Mille plateaux* (1980). For his direct comment on Simondon, refer to Gilles Deleuze "On Gilbert Simondon." *Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953–1974*. Ed.David Lapoujade. Trans. Michael Taormina. Los Angeles and New York: Semiotext(e), 86–9. I would argue that Simondon's theory of individuation and transduction deeply inspired and influenced Deleuze, provoking a missing link between Heideggerian being with Deleuzean becoming and that I am applying Simondon's theory of transduction as the logic of "convergence" of Digital Humanities, transmedia art and world literature, thereby providing the aesthetics and ethics of technology and the humanities in the age of pandemic and precarity for my NRF project.

example. According to Britannica, transduction refers to "a process of genetic recombination in which genes from a host cell (a bacterium) are incorporated into the genome of a bacterial virus (bacteriophage) and then carried to another host cell when the bacteriophase initiates another cycle of infection."[1] Transduction signfies the process of creating a new genotype without mutation by breaking genetic elements into two different genomes as a unit. Although this genetic recombination is highly complex and sophisticated, genetic recombination in the genetic engineering of DNA includes transformation, transduction, and conjugation, simply speaking: transformation refers to a method to change the trait of a bacterium by artificially inserting a DNA extract from one strain to another; transduction is the genetic character of a phage using a bacteriophage medium; and conjugation refers to a phenomenon in which DNA is transferred by direct contact between cells. What is distinctive in transduction is that genetic material is carried by a bacteriophage (or phage).[2] In short, when a part of DNA enters the cell, most of it undergoes a recombination process of "change," regardless of which process it was introduced into. The following figure gives a glimpse into the logic of the transformation.
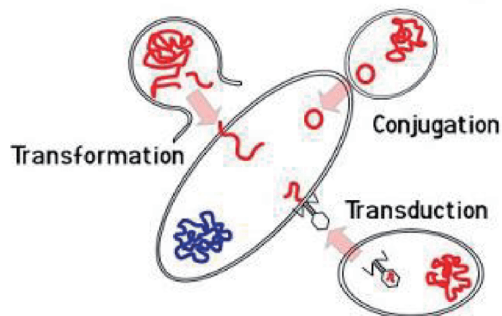
[Figure 2: Horizontal gene transfer; transformation, conjugation and transduction: Hendrickson 28]

In the process of transferring a previously transformed bacterium to another bacterium through artificial genetic manipulation in gene "transduction," the process of transferring a virus with the DNA of a host bacterial cell from another host is itself a response to the recent coronavirus 19. In contrast, Simondon's transduction

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1   https://www.britannica.com/science/transduction-microbiology

2   For the simplified types of genetic recombination in terms of transformation, transduction, and conjugation, refer to Heather Lyn Hendrickson's Ph. D. Dissertation. *Chromosome Architecture and Evolution in Bacteria*. University of Pittsburgh, 2007, 9-33.

can be thought of as encompassing both genetic engineering transformation and transduction. In this context, transduction suggests an "associate milieu" or "associated environment" that complexly occurs "without internal and external boundaries" in the correlation between human and viral entities.

Representation of Transduction: Feedback Loops of Humanities and Technology: Convergence of Transmedia, World Literature, and Digital Humanities

After the 4th industrial revolution, humans are living in the era of big data, which is a repository of information including the Internet and digitized archives. Larger and larger databases have been accumulated and stored on the Internet and in digitized archives, containing ever-expanding amounts of information. Data itself is undergoing an "individuation process" from "pre-individual existence." This is called Big Data. Big data refers to data that exceeds the size that can be captured, selected, managed, and processed (capture, curate, manage, process) within the scope of a software device. Data includes unstructured, semi-structured, and structured data. Big data refers to data with a scale of several tens of terabytes to several exabytes. A new type of technology is required in order to grasp the information of such a diverse, complex and vast dataset and to obtain useful information. Therefore, the nature of the data itself represents Gilbert Simondon's "metastable state."

Recently, even among humanities scholars, the use of database technology has led to a new type of analysis and methodology, particularly in the use of data which draw a cognitive map of the relationship between research subjects, in the collaborative nature of data generation, and in the final visualization of information patterns. It is a known fact that a new research environment is being created by linking existing fields with interdisciplinary research in terms of "convergence." Both unstructured and structured data can be said to be "metastable pre-individual." Transformation from unstructured data to structured data is also the goal of Digital Humanities. The prelude to this transformation is coding. Coding literally means making something into a code. It also includes giving symbols. In a computer, it means "code writing work" involved in the programming process of writing a program using a certain programming language.

Coding in Digital Humanities and world literature is being reconstructed in somewhat different contexts. In his essay, "16. Multidimensional Text Code Marking," Jerome McGann of The University of Virginia, who is a pioneer of Digital Humanities in the field of English literature and humanities, wrote about the

traditional way of reading texts from the perspective of "marked text." According to him, all the text we read now is coded. When we read a character text that has an external implementation which forms a process of thinking and an idea, we follow the conceptual structure of the text, and as we continue to read, we scan with the eyes to determine the font size, font, and word in a row. While observing the external shape contained in the entire page, such as the number of characters, footnotes, number of pages, margins, and book design, we grasp the content at the same time. Innumerable things other than the content can be read by the reader sensing it, or the content can be read automatically as if watching a movie without recognizing it. Here, although it is not clearly visible in a paper book, various features of linguistically coded electronic documents that are indispensable in a digitized book are inherent. In the case of electronic documents, there is a language indicated as a rule to refer to the format in which the document is displayed on the screen and to specify the logical structure of data, which is called a markup language. Markup functions to "control the linguistic status of the text, not the documentary status." (McGann, http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/)

Once it is electronically documented through coding and stored in an electronic archive, how can it be knowledgeable and discoursed by utilizing the information in the informational database? In the field of philosophical representation research, it is already argued that databases are replacing narratives. We can get access to and approach to the information via database which has stored the "metadata" describing files and materials in a repository. This statistical near-objective way of dealing with information provides us with the logic of database according to which linear narratives have multiple forms of elasticity and are continuous. The logic refers to a traditional narrative method that is connected. In contrast, a non-linear database refers to a database whose structural order is discontinuous without elasticity like graphs and trees, as opposed to a linear structure. This is the logic of the new transformation in the 21st century that materialized the conditions of transformation described by Simondon in the process of individuation.

When the "database" of literary texts is put in the context of the "pre-individual" of the existing literature of the entire world, world literature can be constructed from various perspectives. As the positive model, we can look at foreign literature from the future-oriented and progressive perspective to redirect the national literature as an individual. As the negative model, we can view foreign literature as an object to be exclusively avoided while adhering to the tradition of national literature. In the neutral case, foreign literature is accepted as an image of counter-radical otherness, and the tradition of national literature is used as an opportunity to define national

literature more clearly through the reflection from a revisionist perspective.

In the context of Damrosch's diverse perspectives, Franco Moretti's "Conjectures on World Literature" represents an interesting case for Simondonian logic of transduction. First, Moretti presents the metaphors of trees and waves. Trees illustrate the transition from unity to diversity. There are many branches in one tree, like branches from Indo-European to dozens of other languages. Conversely, waves/wavelengths have a uniformity that engulfs the initial variability. Trees need geographic discontinuity, waves/wavelengths hate barriers and seek geographic continuity. Therefore, trees and branches are what the nation-state is obsessed with, and waves/waves reproduce the function of the global market. However, trees and branches coexist on the earth and permeate the branches of local traditions in each individual. On the other hand, transcending the boundaries between inside and outside, deep and wide, trees and branches transform themselves transductively into the form of waves/wavelengths in each individual and are transmitted, absorbed, and rejected as the phylogenetic waves, transducting human thought, memory, cognition and creation. In this way, although it is defined as national literature for people who see trees and world literature for people who see waves/wavelengths, the path of world literature becomes digital in a rapidly transformed form after COVID-19.
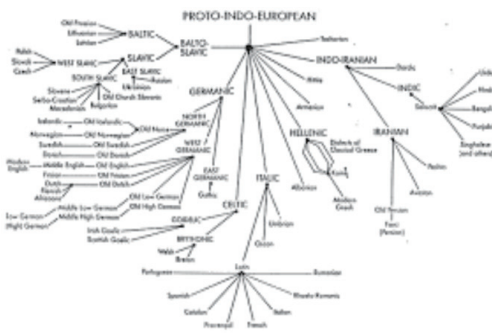
[Figure 3: Trees of Diversity]   [Figure 4: Waves of Unity]

How should we read the digital world literature that is being coded as it spreads through the logic of change? Moretti's distance reading allows us to focus on units that are much smaller or much larger than the text, and the text itself disappears between the very small and the very large, thus creating Moretti's motto, "less is more." Moretti's argument is that in order to understand the system as a whole, one must accept to lose something, and that humans always have to pay the price for their theoretical knowledge. In addition, reality is infinitely rich, and concepts are abstract and poor. World literature as a pre-individual existence is the repository of

discourses of human intellect, sensibility, and understanding with infinite potential.

David Damrosch presents the typology of "elliptical refraction" in "What Is World Literature?" and suggests a double reading method of refraction. He explains that the double refraction works in the process of reading works of foreign literature. According to Damrosch, the space of foreign culture within one's national literature is a space defined in various ways by the national tradition of one's culture and the immediate demands of the native national writer. Even a single work of world literature is a forum for negotiation between two different cultures. At the heart of Damrosch's argument is that receptive cultures can use databases of foreign literature in a variety of ways. An image of the fundamental otherness can be used as a positive case that can contribute to the future development of one's own traditions, or as a more primitive and decadent negative case that should be avoided or eradicated in one's country, or as a more neutral case that can be used more clearly to define one's own traditions. This suggests that foreign literature is being transformed in various ways. In conclusion, Damrosch's theory is that world literature is about the values and needs of one's own culture, just like the culture expressed in foreign literature, and that it can be explained by the oval image of "double refraction." He constructed a world literature that is not constrained by each other while connected to the two cultures. Damrosch proposes to combine the double refractions of microscopic concave and macroscopic convex and to constructing double focus in which foreign and native cultures create a mutual oval-shaped elliptical space of "disparity." In fact, Damrosch presents the transformation of the human intellect toward the direction of the creative and inventive world literature.

I would argue that Moretti and Damrosch's theory of world literature implies the perspective and logic of convergence, though they were not ready yet to elaborate the transductive process of digital world literature in the era of the pandemic. When Moretti expresses world literature with the concept of "scale," he first prepared a view of world literature as a "database." The literature of world literature as a database is also associated with the concept of "glocalization" in terms of "micro-scale" and "macro-scale." A map scale on a map refers to a graphical scale bar or representative fraction (RF) of the map. The concept of global localization from the perspective of "up-scale" and "down-scale" is, in fact, ironically, simultaneous zooming-in and zooming-out techniques.[1] By zooming-out, the object of observation will be reduced and enlarged simultaneously, explaining

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1   For the detailed analysis of scale in world literature, refer to the author's essay, "Scale, Untranslatability, Cultural Translation, and World Literature." *Journal of English Language and Literature* 64.3 (Fall 2018): 469-82.

the phenomenon of simultaneous and competitive movement globally as a response to regionally changing economic, political, and cultural influences. It can provide a platform to explain the movement that enables simultaneous movement from downscale to upscale. As such, scale is the basis for a "dynamic, interactive map" of world literature research. Although it is not yet clear how much the convergence of digital humanities, trans media, and world literature will be realized in digital world literature, the rapid differentiation and transduction in the context of the development of artificial intelligence in deep learning and deep reading can prepare us to detect this breakthrough once we are provided with a Simondonian lense. The process of individuation and the logic of transduction will provide the rationales for a new breakthrough in digital world literature.

Conclusion: Ethics of Transduction in Humanities, Science, and Technology

As I have discussed earlier, Simondon's logic of transduction elaborates and concretizes the existence of an entity before the entity in tandem with the surrounding area near the entity, as shown in crystallization. It creates a self-generating operation (action) process while structuring it. Transduction takes place in an organism, transforming itself by completing dimensions, scale, and direction so that individual beings can survive through opposing and competing forces. Transduction allows the entity to create itself by dynamically moving and remembering the state of the former entity from the resources and potential of the entity before it. In this process, transduction creates a discriminatory problem of different stages as the various transfer forces "dephase" each other. Through this questioning, a new order emerges from the upscaled state, and a new process, event, dimension or object is created or discovered. In a nutshell, individuation also refers to the creation of a relation between an entity and an associated milieu. Therefore, the movement of individuation is transformational and transductive. It traverses countless forces, stages, and dimensions to temporarily structure and reorganize the unorganized potentials of the pre-individual existence.

Countless trans movements such as "Transnationalism, Transculturalism, Transhumanism, Transmedia, Transdiscursivity, Transgender, Transexual" connected with the prefix "trans" are all transductive. Before and after trans, the boundaries between the inside and outside, between above and below, all refer to the membranes in a state of tension and metastable as Simondon pointed out in the crystallization. The work of translating the "metastable" is subtle and complex. Nevertheless, it is my contention that transduction is a structural and executional inventive and creative logic that lies at the center of the continuous and dynamic

conversion between the pre-individual and the individual of each converging event at stake.

Can conversion and transduction have ethics? Is it possible to impose artificial ethics on the changing laws of all things? Unlike morals that can be reached through social unity, is it possible to have ethics based on the autonomous judgment of human individuals? The original English word ethics is derived from the ancient Greek ēthikós (ἠθικός) meaning "related to the person," from êthos (ἦθος) meaning "person, moral nature," then transferred to the Latin "ethica," which was translated into French as "éthique" and became "ethics" in English. In a word, ethics must relate to human character and moral nature. I would argue that technology gives humanities a new norm, and that humans can judge the nature of machines properly only when they understand the true nature of them. Depending on how we can explain the relationship between humans and machines in terms of Simondonian "associated milieu," that judgment will be possible. As we have seen in the crystallization and individuation process, the relationship between humans and technology can vary depending on how we define both crystal and resolution.

In the context of this complex challenge of hyperconnectivity and insecurity of disruption and innovation, writers and critics of world literature are increasingly becoming experts in computing, transmedia, and digital humanities to expand the realms of their critical reading and imaginative thinking, and the growing trend of digital humanities and world literature tells us that big data research is helping humanists to go beyond the global scalability of world literature, sometimes crossing the borders of previously inaccessible data sources, and discovering the interface between cultures. Transmedia artists are conducting new visual and auditory experiments with imagination and utopian thinking to answer questions and solutions to the unsafe biological and ecological challenges facing humanities due to the rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI).

In this new digital and smart environment, it is necessary to implement new ethical values in the newly emerging convergence of humanities and technology. After all, all beings, including human beings, are like open-ended entelechy, and can be said to be the direction and orientation towards the maximization of the force and process that creates existence. Existences are only doomed to evolve, to be mobilized, and to operate to more effectively resource what is judged to be the potential of a resource until it finds a path. The rest is up to humans. Then, one thing is clear: as Nietzsche remarks, we are "all too humans" who are free as what we are as individuals, but becoming "humans" in the community of the ethics of the humanity requires us to remember that we are in the next phase of the pre-individual

at the same time we are part of the pre-individual yet, as in *The Analects*: "If a man keeps cherishing his old knowledge, so as continually to be acquiring new, he may be a teacher of others."

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Neocolonizing the Nation: American Pop Culture and Saudi Television

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Abstract   To allow Americans to enter Saudi Arabia in 1945, King Abdulaziz sought counseling from the religious party where they issued a fatwa of permission. Only then were the Americans able to help the Saudis extract oil and build the world's largest industrialized oil company, Aramco (McHale 622–623). The subject of this paper is not the oil industry but its consequences and impacts on Saudi culture. Focusing on television, this paper examines the impact of American pop culture and its neocolonial influence on Saudi culture. Through the first English Saudi channel, which was founded in 1957, American pop culture introduced America to Saudi citizens. It also examines the hegemonic impact of American pop culture on Saudi Arabia that, while being resisted by fundamentalist religious groups, has contributed to the reshaping of Saudi modern culture.

Keywords   Pop-Culture; Neocolonialism; Television; Imperialism; Religion

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Introduction

> [Cultural imperialism is the] sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system, and how its dominating stratum is attracted, pressured, forced, and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even to promote, the values and structures of the dominant center of the system.
>
> —Herbert I. Schiller, Communication and Cultural Domination.

In 2013, while taking my first graduate course in pop-culture, I realized that some Americans were not aware of the influence of American television on Saudis. My classmates kept wondering how I understood some of their cultural references. I, on the other hand, was curious about how much Americans know about Saudi Arabia. Do they know, for instance, that in Saudi Arabia "there is a direct family relationship between the ultimate owner and the head of state, and the governing system is a single-party state, [and that] we classify the media enterprise as state owned?" (Djankov 353) The fact that Saudi media is state owned has led to American popular media being given priority and becoming more influential in Saudi Arabia, but how did this happen? By saying "priority," I simply mean that since the U.S. government was the first to assist the Saudis in extracting oil, Americans were most likely the first Western foreigners to be allowed to live and work with Saudis. To allow Americans to enter Saudi Arabia in 1945, King Abdulaziz sought counseling from the religious party where they issued a fatwa of permission. It was only then that Americans were able to extract oil and build the world's largest industrialized oil company, known as Aramco (McHale 622–623). The subject of this paper is not the oil industry but its neocolonialist tendencies and impacts on Saudi media and culture. To narrow down the scope of the paper, I examine the role of television during the late twentieth century through a cultural and historical reading of Saudi television within the context of neocolonialism. I suggest that after being recognized as a useful propaganda, television was not only used to counter conservative groups, but also to shape the nation's upcoming generations. By "conservative groups," I mean the Saudis who regard the consumption of Western technology as a threat to Islamic teachings and identity. On the other hand, there was another religious group who thought of Television as a media and an opportunity to preach the Islamic faith as officiated by the Saudi government. Television, therefore, became and remains a means through which religious and political creeds intersect to shape generations of Saudis.

Despite the opposing fundamentalist party, the Saudi media introduced television to accommodate hundreds of American expatriates who lived in Saudi Arabia. As a result, during the second half of the twentieth century, American shows were broadcasted on cable television to entertain American expatriates who were far away from their own popular culture. Consequently, "Aramco Television went on the air for the first time on September 17, 1957. The inaugural broadcast, which was also the first Arabic-language television broadcast to originate in Saudi Arabia, was a reading from the Koran" (Archive. Aramcoworld). Years later, the second English Saudi Channel Two (1982–2017) was founded to serve as a local entertainment

option for expatriates:

> In 1982, Saudi Arabia's channel Two only transmitted 10 hours' worth of programming a day and was targeted towards foreign residents in the kingdom. This is because of the large number of expatriates living in the kingdom and the channel was launched to provide some form of entertainment for them and shed light on the country's cultural and economic heritage. Because of its reliance on terrestrial transmission at that time, foreign residents were the channel's main target audience. (2nd Channel of the Saudi Ministry of Culture and Information)

Although, the targeted viewers for Channel Two when it was launched were foreign residents— mostly Americans, it became available to all residents of Saudi Arabia. Most of the entertainment shows were American, allowing Saudi citizens, for the first time, to be introduced to the America through television. Therefore, it is possible to claim that American television had a neocolonialist impact on Saudi culture. Accordingly, the hegemonic presence of American television in Saudi Arabia, albeit being resisted by conservative groups, contributed to shaping modern Saudi culture and influencing the millennial generation—thus underwriting the Saudi media's efforts to counter fundamentalist groups. In other words, American television can be recognized as a means through which radical religious or antigovernment groups are suppressed.

Radical religious groups acted on their radicalism in 1975, less than twenty years since the inauguration of the first Saudi Channel by Aramco. "Religion was one of the apparent reasons for the assassination of a king. Faisal ibn Masad, the murderer of King Faisal in 1975, may have killed the king in revenge for the death of his brother at the hands of the Saudi police as he forcibly tried to stop the introduction of television into Saudi Arabia for religious reasons" (William Ochsenwald 272). Fundamentalist groups still exist in Saudi Arabia, but it should be clarified that the current religion of Saudi Arabia does not oppose television, but rather embraces it as a means for spreading moderate religious teachings. Just like televangelists, certain religious imams turned to television to spread God's word to as many people as possible. The Saudi government during the 1980s resisted radical religious groups that objected to television. In doing so, it was able to spread and strengthen its doctrine and suppress potential radical religious parties. Since then, Saudi television has become more than a means for delivering news and broadcasting recitations of the Quran. Saudi television has become a source

of entertainment for all Saudi citizens. Yet, we must acknowledge the fact that the history of allowing television in Saudi Arabia is marked by the existence of American expatriates in the country, as T. R. McHale states:

> Television was introduced into the Kingdom by Aramco for its employees in 1957. While radio was grudgingly accepted after many years, television was bitterly fought by the more conservative members of the community. In 1965, when the Government established its station, strong elements in the Royal Family as well as in religious groups bitterly opposed the move. (624)

In 1957, the first Saudi channel started to air Arabic and American shows and movies. However, its morning children entertainment shows were American cartoons, such as *Tom and Jerry*, *Mickey Mouse*, *Popeye*, *Spiderman*, *Tiny Toon Adventures*, and *Looney Tunes*. The difference between then and now is that todays' American children shows are in Arabic and are aired on a new separate channel, *Generations* or *Ajyal*. The American cartoons were considered as the beginning of what followed in 1982. By then, Saudi Channel Two was airing children's cartoons, wrestling, Western movies, and series such as *Lonesome Dove* and many varied genres of movies and shows such as *The Incredible Hulk*, *Black Beauty*, *Airwolf*, *Different Strokes*, *The Electric Company*, *Doogie Howser M.D.*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *The Waltons*, *Full House*, and *Lost in Space* (2nd Channel of the Saudi Ministry of Culture and Information). The influence, and perhaps the hegemony, of American television manifested itself in the historical development of television broadcasted to Saudis. As a result, many Saudis were first introduced to American culture through television, which eventually may have influenced and contributed to reshaping their identities.

Religion and Modernity

During the Gulf War of 1990, religious extremists, despite their initial absolute rejection of Television, used Western technology to produce video tapes encouraging acts of jihad against American troops. Paradoxically, after television was fought during the era of King Faisal, the existence of television helped to spread antigovernment conspiracies. Mamoun Fandy, a political science critic who examines Saudi Arabia and its relation to radicalism and the media, notes that two Saudi preachers "gained prominence during the Gulf crisis as a result of their daring criticism of the deployment of American troops on Saudi soil. Due to the state monopoly of radio, television, and newspapers, the preachers used cassette tapes

and occasional video tapes to propagate their messages" (131). Is it possible that American television has contributed to the majority of Saudi people's stand against radical preachers?

Only after the first Gulf War (1990), the Saudis recognized the significance of satellite television and its empowerment of people's stance against radicalism. However, religious radicals considered satellite television as a Western threat full of immoral shows that led millennials to stray from the true path of Islam. There were fatwas that forbade the consumption of radio and cable television. Nonetheless, satellite television remained a powerful tool for American hegemonic media. Therefore, more television shows were broadcasted and thus more American content was consumed and digested. The difference between Saudi Channel Two and satellite television is that the latter has varieties of material to offer, including original American channels such as FOX and CNN. The impact of American television expanded, leading to more Arabic channels viewing American films and shows accompanied by Arabic subtitles.

Therefore, American television can be considered an apparatus for securing oil companies by curbing the influence of Saudi radical religious parties. Losing these oil companies would have been catastrophic for the American economy. Thus, one purpose of American television was to push back against the extremist Saudis or at least contain their fundamentalist rhetoric and radical proclivity It can be argued that American pop culture participated in the successful stabilization of the reciprocal economic interests of both the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. American pop culture entered millions of Saudi homes and ended up serving both nations.

Furthermore, Satellite television became a means to mould a more globally cultured and modernized Saudi youth. But its biggest contribution was shaping a Saudi generation that will always stand with its government against radical dogmas. Emma C. Murphy, a scholar of political economy on the Middle East, states:

> An Arab satellite system (Arabsat) existed by the mid-1980s, but was not used as a direct broadcast medium. Satellite television viewing was limited to a few, wealthy individuals with dishes which could receive signals from an outdated Soviet satellite. This changed with the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, when regional allies of the US-led coalition realised that their own populations were vulnerable to propaganda beamed at them by Iraqi television. To counter this, Saudi Arabia began installing hardware close to the borders which allowed the American news channel CNN to be downloaded and rebroadcast (after some editing) via terrestrial means. (1070)

The Arabsat allowed Saudis to witness the impact of the American military during the Gulf War. Eventually, Saudis were left with more shows to entertain them and influence their uprising. Ten years later, satellite television became a necessity in almost every Saudi house. It was affordable and easy to install. Satellite television was used as a way of creating a moderate generation who questioned radical beliefs and tendencies.

The television war has always been between the Saudi government and radical religious groups. Acknowledging television's rapid influence on its nation, the Saudi government seized the opportunity to own as many satellite channels as possible. Fandy points that "[t]o combat the opposition's media war outside the kingdom, the Saudi government either directly or indirectly has purchased major media outlets in different world capitals. Currently, Saudi Arabia dominates the Arabic visual and print media" (140). Even though Saudi satellite television censors its content, it still views American films and shows. For instance, among MBC's 18 channels are some in English with subtitles in Arabic, such as MBC 2, MBC 4, MBC Action, and MBC Max. "MBC TV's programming lineup includes movies, soap operas, cultural programs, news, public affairs, live coverage of local and national elections and community events, sports, science, children's shows, family entertainment, and how-to programs" (Allied Media Corp). Every channel has its own website and among their television programs are fully American shows. For example, MBC 4 is concerned with television shows and series such as *America's Got Talent*, *American Idol*, *Oprah*, *Friends*, *So You Think You Can Dance*, *The Late Show with David Letterman*, *Two and a Half Men*, *The Talk*, *The Doctors*, *Dr Oz*, *The Vampire Diaries*, and *Ringer* (MBC4). Other MBC channels in English broadcast sitcoms, series, and films such as *Knocked Up*, *Hellboy*, *Hawaii Five-0*, and *Human Target*.

In 1996, the Saudis encountered a different experience with American television that was introduced by subscribed broadcasting networks such as Orbit TV and Showtime Arabia. In 2009, these two companies merged into the Orbit Showtime Network (OSN). Those who could afford a subscription were offered uncensored American films and shows. But most interestingly, they had access to American daily shows and more. On OSN's website, we read the following:

> Watch the most talked-about award-winning series from the US and UK with the latest seasons of the hottest shows including CSI, Desperate Housewives, Entourage, Ugly Betty, Glee, True Blood, Lost, Grey's Anatomy, Modern Family and many more. A plethora of comedy awaits you with a world class

line-up of talk shows including The Jay Leno Show, The Ellen DeGeneres Show and The Daily Show with Jon Stewart. (OSN)

Ironically, OSN mentions UK shows among the award-winning series they provide, but all of the examples they list are American shows. Unlike many Americans today, who know about Saudis through Fox and CNN, Saudis know more about American pop culture through following daily updates of what American television broadcasts.

Neocolonizing the Nation

The question is: how much of Saudi culture can be categorized as a product of American popular culture? Is it possible that American television has been shaping and reshaping Saudi culture since 1957? The only resistance that the Saudi government could not overcome during the twentieth century and up to 2018 was religious parties' opposition to movie theaters. This is because fundamentalist groups believe in and enforce gender segregation. Nonetheless, the theater found an alternative way to Saudis' home. In March 2011, OSN came up with the idea to provide Hollywood movies as soon as they premiered in theaters. They added an on-demand service under the name "Saudi Home Cinema," which costs about $35 (OSN). As of today, and as a part of the Saudi Arabian Vision 2030, the ban on theaters was lifted in March, 2018.

Let us not underestimate the influence of the Internet and its various windows into American pop culture. With the digital revolution in Saudi Arabia, despite censorship, Saudis are able to view American shows on YouTube and other streaming networks. For example, on January 6th, 2016, Netflix was launched in the Middle East and within the first two months of its service in Saudi Arabia, people were talking Breaking Bad and catching up with The Walking Dead.

Currently, American television is in almost every house in Saudi Arabia. American television shows, for instance, can be seen on free cable and satellite television channels or on paid ones. Therefore, the majority of Saudi people are, in one way or another, exposed to American culture. This is the American cultural imperialism that was introduced in 1957—as much as it imposed itself, its neocolonial tendencies helped in bringing down the dogmas of radical religious groups. Eventually, allowing American television inside Saudi homes may have contributed to adopting a more moderate perspective through which Saudi people perceive themselves and the world.

Therefore, unlike fundamentalist groups, Saudi people embrace America not only as an ally, but also as a culture. Consequently, the introduction of television and

its development may be considered as an implicit attempt to fight radical religious groups. This is a way to redefine, deconstruct and moderate the concept of jihad:

> [In the late-eighteenth century and] within the Saud-Wahhab alliance, a working relationship was established in which Mohammed bin Saud committed himself to a Jihad, or hold war, on behalf of the Wahhabi revivalist objectives; in return Mohammed Saud was recognised as imam of the true faith and secular leader of the movement. The Saud and Wahhabi alliance formed in the eighteenth century has undergone many vicissitudes but it remains the basis of the dynasty that rules Saudi Arabia today. (McHale 624)

McHale's view is misinformed about today's Saudi government, and he is oblivious to see how the government was able to reverse cold jihad against radical citizens. Therefore, it can be said that the modern Saudi television is used as a source of cold jihad against radical Saudis. Benjamin R. Barber affirms that "Jihad not only revolts against but abets McWorld, while McWorld not only imperils but re-creates and reinforces Jihad" (5).[1] As a result of recreating and reinforcing a new type of jihad, television is now able to change the ethos of the nation through endorsing American popular culture.

The question to be asked today is: how much did American popular culture change some Saudis' lives? From a cultural perspective, the new Saudi generation has been reconstructed to be inclusive of other worlds, particularly the West. Today's Saudi citizens are very much influenced by American popular culture as a result of being exposed to it for more than five decades. Unfortunately, few scholarly writings have been published on how Saudi youth are being influenced by American popular culture. Yet, today's digital media websites such as YouTube can be taken as evidence of what the Saudi youth is producing. For instance, one can watch the first season of Arabs Got Talent (2011) and see many Arab rappers, among whom are three Saudis.

Some Saudis are not only becoming rappers but are also looking forward to what American culture has to offer. Simply put, the U.S. has always been looked at by some Saudis as utopia. As a result of the American imperialist culture, Saudis drive Fords, eat Burger King, drink Coke, and catch up on *The Daily Show* or The

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1   Barber identifies the storyteller of the McWorld later in his book as being Hollywood. It "inoculates secularism, passivity, consumerism, vicariousness, impulse buying and an accelerated pace of life, not as a result of its overt themes and explicit story-lines but by virtue of what Hollywood is and how its products are consumed" (97).

Colbert Report. On the contrary, the image of Saudis in the U.S. today is distorted by attaching it to terrorism, practiced by radical religious groups living outside Saudi Arabia. Perhaps, Saudi channels need to compete with American networks and challenge such inaccurate images about its people.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the oil boom brought television to the Saudis, and Saudi oil worked as a fuel for American popular culture. However, it was television that played the diplomatic role and channeled reciprocal economic interests. What I have been trying to communicate throughout this paper is how the Saudi culture of today was influenced by the U.S. as an imperialist culture. To further elucidate the Saudi culture of today, I will conclude with the words of Raymond Williams and his views on understanding the structure of feeling. The Saudi structure of feeling "is in it that communication depends" and it is difficult to learn as generations change over time (37). It is "the culture of a period" (36). In other words, it is best understood by the contemporaries and less by their successors. This will result in shaping a new structure of feelings toward the previous generation's culture. In trying to understand the whole of Saudi society, it can be helpful for us to understand that their actual life is what the "whole organization is there to express" (37). The structure of feeling can be traced in documentaries since "it expresses that life to us in direct terms, when the living witnesses are silent" (37). American popular shows and films were and still are very influential in altering the Saudi structure of feeling. Part of the Saudis' documentaries are media productions. Watching Saudis' media productions these days can help us understand their structure of feeling. Looking closely at what Saudi culture and its television productions are these days, one comes to realize that Saudi culture and television have been imperialized by American television. As a result, it can be argued that it is American shows and films that were able to alter the lives of the Saudi people by offering a window to the Western world and the promises of modernity, which in turn ruptured the ties with Jihadist doctrines.

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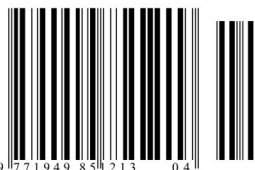
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