

Forum for World Literature Studies

世界文学研究论坛

Vol.11 No.1 March 2019

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Forum for World Literature Studies

Vol.11, No.1, March 2019

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世界文学研究论坛

2019 年第 1 期

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Forum for World Literature Studies (Print ISSN: 1949-8519; Online ISSN: 2154-6711), published by Knowledge Hub Publishing Company Limited, is a peer reviewed academic journal sponsored by Zhejiang University and co-edited by Professor Nie Zhenzhao of Zhejiang University, Professor Charles Ross of Purdue University and Professor Zhu Zhenwu of Shanghai Normal University. This journal provides a forum to promote diversity in world literature, with a particular interest in the study of literatures of those neglected countries and culture regions. With four issues coming out every year, this journal publishes original articles on topics including theoretical studies, literary criticism, literary history, and cultural studies, as well as book review articles.

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The publisher and Editorial Office Address: Knowledge Hub Publishing Company Limited, Amtel Building, 148 Des Voeux Road Central, Hong Kong SAR, China. To subscribe to this journal or purchase any single issue, please contact us at fwlsmarket@163.com or fwlstudies@163.com. Phone: (86) 27 87223368.

Forum for World Literature Studies was indexed in ESCI, SCOPUS and also included in the databases of EBSCO, Gale, MLA (MLA International Bibliography) and ABELL (The Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature).

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金孝顺

李嘉慧

Latvian Literature and National Identity: An Introduction

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In 2018, Latvia was celebrating its centenary. During its centenary year, Latvia was seriously re-evaluating its national history, cultural heritage, folklore heritage, and national literature. Since the time it has become an independent state, there have been many different historical-cultural events that have influenced not only Latvia's path after the establishment of Latvia's statehood, but the development of Latvian literature as well. Although the country of the population little less than 2 million and constituting 0.03% of the world share, as well as of the land area of 62,200 square km (*Countries ...*) seems small and young to big nations, the Latvian culture and literature have produced striking, though still little known in the world, cultural and literary values.

American literary theorist Walter Benn Michaels states that literature is a part of culture (Michaels). In turn, the explorer of Latvian literature and theatre, academician Viktors Hausmanis has pointed out that "literature is one of the ways for the manifestation of our nation's existence, testimony to our identity. We, the Latvians, have our own distinctive language, our own history, folklore and literature, and all these forms of expression taken together attest us as a peculiar formation within the community of European nations. Literature is not merely the matter for reading, but rather the reflection of our soul, of our nature" (Hausmanis). At evaluating the Latvian literature in the context of national identity, we could add that it does not only reflect the national identity, but also actively creates it. The centenary of Latvian state has activated the attempts to understand and define national identity, looking back on the past and assessing different stages of Latvian history anew. Ilze Kacane and Alina Romanovska maintain that "the issue of national identity is currently brought into focus by the fact that due to various historical developments the proportion of representatives of other nationalities in Latvia now is quite considerable, and this situation is being constantly aggravated both socially and politically"

(Kacane, Romanovska 224). The issue of national identity is topical in the aspect of literature and culture, as well as of policy and state security.

The history of Latvian literature is tightly linked with the history of Latvia and with the major periods of national identity development. The review of the history of Latvian literature in the context of the major events of Latvian history opens up new opportunities for defining and analysing national identity.

The early beginnings of Latvian literature are to be looked for in the sixteenth century when the first texts in Latvian were written, which were not of a poetic, but religious, didactic and practical nature. These texts were adapted translations from German. The creators of first Latvian texts were mainly German priests who had the need to successfully communicate with Latvian peasants when the German interests had to be defended on this territory. The reasons for the above described situation have to be looked for in the historical conditions of that time, namely, various other nations (the Germans, Swedes, Poles, Russians) had ruled over the territory of Latvia. Guntis Berelis says that “until the beginning of the nineteenth century the Latvians were predominantly serfs who did not have the slightest notion of the heights of German culture and who, in addition, were quite sceptical about the Christian faith. The Latvians did not have their own intelligentsia — and there was no opportunity for it to arise” (Berelis 14). However, it should be noted that on a primary level Latvian peasants were among the most educated people in Europe, thus, for instance, in 1897 the literacy in Vidzeme reached 94.6%. But to receive a higher level education in Latvia was impossible, since even the first Latvian elementary school in Riga was opened only in 1881. The language dominating in a higher level education was German for a long time (except in Latgale), and the civil service of the Russian Empire, in its turn, forced the Russian language on education of all levels” (*Ieskats Latvijās ...*).

The development of Latvian literature and culture was hindered also by the fact that the value of folk art was belittled at that time (like it was on the rest of European territory), folklore was not written down and therefore it has survived until the present time only fragmentary. The above mentioned processes lasted even until the nineteenth century, until the so called First Latvian Awakening (1850–1880).

Having been influenced for centuries by diverse West-European (German, Russian, British, Swedish, Norwegian, Polish a.o) literary currents, Latvian national literature started to develop only in the middle of the nineteenth century gradually becoming complex, multidimensional, and hybrid. The second half of the nineteenth century is the beginning of the formation of national self-confidence, when seeking for Latvian identity became important. The first Latvian intellectuals (young

people), who have just received education, considered it important to develop the Latvian national culture and literary language, to collect folklore, and develop the national literature. The ideas of New-Latvians (Auseklis, Juris Alunāns, Krišjānis Valdemārs, Krišjānis Barons a.o.) were implemented in literature as the attempt to restore or create anew the Latvian code and thus prove to the Latvians that they can be and must be proud of their rustic culture. The New-Latvians created a poetic mythology, which today is often taken as an authentic Latvian people's folklore and mythology. Literature created by the New-Latvians and perceptions about the past in this literature were subordinated to one goal – to increase nation's self-confidence and shape the national identity. The New-Latvians stimulated the development of Latvian literature. The contribution of Andrejs Pumpurs to defining the national identity is very significant.

The New-Latvians opened up the opportunity for the development of the professional Latvian literature, which today is considered the classics. At the end of the nineteenth century great works were created by Matīss and Reinis Kaudzītes, Rūdolfs Blaumanis, Jānis Poruks, Eduards Veidenbaums a. o., and the authors of later periods, deliberately or not, often relied on them.

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century the development of Latvian literature depended on two significant factors.

1) The ideas about the foundation of a national state were important for the society, and people were striving for freedom. The national aspect manifested itself more obviously, and though unconsciously to a great extent, the ideas about national resistance were evolving among the people. The ideas about independence were topical in all major historical events of that time, e. g. the 1905 revolution, World War I a. o., and they greatly facilitated the foundation of Latvian state in 1918.

2) At the turn of the century, a rapid process of Europeanization, stimulated by the official state policy, takes place; Latvian culture becomes open for fresh foreign winds; simultaneously, the whole cultural heritage of Europe comes in, and in Latvian cultural consciousness the processes of exploring this heritage, summing it up and analysing it — to accept it or not to accept — take place. At the same time, there exists romanticism, realism and trends of modernism emerge. Broņislavs Tabūns, specialist on literature, writes: “in Latvia, this process does not take place under conditions of a new cultural type replacing the former ones but rather by interacting with them, and quite often this occurs even in the creative work by one and the same author” (Tabūns 28).

The manifold Latvian literary heritage at this time was created by such well-known authors as Rainis, Aspazija, Vilis Plūdons, Jānis Poruks, Kārlis Skalbe, Jānis

Akuraters, Edvards Virza, Andrejs Upītis, Jānis Sudrabkalns, Aleksandrs Čaks a.o.

In the 1920–1930s, Latvian literature develops concurrently with European literature, acquiring the new trends and ideas and trying to customize the achievements of world literature of previous times (basically European, less — American) for their own cultural needs. The cultural-historical development of the country and the official priorities of the state policy (the specific character of the policy of the then head of state Kārlis Ulmanis — placing emphasis on Latvian values, development of agriculture etc.) determine also the formation of specifically Latvian literary phenomena at this time, namely, in the 30s of the twentieth century, a special trend of literature — the so called positivism — emerges. It does not relate to positivism in the nineteenth century philosophy, but it rather implements the idea that the foundation of Latvian identity is a rustic culture, and in it eternal values are to be found. Typical of positivism is also defining positive ethical and ideological values, which is directly contrary to negativism created by modernism and dominating among intellectuals at that time. The development of positivism in Latvian literature was enhanced by Edvards Virza, Aleksandrs Grīns, Jānis Veselis a.o.

The natural process of Latvian literature development was interrupted in 1940 when the troops of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics invaded Latvia. After World War II several well-known writers emigrated and then created Latvian literature in the diaspora. The most popular authors of exile literature are Mārtiņš Zīvertis, Dzintars Sodums, Valdis Zeps, Irma Grebzde, Anšlāvs Eglītis, Gunārs Janovskis, Veronika Strēlerte a. o. The Soviet ideology and strict censorship made a powerful impact upon the creative work in Latvia. For many years, it was possible to publish one's works only by strictly observing the principles of socialist realism. At the end of the 50s of the twentieth century, the changes created by the political thaw contributed to the emergence of new themes and artistic methods in Latvian literature, and modernistic works were written. The most outstanding authors of this period are Visvaldis Lāms, Alberts Bels, Regīna Ezera, Zigmunds Skujiņš, Ojārs Vācietis, Vizma Belševica, Imants Ziedonis, Māris Čaklais a.o. Due to the ideology in Soviet Latvia as well as in other Soviet Republics, the national peculiarities in the public discourse, literature including, were not mentioned. All that shaped and united a nation — mythology and folklore, history, symbols, memories, traditions —, everything that constitutes the spiritual heritage of a nation was replaced by new values created in the twentieth century, starting with the 1917 revolution and the foundation of the USSR. The issue of national identity was not brought into focus.

A new renaissance of national values began at the end of the 80s of the twentieth century when the ideas about regaining an independent state evolved in the so-

ciety. The production of rock-opera *Lāčplēsis* by Māra Zālīte and Zigmārs Liepiņš stands among the major events in this period. “The Latvian world perception, system of images, as well as the historical context of this rock-opera united the people, arousing individual’s feelings of national belonging and national identity” (Rutkēviča 54). The regaining of state independence in 1990 stimulated the re-evaluation of values in literature, experiments of postmodernism appeared rapidly, and a new generation of authors emerged who rejected the traditional methods of realism and started seeking for new ways of expression, laying stress on what was universally human rather than national. The most popular authors of this generation are Edvīns Raups, Aivars Ozoliņš, Jānis Vēveris, Gundega Repše, Nora Ikstena, Arvis Kolmanis, Pauls Bankovskis a.o.

From the 50s of the nineteenth century and until nowadays, Latvian literature has gone through several complicated developmental stages, when it was influenced by different internal processes of cultural development (which relate to the political, ideological and economic priorities of the country) and experienced the impact of other cultures (manifesting itself as both a conscious or unconscious orientation of Latvian culture towards acquiring values of European culture and as imposing the ideology and cultural features of other nations).

The celebrations of the centenary of Latvian state awakened new interest in national values and national identity. As the result, many fiction works about the past of Latvia, particularly about the twentieth century history, have been written. The attempts to describe the most important stages of Latvian history and features of national identity have been made by Gundega Repše, Nora Ikstena, Pauls Bankovskis, Māra Zālīte, Guntis Berelis, Arno Jundze, Inga Ābele, Laima Kota a. o.

Currently, special attention is given to popularizing Latvian literature in foreign countries. Recently the national support for bringing Latvian literature beyond our country’s borders has grown significantly and the translations of Latvian authors’ works into other languages have reached record levels. The works chosen for the translation are crucial for understanding Latvian national identity and culture as they offer postmodern re-evaluations of the by-gone times from the perspective of the present, however in most of the cases the authors of these works are contemporary writers. At present, works from the series *Mēs. Latvija, XX gadsimts* [We. Latvia. XX century] have become vastly popular in foreign countries, thus, for example, the novel *Mātes piens* [Soviet Milk] (2015) by Nora Ikstena will be published in 10 languages (Krenberga). Other novels of this series are being intensively translated into English and will be published soon.

However, the literati of the earlier stages of the development of Latvian litera-

ture, especially the ones who created their works almost a century ago, remain unknown for a foreign reader.

The cluster of articles published in the journal, *Forum for World Literatures Studies* has been prepared by the researchers of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences at Daugavpils University, Latvia, with the aim to acquaint the English-speaking world with some of the significant representatives of the Latvian literature of the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century in the context of West-European cultural and literary processes. The developmental stage of Latvian literary history discussed in the articles is important from the aspect of Latvian national identity, since at this time serious attempts to define and shape Latvian identity are made, being aware of our own place within the system of European culture.

Taking into account the fact that the influence of Western esotericism on literature is an unexplored field in Latvian literary studies, in her paper *The Presence of Western Esotericism in Latvian Literature* Anita Stasulane analyses the creative works by the Latvian writers (Antons Austriņš (1884–1934), Viktors Eglītis (1877–1945), Rihards Rudzītis (1898–1960) and Konstantīns Raudive (1909–1974) who since the end of the nineteenth century had been searching for new means of expression and looking for a source of inspiration in esotericism, thus gaining metaphors and symbols from Spiritualism, Theosophy and Agni Yoga/Living Ethics. The influence of esotericism on the writers' literary works is not uniform: some adopted theosophical ideas from the primary source — Russian artists Nicholas Roerich and Helena Roerich —, while others were influenced indirectly. Anita Stasulane states that Agni Yoga/Living Ethics has influenced the world of Latvian artists in various degrees: some adopted theosophical ideas without any sort of critical approach; others did some sifting and reworked these ideas; some artists had read only a few theosophical articles, from which they gained some idea; others discovered new ideas through the circle of their friends, without even suspecting that these were theosophical ideas.

The subject of regionalism and the representation of regional identity have been studied by Alina Romanovska in her research *The Search for Regional Identity: Latgale in Latvian Literature in the First Decades of the Twentieth Century*. The paper focuses on the period of the national awakening and establishment of the statehood of Latvia, as well as on the time that was extremely important for the formation of Latvianness, Latvian national and regional identities. The analysis of the narrative of the south-eastern part of Latvia — Latgale, based primarily on the literary texts by Antons Austriņš, who was one of the first Latvian writers depict-

ing Latgale, allows establishing the indicators of regional identity. A. Romanovska concludes, “No matter how hard Latvian writers wanted to dive into the Latgalian identity, to grasp all its features, it was still impossible, as they remained foreigners for this land. It also determines the importance of the category of mysteriousness in Latgale’s descriptions by Latvian authors. These writers often looked at Latgale from the perspective of a traveller, or a guest, therefore, the highlighted features of Latgale are the same: the cult of Catholicism, the idea of preserving of ancient values, the beauty and mystery of Latgale’s nature, the peculiarities of the people’s nature and behaviour, the flair of the Latgalian language, the peculiarities of historical development.”

In Latvia there are authors who during specific periods of their literary career have been impacted by the representatives of Symbolism and who have turned to the symbolic and/or ironic expression. In her paper *Post-Symbolist Irony on the Latvian Stage: The Staging of Van Charles Lerberghe’s “Pan” And Maurice Maeterlinck’s “Le Miracle De Saint Antoine”* Simona Sofija Valke states that “Symbolism, with its intrinsic values, exhorted Latvian writers to fight for independence of the literature, of ideology, and public utility.” The study on the staging of van Lerberghe’s *Pan* and Maeterlinck’s *Le Miracle de saint Antoine* of the 1920s aims at not only identifying the change in the reception of two authors in the Latvian cultural space, but also discusses the concept of creative freedom, important for this epoch.

One of the crucial influences on the Latvian literature have been exercised by Oscar Wilde’s one-act tragedy *Salomé* (1891) and Richard Strauss’ monumental opera *Salome* (1905). The study *Reception of Opera “Salome” by Richard Strauss in Aspazija’s Novel “The Autumn Nightingale”* by Ilze Kacane demonstrates the importance of the opera *Salome* in Latvia’s cultural space of the first half of the twentieth century. The work by Aspazija is a vast description of cultural-historical epoch and an emotional depiction of spiritual atmosphere that go beyond the limits of the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century. The author looks back not only on the life of *femme fatale* (also on her own), but also on that of Latvia, the individual and national identity. “At depicting the atmosphere in the nation’s biography and perception of woman in the society in a specific period of its history, the “alien” discourse in Aspazija’s novel becomes “one’s own” pre-text and indicates to changes in individual and nation’s consciousness, and consequently to changes in a specific cultural space” (I. Kacane).

The final paper of the section *Latvia in Russian Literature (1901–1940)* by Zans Badins analyses Latvian and Russian literary contacts and describes the reception of Baltic culture space, particularly Latvia, in the works by Russian writers

till 1940. The territory that was mostly inhabited by the Latvians and that had been a part of the Russian Empire since the eighteenth century did not exist in the consciousness of the Russians as Latvia for a very long time, i.e. till the foundation of independent Latvia in 1918. For this reason, the perception of Latvia and the “text of Latvia” developed gradually and was first incorporated in the paradigm of the “Baltic text.” The scholar analyses three types of perception models that demonstrate an attitude towards Latvia in the Russian artistic and public consciousness: 1) the portrayal of Latvia in the framework of the binary opposition “we – they” till 1918, 2) the portrayal of the attitude by the Soviet Russian writers towards a new independent country after the proclamation of independence of Latvia, and 3) the perception of Latvia by Russian writers who were living in Latvia and by Russian émigré writers from 1918 till 1940.

On 18 November 1919, to mark the first anniversary of the country, in the article “The Foreign Policy of Latvia” by the first Foreign Minister of the Republic of Latvia, Zigfrīds Anna Meierovics, it was written:

[..] The state of Latvia, having achieved the recognition of its de facto independence by the allied powers, has acquired several de iure rights of sovereign states, thereby winning for itself, step by step, a rightful and deserving place among other free states [...] Latvia is in the making! In the making, despite all our big and strong historical enemies; it is going to be beautiful and free, created by the Latvians’ own hands, cemented with the precious blood of our sons [...]. (Meierovics 7)

While celebrating the biggest event in the history of modern Latvia — the centenary of the Republic of Latvia — we can still say — Latvian literature, the same as Latvia, is still in the making. Although the history of Latvian national literature dates back only one-and-a-half centuries, it is rooted in Latvian cultural heritage of more than 300,000 folk songs. Nowadays “Latvia has an active publishing industry with 2,177 new titles being published every year. Latvia ranks second in Europe in the export market share of books printed, export value being 74%. Books illustrated by Latvian artists and printed in Latvia are frequently nominated and awarded prizes in The Most Beautiful Books in the World competition” (*Introduction to...*).

By acquainting the international audience with some tendencies of Latvian literature, we “export” our cultural heritage and hope to contribute to the re-evaluation of Latvia’s national history and cultural heritage.

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The Presence of Western Esotericism in Latvian Literature

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Abstract After detecting a gap in cultural studies regarding the influence of Western esotericism on Latvian culture, this paper attempts to illustrate the presence of Western esotericism in Latvian literature. From the late 19th century, Latvian writers searching for new means of expression found a source of inspiration in esotericism, gaining metaphors and symbols from Spiritualism, Theosophy and Agni Yoga/Living Ethics. With particular attention paid to Antons Austriņš (1884–1934), Viktors Eglītis (1877–1945), Rihards Rudzītis (1898–1960) and Konstantīns Raudive (1909–1974), the author seeks to show, that the influence of esotericism on the creative work of writers strongly differs: some adopted esoteric ideas without a critical approach, others did some sifting and reworked them, while others, having read a few esoteric texts or having heard something about it, just got some idea or image. As the artist's worldview is reflected directly in their creative work independently of the author's own will, the paper argues that it would be timely for contemporary literary studies to focus greater attention on the connection of authors with Western esotericism.

Key words Western esotericism; Spiritualism; Theosophy; Agni Yoga; Living Ethics; Latvian literature

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Introduction

The influence of Western esotericism on literature is an unexplored field in Latvian literary studies, as the tendency to look at the literary process as a whole, without excluding the influence of esoteric ideas in literature, has only appeared in recent decades. This article attempts to illustrate the presence of Western esotericism in Latvian literature.

The term *esotericism* is used with two meanings in the academic environment. In the typological aspect, the term *esotericism* is usually understood as *secrecy*, and is used to describe a practice maintained in various religious contexts to reserve some portion of *salvific knowledge* for the preferred (initiated) followers. The idea of secret knowledge available only to the elite is a global phenomenon, which is encountered in various religions and in various eras. As opposed to the typological aspect, which understands esotericism as a religious type or a religious structure, from a historical aspect, *esotericism* is “a general label for certain specific currents in Western culture that display certain similarities and are historically related” (Hanegraaff 337). Nowadays, in discussing culture, most researchers prefer the term *Western esotericism* to avoid misunderstandings. The author of this article maintains this position, despite continuing debates about the need to fine-tune the terminology.

Latvian national literature had its beginnings in the mid-19th century¹, which is why we can talk about the possible influence of Western esotericism on the creative work of Latvian writers, starting from this period. In the 1880s–1890s, romanticism and realism arrived in Latvian literature. It is futile to search for the influence of Western esotericism in the literature of this period, as romanticism in Latvia gained the so-called national romanticist form, which was characterized by an idealization of Latvian ancient times, while realism repudiated everything unreal. However, it is hard to believe that Latvian cultural circles which had close contacts with both German and Russian culture would not have come into contact with esotericism.

The Influence of Spiritualism

Esotericism reached Latvian society firstly in the form of Spiritualism, or more precisely, attempts to contact the spirits of the departed. It has existed in all eras and in all cultures and did not bypass Latvia, but gained an organized and systematized form in the 19th century with the development of a new religious movement,

1 Juris Alunāns' (1832-1864) “Dziesmiņas, latviešu valodai pārtulkotas” (Little Songs, Translated for the Latvian Language) which was published in 1856, was the first literary significant classic collection of secular poetry in the Latvian language.

Spiritualism.¹ In the early 20th century, Latvian society also got carried away with dancing tables, automatic writing, the summoning of spirits, materialization and other methods which were widely used elsewhere in Europe, using a medium as an intermediary in contact with the spirits of the departed. As opposed to Baltic-Germans, who adopted esoteric ideas from Western Europe, intellectuals of Latvian origin came into contact with them in Russia, mainly in St. Petersburg where a considerable number of Latvians were studying.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th century, St. Petersburg had become the centre of esotericism in the whole of Russia due to high society's interest in the world of the occult.² From an analysis of early 20th century Russian newspapers, it can obviously be seen that esotericism in St. Petersburg was almost officially recognized at this time.³ It was discussed not only in salons, but also at lecture evenings which were organized by various societies. It is hard to imagine that budding Latvian lawyers, writers, artists and engineers, who were living in St. Petersburg in the early 20th century, would not have come into contact with the culture of the Russian Silver Age (1890–1914), which was permeated by the most diverse forms of esotericism.

It is significant, that Latvian writers and artists adopted Western esoteric ideas, metaphors and symbols even if they themselves were not actively involved in esoteric groups, for example, writer Antons Austriņš (1884–1934). Judging from his story “Purmalas kumēdiņi” (Purmala's Tricks), he was informed about the activities of spiritualists. As “Austriņš has done the most translations of Russian Symbolist prose”⁴ (Sprōģe 23), including the works of Valery Bryusov⁵ as well, it would be surprising that Spiritualism would have remained unknown to the Latvian writer.

1 1848 tends to be considered the beginning of Spiritualism, when the American Fox sisters began to make contact with the spirit of some murdered man. Cf. Mather G. A., Nichols L. A. *Dictionary of Cults, Sects, Religions and the Occult* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993) 263.

2 As the family of the Tsar had a sick heir, the courtiers also turned to various healers, those with secret knowledge, mediums etc. Latvian writer Austriņš, in describing the St. Petersburg of that time, mentioned that “the Russian aristocracy with its belief in miracles is still at home” there (Austriņš 1931: IV, 219).

3 Cf. Bogomolov, Nikolay A. *Russkaya literatura nachala XX veka i okkultizm* (Moskva: Novoye literaturnoye obozreniye, 1999) 312.

4 Here and afterwards translation by author – A.S.

5 Valery Bryusov (1873–1924) was very taken with spiritualism. In his diary, Bryusov noted (1900) that the trance and epiphany experienced at a Spiritualist séanse were significant moments in his life. Bogomolov, Nikolay A. *Russkaya literatura nachala XX veka i okkultizm* (Moskva: Novoye literaturnoye obozreniye, 1999) 37.

However, Spiritualism did not leave a deep impression on Latvian culture, as only a small number of intellectuals got carried away with it: chemistry professors Kārlis Blachers (1867–1939) and Jānis Kupcis (1871–1936), theologian Valdemārs Maldonis (1870–1941), and writers Aleksandrs Grīns (1895–1941) and Anna Rūmane-Ķeniņa (1877–1950), who gathered at a spiritualist club in Riga. Spiritualist séances were also held by the Latvian Parapsychological Association (1925) headed by Emma Apare, using local medium Fricis Gailis. It should be added that spiritualists had to compete with chiromantists, fortune-tellers, and clairvoyants, whose numbers reached approximately 200 in 1926.¹ The main figure among them was the clairvoyant Eižens Finks (1885–1958), who outclassed all the rest: he had foreseen an assassination attempt on Mussolini, the tragic death of the Latvian foreign minister, and the death of the first president of Latvia, all sensationally written about in the newspapers and still remembered today.

In the late 20th century, writer Konstantīns Raudive (1909–1974), who was a refugee during the Second World War and later lived in Sweden and Germany, turned to a new form of spiritualism. Outside of Latvia he is known as a parapsychologist, who considered that it was possible to make contact with the spirits of the departed and used a tape recorder as a means of communication. Experiments with the so-called *electronic voice phenomenon* were very popular in the 1960s–1970s. This form of Spiritualism is now called *instrumental transcommunication* (ITK)².

Estonian singer and painter Friedrich Jürgenson's (1903–1987) book in Swedish *Röster från rymden* (Voices from the Universe), (1964) prompted Raudive to become active in the audio ITK area. The book, which provoked a great sensation

1 Zarubins, N. 2002. "Visi Rīgas zīlnieki un himomanti paredz 'lielus notikumus' 1926. gada novembrī." In B. Raudins, ed, *Rīgas gaišreģis Eižens Finks* (Rīga: Jumava) 83-84.

2 The term *transcommunication* was introduced by German physicist Ernst Senkowski (1922-2015), who published the magazine *Transkommunikation* (1990-2002). By the term *transcommunication* he described the process during which an exchange of information takes place, furthermore, in a way which cannot be explained with concepts in physics like frequency, waves etc. Instrumental transcommunication is made up of different branches, of which the oldest is audio instrumental transcommunication, followed by video instrumental transcommunication, while computers are used nowadays. Thousands of interested people searching for possibilities to contact their departed, nature spirits and heavenly choirs, use the most diverse equipment: the telephone, radio, television, fax and computer. They have come together in a broad international organization I. N. I. T. (International Network for Instrumental Transcommunication). The activities of its members shows that interest about *invisible interlocutors* has still not disappeared.

in Sweden¹ at that time, tells of how Jürgenson heard the voice of his departed father addressing him while he was listening to bird songs recorded on a tape recorder. The sensation quickly died down again, but Raudive's interest remained. Raudive began working on his own with the goal of clarifying whether it was a voice from the *afterworld*. He set up his own *studio* in Krozingen (Germany) and collated his research in a book called *Unhörbares wird hörbar* (1968) (The Unheard Becomes Heard).² Raudive's success was facilitated by the publication of the book in the English language, which came out in Great Britain and the USA (1971) in a supplemented edition and with the title *Breakthrough: An Amazing Experiment in Electronic Communication with the Dead* (1971).

After ten years of intense work, Raudive suddenly announced that he would no longer be working with *voices*. Raudive's announcement as to why he had decided to stop working with voices is particularly significant: "I have done what I could. *If all of it has no connection with the afterworld, then it does not captivate me. Then I abandon it.* [Italics mine – A. S.] I return to literature" (Quoted in Gills 244). These words from Raudive provide an exhaustive answer to the question of why he stopped working with *voices*. The writer confessed that he had been unable to gain evidence that the source of the voices had been transcendent. Even though Raudive himself terminated his research, he has inspired a new generation of Spiritualists and the electronic voice phenomenon is now called *Raudive voices*.

Raudive was an existentially thinking writer, and to a large degree this was determined by his captivation with 20th century existentialism. Turning against Hegel and positivism, as well as against the dominating role of science and technology in the world, existentialism determined the cultural climate of the time. In this context, several directions in philosophical thought developed, including *philosophy of life*. Even though Raudive had been captivated by spiritualism for ten years, it has not left a significant imprint on his works. However, the influence of life-philosophers Miguel De Unamuno (1864–1936) and José Ortega y Gasset (1883–1955) can clearly be seen.³

The Influence of Theosophy

Theosophy, the historical beginnings of which in Latvia are, as yet, unknown has

1 Raudive lived in Sweden from 1947 to 1965, when he moved to Krozingen (Germany).

2 Raudive, Konstantin. *Unhörbares wird hörbar*. Remagen: Otto Reichl Verlag, 1968.

3 For more information, see Anita Stasulane, "Raudive Voices: *The Latvian Writer in the Field of Scientific Spiritualism*." Ed. Ch. M. Moreman. *The Spiritualist Movement, Santa Barbara, Denver, Oxford* (USA, United Kingdom: Praeger, 2013): 245–264.

had a deeper influence on Latvian cultural processes. Currently, there is very little idea about the way in which the ideas of the Theosophical Society (1875) founded by Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891), reached Latvian society. First of all, the question of Helena Blavatsky's (born von Hahn)¹ genealogical connection with Latvia is worthy of research, as the Hahn family has also had a branch in Latvia, where it was one of the wealthiest families for more than 400 years. It is indisputable that theosophical ideas came into Latvia first through Baltic-German community, and that these ideas were also familiar in Latvian circles in the early 20th century. The year 1908 could be considered a historical reference point, when Blavatsky's closest confrere H. S. Olcott's "A Buddhist Catechism" was published in Latvia, and it was translated into Latvian by the well-known Latvian writer Augusts Deglavs (1862–1922).

Latvian writers' close contacts with the followers of Blavatsky's teachings should be taken into account in answering the question of the way in which theosophical ideas reached Latvian writers in the early 20th century. Latvian writer and poet Viktors Eglītis (1877–1945), who worked at Princess Maria Tenisheva's Talashkino Art Centre in 1902, and became acquainted² with Russian Ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929) is a fine example. In supporting Diaghilev's efforts to gather together young Russian artists who would break the traditions of *academic* art, the princess had given over her summer residence Talashkino to the activities of the *Mir Iskusstva* (Art World) artists' society and financially supported the publication of a magazine of the same name. Eglītis meeting Diaghilev is extremely significant, as Anna Filosofova (1837–1912), born Diaghilev, one of the most active theosophists, who financed Russia's Theosophical Society, was a close relative of the Russian ballet impresario. The elite of society at that time, which undoubtedly talked about Theosophy, gathered at her salon in St. Petersburg. It can be asserted that Eglītis inevitably would have come into close contact with the teachings of theosophy at Tenisheva's summer residence, as the Talashkino Art Centre was also a gathering place for Theosophically oriented artists.

The exhibitions staged by the *Mir Iskusstva* group of artists had also attracted the attention of Austriņš. It seems that it was no accident that Krams, the main character in the story *Nemiers* (Unrest), decides to stay in St. Petersburg another

1 Helena Blavatsky's parents: her father, colonel Peter von Hahn (1798–1873), a son of Lieutenant-General Alexis Gustavovich von Hahn, her mother, a writer Helena von Hahn (born Fadeyeva) (1814–1842).

2 Cf. Sprōģe, Ludmila and Vāvere, Vera. *Latviešu modernisma aizsākumi un krievu literatūras "sudraba laikmets"* (Rīga: Zinātne, 2002) 57.

two days, "... to visit ... the *Mir Iskusstva* exhibition" (Austriņš 1931: IV 46). It is possible that Austriņš may have attended several *Mir Iskusstva* exhibitions, as, in evaluating what he had seen, his literary hero deliberates "The *Mir Iskusstva* exhibition *this year* [Italics mine – A.S.] too was colourless. It lacked maturity" (Austriņš 1931: IV 47).

Latvian writers also came into contact with theosophical ideas at Vyacheslav Ivanov's (1866–1949) *Bashnya* (Tower) salon, which was in a sense a mirror of Russia's cultural atmosphere at the time. Eglītis visited Ivanov's salon in February 1906, at a time when censorship had already been liberalized after the 1905 revolution. This was a period when all occultist trends flourished, as the influence of the Orthodox Church had decreased in Russia after the 1905 revolution and occultist publications began coming out in ever greater numbers: by 1905 the Russian spiritualist journal *Rebus* "boasted more than sixteen thousand subscribers" (Carlson 5).

Anna Minclova (1865–1910), who can be considered as the determiner of the atmosphere at the evenings when these people met, had an important role at Vyacheslav Ivanov's salon. She was "a Mme Blavatsky double who "theosophized" the eminent scholar, writer, and critic Viacheslav Ivanov" (Carlson 8). Minclova was an important St. Petersburg occultist, as she had contacts with the leaders of the Theosophical Society, including Rudolf Steiner too¹. Rumours spread, obviously based on Minclova's own statements, that she also had communication with the secret teachers of the planet's history.²

Even though there is no documentary evidence that Austriņš had been a guest at Ivanov's *Tower*, it is clear that the Latvian writer was well informed about what took place there. For example, in the novel *Garā jūdze* (Long Mile) he recounts Eglītis' meeting with Russian symbolists, which took place at Ivanov's salon.³ Other facts, and people who could be met there who were associated with the *Tower* are also mentioned in the novel. We can conclude that Austriņš' works show that the writer came into contact with the teachings popularized by Blavatsky's followers. First of all, the story *Leišu nedēļa* should be mentioned, where we read: "I, as a

1 R. Steiner (1861–1925) was the leader of Germany's Theosophical Society from 1902 to 1913.

2 For further information about the role of the teacher or mahatma in the theosophical system, see Stasulane, A. *Theosophy and culture: Nicholas Roerich* (Roma: PUG, 2005): 91-126.

3 L. Sprōģe and V. Vāvere consider that Eglītis visited V. Ivanov's salon several times. Cf. Sprōģe, Ludmila and Vāvere, Vera. *Latviešu modernisma aizsākumi un krievu literatūras "sudraba laikmets"* (Rīga: Zinātne, 2002) 36.

theosophist, have different views,” said Zīle. “The spirit does not perish — it just flies off to other spheres ” (Austriņš 1931: IV 215). This, seemingly, unimportant phrase from the literary character shows that Austriņš was able to identify theosophists in the society of his time and had also gained a certain insight into their teachings.

In his works, Austriņš has mentioned many concepts used by occultists. For example, *adept*¹, one of the most often used concepts in the lexicon of theosophists (Austriņš 1931: IV 137). As the writer has used it with a humorous touch, we can conclude that he treated esotericism sceptically. This attitude has also been expressed in the story *Salnēnos* (In Salnēni), where Austriņš expresses his critical evaluation of the spiritualist séances of intellectuals: “[The intelligentsia] wants to rise into the spheres immediately, forget about yesterday and some even want to almost unload it from their possessions” (Austriņš 1931: IV 486).

Even though esotericism was not able to take over the writer’s world of thoughts, its ideas were not foreign to him, including the idea about *akasha* — information layers, which encircle the Earth and encompass all of the thoughts of people who have lived in various eras, which only the highly developed spiritually are able to uncover. In the story *Peklē* (In Hell), Austriņš has noted: “I wonder whether a person living in a city where some famous battle has taken place, or where some great artist lived in his time, is able to *guess the intentions of this former great artist or leader in battle? Maybe they just fly round about and live right here* [Italics mine – A.S.] like owls in some old church tower, where the priest still holds church services, without being able to predict that in the quiet, suddenly, the tower’s bells begin to be rung by some invisible hand... to a huge fire... Here, you could easily dream of the end of the world” (Austriņš 1931: IV 32).

In the character of Kalders (in the story *Peklē* (In Hell)) the author provides an example of a typical characteristic at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, that initially, the Theosophists and socialists worked together. As can be seen from the history of theosophy, occultist interest centres were also gathering places for socialists, for example, in Ascona (Switzerland), where turn of the century free thinkers gathered at the initiative of theosophists, and *adepts* of the teachings of Karl Marx, including Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin) also stayed there. Bearing this historical peculiarity in mind, we can better understand Austriņš’ character, the socialist Kalders with his pathetically uttered words: “... this is an obligation for all of us ... to do all in our power to *wake the consciousness* of society [Italics mine

1 Explanation provided by H. Blavatsky about what an adept is, see Blavatskaya, E. P. Teosofsky slovar (Moskva: Sfera, 1994) 28.

– A.S.] and a lively spirit, respect for science and education, so that it is possible to *tear down that old house of God and build a new one in its place. Homo homini deus! The person is the person's God!*" (Austriņš 1931: IV 23-24). "To wake the consciousness" — socialists and theosophists too popularized their ideas with this challenge at the turn of the century. Whereas, theosophists and socialists tried to achieve this challenge of tearing down the old house of God and building a new one, as each knew how. Socialists turned against religion as the opium of the people, but theosophists offered to replace Christianity with esotericism.

As the influence of Theosophy has been expressed the most strikingly in the creative work of Andrei Bely, the contact of the Russian symbolist with Latvian writers is particularly significant. Viktors Eglītis and Kārlis Jēkabsons (1879–1946) met Bely in St. Petersburg, whereas, Andrejs Kurcijs (1884–1959) met him when Bely "visited Rīga on the way to Berlin" (Sproģe 106). They also had indirect contact: Bely's novel *Peterburg* (St. Petersburg) was read by Kārlis Krūza (1884–1960) (Sproģe 85) and Janis Jansons-Brauns (1872–1917) criticized Latvian poets that they accept "Bely's hate for the *mob*" (Sproģe 118), while Jānis Sudrabkalns (1894–1975) considered Bely to be among the "constellation of Russian poets" (Sproģe 121).

Whereas Austriņš, who did not even try to "get close to the Russian modernist elite of the time" (Sproģe 182), has, of all the Latvian writers, portrayed St. Petersburg the most extensively, and then in quite unusual images, for example, "the imagined city" (Austriņš 1929: II, 240) and "the foggy labyrinth" (Austriņš 1931: IV, 39). Bely has also used such images in his novel *St. Petersburg*. At the base of the novel's concept is the idea that thought can create the material, respectively, the absolute power of the will creates real objects. This idea is not Bely's invention. Blavatsky wrote: "How God creates, so can man create as well" (Blavatsky 62). One of the foundation stones of Bely's symbolism is theurgy. The writer is able to create just like God: with his thoughts and with his will, the artist creates an alternative universe. Bely, in his novel *St. Petersburg*, calls this process "mozgovaya igra" — a mind game (Bely 42).

Fog is the dominating symbol in Bely's novel *St. Petersburg*. Astral material is like fog, like shadow, and it continually changes its image. To understand why the city fog portrayed by Bely appears here, then is lost in the shadow, one should note Theosophical Society's leader Annie Besant's (1847–1933) paper *Man and His Bodies* (1896), which describes the astral world changing its image continually. One of the characters in Bely's novel is reading this book. This allows us to understand another nuance: why one set of images is continually replaced by other images in

the novel *St. Petersburg*. They are astral beings, which continually transform the existing extremely active thought in 1905 at the physical existence level.

In Austriņš' portrayal as well, fog transcends the boundaries of real natural phenomena — that is “... the fog labyrinth, where not only Dostoevsky, Vrubel, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Komisarzevsky, but hundreds of their foolish worshippers, and thousands of those for whom their little room is too narrow and have no earth underfoot, wander like ghosts” (Austriņš 1929: II 240-241). The metaphor *fog labyrinth* is interwoven several times in Austriņš' works. For example, in the story *Nemiers*, the main hero Krams, obsessed with thoughts about death, ruminates: “God knows, whether I will still get out of this fog labyrinth alive?” (Austriņš 1931: IV 39). An identical semantic meaning for this metaphor has also been preserved in the poem *Necilvēks* [Monster] (Austriņš 1929: III 42).

The metaphor *fog labyrinth* is so peculiar that the question unwittingly arises about its motivating source. It would not be out of place to provide a reminder that the labyrinth is a symbol favoured by theosophists. This has been used successfully by Bely, who, in his novel *Serebrenny golub* (Silvery Pigeon) describes the sinking of the soul into an illusory labyrinth of matter, from which one can get out, only by following a call (*zov*), which leads one into the real spiritual world.

Even though Austriņš has used theosophical symbols and metaphors merely as striking means of expression, it still proves the influence of Theosophy in early 20th century Latvian literature and illustrates how artists adopted the metaphors and symbols of Theosophy, without becoming Blavatsky's followers themselves.

The Influence of Agni Yoga/Living Ethics

Countless world writers, painters and composers, who were attracted by attempts to combine the popular idea of evolution in the 19th century with the understanding of the cyclical process of the world in Eastern religions were carried away by Blavatsky's teachings. Latvia is also no exception in this respect, and this took place due to a new branch of Theosophy called Agni Yoga/Living Ethics¹, which was started by Russian artist Nicholas Roerich (1847–1947) and his wife Helena Roerich (1879–1955). On the base of the ontology, cosmogony and anthropology developed by Blavatsky, they created their theosophical system, which included elements of ethics and psychology. On commencing their activities, the Roerichs established small groups of people sharing their views in various countries around the world,

1 For more about the history of the Agni Yoga/Living Ethics group see Stasulane, A. “Theosophy of the Roerichs: Agni Yoga or Living Ethics.” *Handbook of the Theosophical Current*. Eds. Olav Hammer, Michael Rothstein (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013): 193-216.

where the movement's first centres gradually developed. Rīga had a special role in the development of the network of theosophical groups, as one of the first groups of Roerich followers in the world formed here¹, and became the Baltic region's theosophical centre in the 1920s and 1930s.

Agni Yoga/Living Ethics has influenced the world of Latvian artists in various degrees: some adopted theosophical ideas without any sort of critical approach; others did some sifting and reworked these ideas; some artists had only read a few theosophical articles, from which they gained some idea; others found out about the new ideas through their circle of friends, without even suspecting that they were theosophical ideas.

The most direct influence on Latvian literature of Theosophy expressed itself in the creative work of Rihards Rudzītis (1898–1960). When he accepted the Latvian Roerich Society's² offer to translate Living Ethics text books, "a rapid drawing together to the spiritual world of Nicholas Roerich" took place (Viese 16). The poet became one of the most active members of the society: "A sincere friendship was established between Rihards Rudzītis and the Roerichs. Over the years, the poet was sent about 400 letters from Roerich family members and their secretary — rich material for the biographies of Nicholas, Helena and their sons Svyatoslav and George and the history of the Friends of the Roerich Museum Society" (Viese 17).

Agni Yoga/Living Ethics became very popular in Latvian cultural circles when the work of the society was directed by (1936–1940) Rudzītis. He was truly carried away by Roerich's teachings which inspired him. Roerichs declared that his teachings had been received from the Teacher or Mahatma, who Rudzītis called the Master and to whom a poem *Meistara dārza ziedi* (Flowers in the Master's Garden) was dedicated. The fact that Rudzītis gained the impulse for this poem specifically in the theosophical paraphrases, is confirmed by the title of the poem alone. It is a rephrasing of *Listy sada Morii*³ (The Leaves of Morya's Garden) which is the title of Roerich's collection of poems. Roerich left such a deep impression on Rudzītis that more than one of his poems can be referred to as a paraphrasing of the theosophical.

1 Cf. Melton, Gordon J. (ed.) 2001. *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. New York: Gale Group, 1318.

2 At that time, its name was the Roerich Museum's Friends' Society.

3 In every circle of the evolutionary spiral, one Teacher or Mahatma (Manu or the Teacher of Teachers, the Highest Spiritual Being or the Hierarch) makes known what is absolutely necessary for humanity's development, who accepts responsibility for a certain evolutionary cycle. *Morya* is one of H. Blavatsky's mahatmas, who theosophists avoided calling by the person's name, which is why that mahatma was most frequently referred to as either *Master*, *Maître*, *Hozain*, or even *Master M*.

According to Roerich's ideas, the source of everything is Divine Origin (Highest Awareness, Cosmic Consciousness), from which flow (emanate) billions of the so-called monads. Taking root in matter, firstly in mineral, then plant and animal form, these monads reach a person at the level of consciousness, in this way the Universe moves towards perfection. Dressing up this idea in the images of poetry, Rudzītis wrote: "A plant wants to become a bird, which embraces distance, / A bird, a human — the older brother, / To grow deeper into eternity" (Rudzītis 59).

The Mother of the World has been designated a particularly important role in Roerich's teachings. Regarding the Mother of the World as the Highest reality, Rudzītis composed a poem, *The Mother of the World* (Rudzītis 59). In reading works by Rudzītis, one should bear in mind that in 1924, when Venus, namely, the Mother of the World's star, came closer to the Earth briefly, Roerich announced the beginning of the new era of the Great Mother of the World's daughter. In this era, the female has been entrusted with a special mission, to expedite the evolution of the world.¹ Having adopted this idea, Rudzītis wrote essays about the crucial role of the mother in the future destiny of the world (Rudzītis 51).

Concluding Remarks

It should be acknowledged that there is very little information about the arrival of the idea of esotericism in Latvia. It may even seem that this problem is insoluble, as there is a lack of documentary evidence. However, in researching the biographies of Latvian writers and poets and analyzing their work, we can develop a mosaic which illustrates the presence of Western esotericism in Latvian culture. Furthermore, some of the fragments of this mosaic are quite striking.

In the late 19th century and the early 20th century, writers searching for new means of expression found a source of inspiration in esotericism, gaining metaphors and symbols from it. There is no doubt that the influence of esotericism on the creative work of writers must be looked at in different ways: some adopted esoteric ideas without a critical approach, others did some sifting and reworked them, while others, having read a few esoteric texts or having heard something about it, just got some idea or image.

Rudzītis' broad correspondence with the Roerichs shows that the poet tapped

1 The idea about the female's special mission in the facilitation of evolution is closely connected to the role which Roerich allocated to his wife (the Mother of Agni Yoga) in ensuring the evolution of all of humanity. The spirituality of 20th century humanity has slid down to such a low level that as fire energy approached the Earth, someone was needed, who could transform the highest cosmic energy in a way that humanity would be able to receive them. This had been achieved by Helena Roerich, who had saved the world in this way.

into what could be called, theosophical ideas from the primary source, while other Latvian artists adopted Roerich's ideas indirectly. However, in both cases Latvian writers, poets and artists perceived (and also continue to perceive) Theosophy very seriously, like religious philosophy. Helena Blavatsky's ideas, which are particularly actively popularized by the followers of Nicholas Roerich in today's Latvia, are echoed in the creative work of several writers, for example, Rainis, Anna Brigadere, Marina Kosteņecka and Lija Brīdaka. In what way and how deeply Theosophy has become rooted in their creative work is an interesting question and has been researched very little in the history of Latvian literature. As the creative work of creative personalities cannot be divided off from its world view, namely, the artist's world view is reflected directly in their creative work independently of the author's own will, it would be timely for contemporary art and literature historians to focus greater attention on the connection of authors with Western esotericism. Thus, the creative work of Latvian writers, which has been affected by theosophical ideas, could, for example, be reassessed and better understood by delving more deeply into the history of the Roerich movement.

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Latvia in Russian Literature (1901–1940)

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Abstract The first half of the 20th century was an extremely significant period in the history of Latvia. After the end of the World War I and the fall of the Russian Empire, on the map of Europe new countries appeared — Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland. From the first days of their existence, the new countries started to build new relations with the former metropolis — Soviet Russia, later (from the end of 1922) USSR.

During the time period from 1901 to 1940, three basic models were developing which demonstrated an attitude towards Latvia in the Russian artistic and public consciousness. For understanding a place Latvia took in the Russian consciousness one of the most important binary oppositions in these models was the opposition of “ours – theirs.” The first model started to develop already in the 18th century when Latvian territories had been annexed to the Russian Empire forming governorates of Livonia and Kurland. The eastern part of Latvia — Latgale, at first became a part of Pskov, but later Vitebsk Governorate of the Russian Empire. Due to their geographical location, these territories became an integral part in the journeys to the countries of Western Europe for the Russian writers, officials, and philistines.

The second model began to form after the Proclamation of Independence of Latvia on November 18, 1918 and it demonstrated the attitude of Soviet Russia to a new independent country. One of the central themes of this model was participation of Latvians (Latvian Riflemen) in October Revolution of 1917 and in the Russian Civil War that broke out shortly after the revolution.

The third model was forming in the consciousness of Russians who had been living in the territory of Latvia when Independence of Latvia was proclaimed and border agreement between Latvia and Russia signed. This model was also significantly enriched by representatives of Russian Emigration who had escaped or had been expatriated from Soviet Russia.

Key words Latvia; Russian literature; emigration; topos

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Introduction

Study of Latvian-Russian literary contacts is one of the current problems of the contemporary Latvian literary theory. In the 1960s the work *Latvian–Russian Literary Relations (Latyšsko-russkie literaturnye svyazi, 1965)* written by Vera Vāvere and Georgiy Matskov became the first fundamental research regarding this issue. The authors do not decrease nor increase the significance of the Russian literature’s influence in the Latvian literature by justly highlighting that the

Russian influence — [...] was significant only in those cases when it coincided with trends in the very Latvian literature. The impact of the Russian literature usually only accelerated and deepened the development of natural processes in the Latvian literature. (Vavere, Mackov 6)

Due to objective reasons, the authors could not enlighten the complex, contradictory and important period of the first independent Republic of Latvia and to show the significance of the literary contacts between the local authors and Russian emigrant writers.

In the 1980s–1990s, the literary magazine *Daugava* regularly presented Yuri Abyzov’s and Roman Timenchik’s publications about authors whose literary activity was linked with Latvia: *An Episode from the life of Valery Bryusov* [Together with Alexandre Parnis] (1983), *Riga Episode in Anna Akhmatova’s “Poem without a Hero”* (1984), *“Over the Silver, Foamed Daugava”*: N. Gumilyov and Latvia, 1916–1917 (1986), *“Foreign Delight”*: Vladislav Khodasevich and Latvia (1987), *Mandelstam and Latvia* (1988), *A History of One Mystification [L. Kormchy (L. Korol-Purashевич) – A. Blok’s “confident”]: Facts and Hypotheses* (1988), *Repercussions. Latvia in the Russian Poetry* (1994), a.o.

The book by Yuri Abyzov, *Russian Printed Word in Latvia 1917–1944: Bibliography: 4 Parts* (1990–1991), became a true guide into the emigrant world of Latvia’s Russians. It is a kind of a chronicle of the Russian-speaking society’s literary and publishing life in the Republic of Latvia. After familiarizing with

Y. Abyzov's book, it can be concluded that the Russian spiritual culture developed in a more organic, multisided and freer way in the independent, democratic Latvia than on the other side of the border.

Y. Abyzov together with Lazar Fleishman and Boris Ravdin has prepared and published one more work regarding general and individual issues of Latvia's Russian emigrant newspaper world (*Russian Press in Riga. From the History of the Newspaper "Segodnya" in the 1930s*, 1997). The researchers dissipate the myth regarding the provinciality of the newspaper published in Latvia until the Soviet annexation and reveal the real role of this publication in the emigrant press.

The early 21st century is marked by the issue of V. Vāvere and L. Sproģe's monograph *Outset of the Latvian Modernism and "Silver Age" of the Russian Literature* (2002). This study uses previously unknown or little-known archive materials (letters, diaries). The main attention in the monograph is paid to the literary contacts of the first Latvian modernists (so-called decadents) with the brightest representatives of the Russian symbolism and the Silver age. Their typological closeness and difference are stressed (Viktors Eglītis, Edvarts Virza, Kārlis. Krūza, Fricis Bārda — Aleksey Remizov, Valery Bryusov, Fyodor Sologub, Konstantin Balmont, a.o.). Combination of the literal-historical and comparative views in regarding both Latvian and Russian literary processes in the early 20th century is successful, also the European literary context is not forgotten.

Doctoral thesis devoted to various aspects of this problem have been successfully defended in University of Latvia and Daugavpils University: Pāvels Glušakovs *Genres of the Russian Exile Historical Prose (1920–1930s in Latvia)*, (2007), Žans Badins *Latvia in the Russian Literature (1901–1940)*, (2008), Natālija Makašina *Artistic World Models in Andrei Zadonskiy's Prose Fiction* (2012), Marija Sivašova *The Latgale Text in Writings of Russian Writers-Emigrants (1920–1930s)*, (2012).

Concurrently with the scientific study of Latvian-Russian literary contacts also methodological and educational work took place in this direction. A significant section in understanding and examining of Latvian-Russian literary contacts is represented by B. Infantyev multifaceted and diverse publications, such as *Latvia in Fates and Creations of Russian Writers: Folklore, Russian-Latvian Literary Contacts in the Late 18th – Early 19th Century*: a text-book for secondary schools (1994); *Lines Devoted to Latvia: Russian-Latvian Literary Contacts. Second Half of the 19th Century*: a text-book for secondary schools (1999).

Practically the same problematic is considered in Sergey Zhuravlyev's books: "... I Pass by Livonia's Countryside...": *Russian Writers in Riga, Mitau, Dinaburg*

and Other Towns of the Baltic Region (16th century – 1st half of the 19th century) (1990); *Russian Writers in Livonia and Kurland, 2nd Half of the 19th Century* (1995); *There, Where Livonia Used to Be: Stories on the Russian History, Stay of Famous Writers in Livonia and Kurland in the 18th–19th Century* (2005), *Latvia's Russian Writers of the 1920–1930s: from the Russian Foreign Anthology* (2015).

Methodology

Structure and semantics of the topos study in the Russian literature have started already several decades ago. Yury Lotman's works *Petersburg's Semiotics and Problems of City Semiotics* (*Semiotika Peterburga i problemy semiotiki goroda*), *Semiotics of a City and Its Culture* (*Semiotika goroda i gorodskoj kul'tury*) and Vladimir Toporov's book *Petersburg and the "Petersburg Text" of the Russian Literature* (*Peterburg i «Peterburgskij tekst» russkoj literatury*), being devoted to the study of the formation and development of the "Petersburg text" in the Russian literature, must be recognized as the starting point of this research. In the editor's preface, Y. Lotman writes:

The common trait of articles in this edition is that on the one side Petersburg is regarded in them as a text, yet on the other side, as a mechanism to create these texts; the city exploration is included in the history of civilization as a text sui generis. Even more — some text peculiarities are particularly notable on such an object. [...] Evidently the text peculiarity of accumulating and independently regenerating its history appears. (Lotman 3)

After the "Petersburg text," also "capital texts" started to appear with greater or lesser success — Moscow, Rome, Kyiv, etc. Later — also texts of the Russian province, such as "Perm text."

Human life is located in space, and inevitably proposes the question of living place — a country, district, town: what is it and what is the meaning of my life while being here? A human did not stand the emptiness of their living place meaning and value, they vitally need to comprehend it and arrange it to its value.

This aspect — existential in its essence — of human relations with their living place was for us one of the most important impulses for studying the Perm text. (Abashev 8)

A significant aspect is activation of one or another provincial topos in the centre's (capital) consciousness. We should also speak about the heterogeneity of the provincial and foreign topoi. Every historical era has brought one or another provincial topos to the foreground. Apart from the Moscow's and St. Petersburg's topoi, Kiyv, Odessa, Kishinev, Caucasus, Poland's, Baltics a.o. topoi are of significance for the Russian culture.

Reception of Baltic Culture Space in the Works by Russian Writers and Journalists in the Early 20th Century

In the Russian Empire, the regions that were inhabited mainly by Latvians were not administratively united. Thus, Latvians formed the majority of the Kurland and Livonia Governorates, as well as a significant part in the (Latgale) Vitebsk Governorate.

One of the most significant peculiarities of Latvia's text in Russian literature is that the "Latvian text" is formed in a considerably wider sense in the Russian public and cultural awareness. The *Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary* stresses:

Though this [Baltic] region does not form a particular administrative unit since 1876, still in many aspects its constituents have many things in common, and they are radically different from other parts of Russia. (Jenciklopedicheskij slovar')

Thus the "Latvia's text" is incorporated in the joint paradigm of the "Baltic text." In the early twentieth century, the public awareness in Russia became more and more interested in the proceedings in the region. In this context, one must note the special significance of the Courland — Livland text in Russian literature of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The territories included into the Russian Empire *de jure* were an intrinsic part of the multi-national state formation where ethnic Russians constituted a minority and the Russian language had a secondary status until the implementation of the Russification policy. Hence, the topos of Courland — Livland must be regarded not only as a variant of Russian provincial text but as a specific structure that was territorially perceived as one's own but mentally it continued existing as other — distant, at times obscure; this is proved by the majority of texts created at that time. This topos makes an organic entity of the opposition 'Russia – abroad' (Russia – West).

The administrative border (inside the Russian Empire) becomes a mental

border in the consciousness of authors (Vasily Rozanov, Ivan Konevskoy, Valery Bryusov, Leonid Andreyev, Maxim Gorky), who go to Riga. The first encounter with the Roman letters brings out Rozanov's admiration:

Is the border really close? And my heart started to beat faster. I love borderlands because of this uninterrupted life in outland Russia. I just love in them this sensation of the new, I love my new excitement, the new line of colour in my eye span, new smell, new taste. (Rozanov 45)

Each topos has an individual original structure and semantic, therefore spatial texts are based on not only highlighting the common dominants of sense but on the sets of their own internal structure elements that determine the specificity and autonomy of the topos. In the early 20th century, Baltic provinces of Courland, Livland, Estland formed the western border of the Russian Empire that were associated in Russian perception with a German area. Riga was the most significant topos of the Baltic at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries. As to its exterior, architecture, lifestyle, public relations, Riga differed from other province capitals of the Russian Empire. Riga surprised by its European qualities, whereas Old Riga had an air of the Middle Ages. In this period Russian writers and journalists were not interested in Latvian cultural environment but in the life of local old-believers, the development and existence of other religious confessions in a foreign cultural space. The specificity of a 'spatial text' is first and foremost determined by the existence of another, often foreign component that attributes certain colour to a particular culture space. The existence of this component complicates the structure of the particular locus. It is diversified by another language, different history, often by another religious confession, as a result creating a completely different world picture.

Many realia of the Russian life would be perceived here as completely inappropriate, would not correspond to the Riga space. According to V. Rozanov's everything that is Russian attains German shade in Riga. Riga, just as the whole Baltic territory, is a small corner of Germany for Leonid Andreyev, just as for the majority of Russians. In L. Andreyev's perception, Riga — it is not just an uncharacteristic for the Russian Empire enclave of the German architecture and culture, though definitely this is also present, it is rather the space of natural, harmonic behaviour of people.

The place we should definitely go to — it's Riga," — he writes to his fiancée. "Here in boulevards, gardens and seaside people peacefully sit and walk

hugging one another — Nerts! (Andreev 189)

Other towns and small-towns of Kurland and Livonia Governorates were of optional significance for the Russian awareness of the early 20th century, they remained shadowed by governorate Riga. They were perceived as a kind of Riga's suburbs, a German-Latvian province, or a by-place, sometimes completely cut off from the civilisation. The majority of such settlements existed in their closed, patriarchal world. In the midst of all these towns, it appears that Libava stands out. It is not a coincidence that Fyodor Sologub devotes to it his *Triolet* (Triolet), included in his poetic cycle *Cities (Goroda)*.

When speaking about more typical personality traits of Latvians, most often “*on the one hand — hard-working nature, on the other — distrustfulness,*” closeness, suspicion towards the unfamiliar are indicated. Already Garlieb Merkel wrote about this in the late 18th century, he claimed that “slave tremulousness and distrustfulness — these are the most notable character traits of a Livonian peasant” (Merkelis 25).

A folk song has always been a true outlet for a Latvian-peasant. For Latvians, specifically the song has become the niche in the public conscience where Latvians could show their national identity and express their problems. A Latvian-singer has organically melted with the image of a Latvian-working man. Work and songs turned out to be inseparable throughout the whole people's history. We can find a more successful formulation of this idea in the work by Apollon Korinfsky *In the Latvian Region (V Latvijskom krae)*. The Latvian song in the Korinfsky's reception fills all the space, the whole world of Latvians, everywhere where Latvians are present one can hear singing. The nation's character is revealed exactly in songs. The Latvian song does not show complexity, boldness, rather on the contrary, its distinctive qualities are conciseness, simplicity, availability, monotone, calmness, and softness. In a way we deal with idealization of the Latvian song on the one hand, and of the Latvian people on the other.

During the World War I, especially after the formation of the Latvian Rifleman battalions, the image of a Latvian-soldier moved upfront in the Russian public thought. Also, Russian writers participate in creating the new image, thus Aleksandr Kuprin writes a couple of sketches, united under the title *Livonia*. Kuprin's reception — it is a view of an outsider, for this reason his evaluation, his vision of the Latvian people is more reserved. He defines the Latvians' character traits and behaviour by their affection to earth, sacred attitude towards it. In his eyes, Latvians are utterly devoted to their Fatherland, they are fearless defenders of their rights and property, ready for any, even the hardest work and the most unpredictable turns of

the history. *A Latvian goes to war just like to ploughing*, (Kuprin 232) states Kuprin, thus creating the image of the Latvian-soldier immediately following the image of the Latvian-ploughman.

It is undeniable that during this period the Latvian literature feels an impact of other cultures, one can clearly notice influence of the Scandinavian, German, and Russian literature in it, yet the presence of the “foreign text” in general shows a more open character of the literature and culture. For the Latvian culture, establishment of new, more active culture contacts with other cultures and literatures is an evident step forward. The very literature was the field of the nations’ mutual dialogue, culture development and enrichment.

Reception of Latvia in Russian (Soviet) Literature of the 1920s and 1930s

Emergence of Latvian text in Russian (Soviet) literature of the 1920s and 1930s is directly linked with the formation of Latvian Rifleman Regiments during World War I. The Latvian Rifleman took an active part in the revolution and the Civil War in Russia and it was portrayed in the texts written by the authors of two opposite sides. As a result, in the 20th century Russian literature an ambivalent image of the Latvian Rifleman had been developing which was projected on Latvians and Latvian state as such.

The conceptual dominant of the Latvian rifleman’s image in the literature began to develop even before the tragic events of the revolution and Civil war when also Latvians were active participants. Already the first sketches mark a specific, confabulated stereotype of the Latvian rifleman’s perception that will become the basis for the more detailed revelation in the Soviet-time literature. Many of the things that created the Latvian-soldier’s image will turn out to be central for the image of the Latvian Red Rifleman during the first years after the October Revolution.

Cruelty and blood lust become the dominant trait of the perception of Latvians among the Russian population. It is not a coincidence that the first literary echoes regarding events where the Latvian Red Rifleman were active participants appeared not in the works by those authors who sympathized with the new power, but on the contrary, among the ideological opponents who themselves quite often became victims of the new regime, such as, for instance, a son of the grand duke Pavel, eighteen-year-old poet Vladimir Paley. He was one of Alapaevsk martyrs and shortly before his death, when imprisoned in Vyatka, wrote the poem *Silent Night Is Creepy. Minutes Crawl by...*

In literary texts Latvian riflemen are portrayed as carriers of destruction,

violence, death, personalizers of power. Many truly did not perceive the Bolshevik power as the Russian power. This impression was even further reinforced by penalty actions where Latvian riflemen, who spoke Russian poorly or with an accent, were active participants.

The same motif of destroying and abusing symbols of the Russian State power done by foreigners sounds in the revolutionary poem *Iskander Name* (*Iskander-Name*, 1921) by imagist A. Kusikov. It shows a particularly significant line where Latvians are mentioned next to Chinese. In the eyes of the Bolshevik opponents the Red Army was nothing else, but a foreigners' get-together. The folklore of that time is extremely eloquent: *The Soviet power holds on the Jewish brains, Latvian bayonets and Russian fools, or Do not look for a villain, look for a Latvian* (Ross 255).

Quite often in the works of the 1920s Latvian characters are endowed with repulsive, zoomorphic qualities, such as, for instance in I. Babel's diary: *I worked in the command post (the horse galloped smashing), I go to sleep next to Lepin. He is Latvian, his face — dullish, like that of a piglet, glasses, it seems he is kind-hearted.* (Babel' 192) The motif mentioned in Sergey Bekhteyev's poem *Russian Golgotha* (*Russkaya Golgofo*) is reinforced by the catastrophe of all the Christians, while the Latvian riflemen are part of the Antichrist's army.

Also, Soviet poets who turned to poetization of the Latvian Riflemen's "glorified" past had difficulties to break out of the dual world matrix — the past world and the present world, and of the opposition of the red and white colour. But, of course, this type of system included diametrically opposed sense. The first Soviet poets set the art's key purpose — serving to the political topicality, political environment.

The first substantially significant text where the "glorified" past of the Latvian Riflemen is sang of becomes the poem *Latvian Red Soldiers* (*Latyshskie krasnye bojcy*) by Demyan Bedny. Both in the mentioned text and in all his creative works Demyan Bedny gradually embodies requirements of the appearing Soviet literature and the awareness model of the socialistic realism type. First of all, the requirement for truth ("life reality"), as well as accessibility and understanding of the deliverable material is realized. The Bolsheviks' revolutionary ideology is not being masked in any way, on the contrary, it is placed in the foreground.

For Bedny, the Latvian Riflemen are carriers of destruction and death. Yet in the Soviet ideology with its class approach they acquire the status of a kind of a true hero of the new age that *requires neither canvassing, nor appraisal* (Bedny 391). A particular place in the works by Demyan Bedny and a range of other Soviet authors

is devoted to the enemy's character. The enemy, ideological and actual opponent for D. Bedny has always been primitive, rough, and caricatured. There is nothing attractive in the opponent's character, nothing causing compassion, the enemy is always of a lower stratum, for this reason he should be not only destroyed, but also humiliated, his dignity shattered. And battalions of the Latvian Riflemen do exactly this. Merciless, ready to self-sacrifice for the ideals of the New world, such are the Latvians — participants of the Civil war in the works by Isaac Babel, Boris Pilnyak, Aleksey Tolstoy, in the novel by Nikolay Ostrovsky *How the Steel Was Tempered* (*Kak zakalyalas' stal'*).

Another plane of the "Latvia's text" in this model is satirical depiction of the Republic of Latvia. Due to its geographical location, Latvia has become a borderline between two worlds. Influenced by this fact, the border between Latvia and Russia acquires specific semantic load in many poetic and prosaic texts by various authors. It is not just a cordon separating two countries, but the truest border between two worlds.

The motif of border overcoming, transit turns out to be of significance for Vladimir Mayakovsky *How Does the Democratic Republic Work* (*Kak rabotaet respublika demokraticeskaya*) and for Demyan Bedny *Political Nepman* (*Nehpman politicheskij*). Both books depict the lyrical protagonists who are afraid of crossing borders. For Mayakovsky in his trips abroad, Latvia becomes the first bourgeois country. D. Bedny, unlike V. Mayakovsky, has never been to Latvia, and he had quite a poor idea about the order of things in the neighbour country. In the Bedny's text, the main satire object is Nepman, but his trip to Riga with a fake surname and most probably bought papers involuntarily links this character with emigrant characters.

If Mayakovsky depicts a wide reality scene of Latvia, where he deals with territory, army, culture, government, then for Bedny the whole Latvia is presented as a single restaurant topos. The restaurant is a separate social, pragmatic space, a space for bodily amusements and delights. In addition, in the early 1920s restaurants were more related to bourgeois, nepmen, but the restaurant space outside Russia — to the white emigration that burnt their lives in the restaurant fumes. Bedny depicts Nepman's stay in Riga, in a foreign place, as a kind of sobering that penetrates the restaurant topos in a paradoxical way. The protagonist is subjected to nostalgia, citizenship and patriotism awake in his soul. For the first time he realizes that he has made an unequal exchange: *he has exchanged the native Moscow for Riga's condoms* (Bedny 1). Nepman feels his isolation and its consequences — his insignificance, uselessness for anyone, one's own contempt. Actually, it is

an adjusted person, fawner, pseudo-victim, so now — a pseudo-patriot who has changed and accepted the new power on the outside, but has remained alien and hostile to it on the inside. Even more — rules cannot change such a character due to his class background. From Mayakovsky's and especially Bedny's point of view, the Latvian state is adjusted, just like Nepman is.

After the declaration of the USSR the bourgeois-democratic Republic of Latvia a priori was put on the list of enemies of the Soviet power. In the 1920s in the Soviet culture it was impossible to depict an image of Latvia as being favourable or even neutral. In the Soviet literature of that period, a satirical image of Latvia is dominating.

Latvia in the Russian Emigrant Literature

Along with the Latvian majority, several notable national minorities (Russians, Germans, Jews, Polish) were present in the independent Latvia. In the 1920–1930s, more than 200 thousands of Russians lived in Latvia. During the interwar years, Riga was one of the cultural centres of the Russian émigrés. It is possible to trace one important idea in publications of Russian authors — the young states are not yet burdened with the bitter legacy of the historic right that weighs over the life of old states. The young states can be built freely, along the lines of justice and freedom for everyone. They need not to fear centrifugal force, they need not to resort to oppression of minorities, repressions, and restraints of freedom. Latvia must become an example of new nationhood that is built along the lines of freedom, rights, justice for all.

From the very first days of Latvian independence Russian newspapers of heroic and patriotic kind started to eulogize Latvia, Riga and other towns as well as brave fighters for the independence: both military and civil people. It is typical for a new culture, which is trying to become firmly established on the political and mental map to fill different cells with different texts, including propagandistic ones. Not only publicistic articles, but also the first attempts of creating literary texts on pages of the printed press are of particular interest. When speaking about the Russians of Latvia, we need to mention poetical works by two Riga's authors — M. Argunov and M. Rodionov, who actively cooperated with the newspaper *Utro* in 1919 and 1920.

Undoubtedly, all texts written by M. Argunov and M. Rodionov, and also the majority of the material of this newspaper presented a good example of propaganda. The idea to create the independent Republic of Latvia was not and obviously could not be dominant in the Russian society. The character of publications, as well as M.

Argunov and M. Rodionov's poetical works prove clearly that it is only an attempt or the way to create the general public mood of a specific kind with a simultaneous transfer of the propagandistic information.

On August 11, 1920, in Riga in the building of Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Latvian–Soviet Peace Treaty was signed and the Latvian and Russian border defined. The border factor of the new state strongly affected a usual lifestyle of the inhabitants of these territories. Best of all it was understood by people living in border zone who sometimes, especially in the 1920s got to the territory of another country. The brightest example is *chastushkas* recorded in Latgale by the teacher and folklorist Ivan Fridrihs. In these folklore texts the theme of border is one of the most important. The border activated an opposition *own – strange*: if earlier this opposition existed on social level (a stranger was an inhabitant of another village) then now it reached the state level.

All emigrants suffered much their motherland loss. They were the people who had left the soviet Russia and started their lives in emigration. Insurpassability of border strengthened homesickness, activated space of border zone, especially it was true with the places where actual facts of Russian pre-revolution culture and social life had survived. The border turns into a barrier that divides two different systems of values and concepts, and emphasizes it as an invincible line in space and time. The border symbolically demonstrates fragmentation of Russian culture, two kinds of parallel, not contacting with each other Russian worlds — Soviet Russia and Russian emigration. But all in all, it activates Latvian text in Russians' artistic consciousness.

In the 1920s–1930s Riga becomes a large centre of Russian emigration. In Riga a huge number of newspapers, magazines, periodicals are published, in addition the most well-known writers and poets of the Russian émigré cooperate with the largest of them. In Riga poetic collections and novels by authors who had decided to link their destiny with Riga and Latvia, such as Yuri Galich, Viktor Tretyakov, Nikolay Belotsvetov were published regularly enough. More often than not essays, stories, feuilletons, and playful sketches from urban life start to appear on the pages of Riga's periodicals. Latvia appears on the pages of publications of such authors as Ivan Bunin, Vladimir Nabokov, Pyotr Krasnov. Riga's present — it is the careless world of entertainment: world of theaters, cafes, world of play. World of townly entertainment — it is one of the favourite themes of Riga's essayists and writers of the 1920s that will be more deeply exposed in novels by Pavel Chunchin (Korol-Purashevich) *Diamonds in the Heel* (*Brillianty v kablukе*) and *Riga's Bar-Lady* (*Rizhskaya bar-dama*). The true ambience of the city is rendered not by urban

planning, but the natural beginning. Riga's gardens, parks, boulevards become the true embodiment of the city, its *genius loci*.

The local provincial *topoi*, such as Kurland and Latgale, become the semantic opposition of the capital Riga. The contemporary Latvian-Courlander, for instance, as the protagonist of Andrey Zadonsky's story *Arvid Jaunarajs' Fortune* (*Schast'e Arvida Jaunarajsa*), is doomed to leave, flee from a patriarchal family in order to realize his own creative potential. He becomes a popular Riga poet, regular customer of saloons and literary evenings, he finds his love and is happily married, yet an attempt to reconcile with the family turns into a catastrophe at the end of the story. Jaunarajs' offered hand meets austere silence, while his younger brother Janis responds with a spit in the face.

The Latgalian text in the Russian emigrant literature in Latvia of the 1920s-1930s is a quite interesting phenomenon. On the one hand, the Latgalian Russian world is proclaimed to be one of the main values, on the other hand, the same world increasingly becomes an object of satirical representation. Irony and satire in evaluations attest particular changes in the awareness of the Russian émigrés.

Conclusion

The "Latvia's text" of the Russian literature becomes, though not the main, yet a significant part of the Russian literary space texts that undoubtedly possesses its own peculiarities.

One of the peculiarities of the "Latvia's text" in the Russian literature is that the very notion 'Latvia' did not exist in the Russian consciousness for a long time, though the territory that was mostly inhabited by Latvians was included in the Russian Empire already in the 18th century. We can speak about full-fledged formation of the "Latvia's text" in the Russian literature starting from the moment when Latvia gained its national independence. Yet a particular perception of the Kurland and Livonia *topos* also existed in the Russian literature; thus Russian writers created a text that was a typological predecessor of the "Latvia's text." But one should take into account that this text was one part of the common "Baltic text" that mainly focused on the depiction of the German world of the Russian Empire's Western governorates.

Yet we can affirm that the "Latvia's text" began to form gradually and rather vigorously in the depths of the "Baltic text." It was favoured by various factors: 1) rather frequent visits of famous Russian writers to Riga and other cities; 2) rather active participation of Latvians in political events of the country and the Baltic

region (the revolutionary events of the 1905, World War I); 3) emergence of serious literary contacts between two cultures, as a result of which the “Collection of Latvian Literature” edited by V. Bryusov and M. Gorky was published (1916).

In the early 20th century, literature presents the first attempts to create a typological Latvian’s portrait. The literature of that time shows two types of Latvian characters. On the one hand, it is a Latvian-ploughman, but on the other hand — a Latvian-soldier (rifleman). A rather exact representation of the Latvian nation is generalized by Aleksandrs Dauge in the book *Latvians*, published in 1917 in Petrograd:

But Latvians are not just “God seekers” in the soul, they are also careful and reliable performers of all the small daily works and tasks. They even believe that proper doing of these small tasks and works, if only they are done in the spirit of the Almighty and in His honour, is a safer way to a person’s perfection than the most noble and laudable intentions, if they remain just intentions. (Dauge 29)

The existence period of the Republic of Latvia in the interwar period from 1918 till 1940 turned out to be both unusually productive and interesting, as well as exceptionally contradictory throughout the whole “Latvia’s text” in the Russian literature. Its structure was significantly influenced by the division of the Russian culture into two camps — Metropolis (Soviet Russia’s) culture and Foreign Russian culture (Russian emigrant culture).

Thus, two models of the “Latvia’s text” exist simultaneously during this period of time. One model consists of creative works by authors who live in the Soviet Russia (that is later represented by the Soviet literature); this model actively, though not long (early and mid 1920s) praises divisions of Latvian Riflemen for establishing and strengthening the October ideals. At the same time in the early 1920s a considerable number of texts appear that reflect atrocities of Latvian Riflemen and Red Latvian Commissars.

Also, the process of discreditation of the Latvian State takes place. A series of satirical and ironical works appear that ridicule the bourgeois values of the Republic of Latvia. The caricature character of a Latvian begins to form by combining many stereotypical traits of Latvian characters.

Another model of the “Latvia’s text” in the Russian literature of that period — it is the result of the creative efforts of those Russian emigrant writers whose destiny was related to Latvia. The formation of this model begins right after the

independence is proclaimed. The Russian periodicals in Latvia become the main field for the formation of the “Latvia’s text.”

This model implements Latvia as the second home, as an idea of a new Fatherland. The Latvia’s Russian emigrant literature created a significant number of poetic and prosaic texts. Quite many works are devoted to the implementation of the values and normative potential of the “Latvia’s text” by creating a particular Russian-Latvian mindset that anticipates representation of historically consistent value dominants that form the semantic core of the Latvia’s spatial mentality.

A particular place in the system of the “Latvia’s text” topoi is taken by Riga who becomes the conceptual core of the whole “Latvia’s text” in the Russian literature. The provincial, local topoi, such as Kurland and Latgale, become the semantic opposition of the capital Riga. In this relation we can note a significant peculiarity — provincial authors strive for idyllic, almost sacred representation of the provincial world of towns, villages, and homesteads; while Riga authors mainly highlight the provincial backwardness of Kurland and Latgale topoi. That is proven also by the character system of the most diverse texts. The collision between a Rigan and a provincial often turns out to be devastating for the latter.

When reading and analysing works by Latvia’s Russian writers and poets, we understand that they were mainly interested in the fact that the Latvia’s topos opened a new field for literary activity, it permitted to create other characters, helped to implement authors’ intentions in a completely new space. The inspiration that grew into a new philosophy, into comprehension of the previously incomprehensible, enriched the Russian literature with new realia that were attractive for both the reader and the literary reviewer, showed social life of the previously unexplored territory that people used to write about earlier without knowing the true state of affairs.

Thus, it is possible to substantiate the phenomenon of the “Latvia’s text” as a semantically unified system of characters that reflects the cultural peculiarities and uniqueness as represented by its values and norms, while preserving and objectivising traits of mental national and cultural existence.

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The Search for Regional Identity: Latgale in Latvian Literature in the First Decades of the Twentieth Century

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Abstract Nowadays, problems of regionalism have appeared in the centre of political life in a lot of countries. Therefore, the study into a sociocultural, and political-economic situation in a specific region, as well as the development of the theory of a regional identity has become an important research issue for the humanities and social sciences. Focusing on the subject of regionalism, the research into regions' cultural and historic peculiarities has become one of the tasks for the humanities, one of the possible sources of which is a literary text. This research deals with Latgale's narrative analysis in the Latvian literature of the first decades of the 20th century as a means for the study into Latgale's regional identity which allows establishing the indicators of regional identity.

The aim of the research is to analyse how Latgale's regional identity is reflected and created in the Latvian literature of the first decades of the 20th century. This time period has been chosen for the purposes of the research as it marks the beginning of the formation of Latgale's image in the public consciousness of Latvian people, as well as it is related to the period of the national awakening and establishment of the statehood in Latvia. The study uses theoretical insights on the relationship between a person, place, and regional identity; as well as it uses the data on Latgale and Latgalians found in the Latvian periodicals of that period as an additional source of information. In order to analyse the reflections of regional identity which can be found in literature, the research uses the texts which show both the internal and external identifications, in particular, both the texts that were written by people from Latgale, and the texts whose authors were writers who visited Latgale as travellers, or stayed there over a certain time. The literary texts under study include such features of Latgale's regional identity as its nature, landscape, architecture,

Catholicism, characteristic features of its people, language, history, and memory, which in general create a positive and harmonious image of Latgale in the literature of the early 20th century and up to the 1920s, which contradicts the official discourse reflected in the periodicals.

Key words region; identity; Latgale; Latvian literature; culture; local; global

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Introduction

The issue of the influence of globalization on the regional identity has become especially relevant in modern society. Open information space, wide opportunities for mobility, and development of the Internet have changed a person's view on themselves and their place in the world. Since the connection between a person and place in the consciousness is very strong, the processes of globalization have caused a crisis of identification, resulting in the appearance of the so-called hybrid and unidentified identities. In this context, regional identity has become an opportunity for a sense of stability and an unconscious protest against the trends of globalization and unification. The problems of regionalism have appeared in the center of political life in a lot of countries. Therefore, the study into a socio-cultural and political-economic situation in specific regions, as well as the development of the research theory into the regional identity have become topical research issues for the humanities and social sciences. Focusing on the subject of regionalism, the research into regions' cultural and historic peculiarities has become one of the tasks for the humanities, one of the possible sources of which is a literary text. In order to clarify the needs and peculiarities of the region's identity in our time, it is necessary to study their development in the past, paying attention to the ideas that have developed about this region over time. Literary texts not only adequately describe the features of a particular period, place, and mentality of people, but also reflect the spiritual and physical needs of the society living in that time period.

Narratives of regional identity lean on miscellaneous elements: ideas on nature, landscape, the built environment, culture/ethnicity, dialects, economic success/recession, periphery/centre relations, marginalization, stereotypic images of a

people/community, both of ‘us’ and ‘them’, actual/invented histories, utopias and diverging arguments on the identification of people. (Paasi 178)

The aim of the research is to analyse how Latgale’s regional identity is reflected and created in the Latvian literature of the first decades of the 20th century. The abovementioned period — the first decades of the 20th century — is extremely important for the process of formation of the Latvian national and regional identities. Firstly, this was the period when for the first time in history the Latgale region with its specific cultural and historical features, which are not typical for other inhabited Latvian territories, emerged in the Latvian cultural context. First journalistic and literary works that appeared at that time laid the foundation for the further attitude to Latgale’s region and created the basic principles for perception of Latgale’s regional identity up to the present day. Secondly, the period chosen for the study is significant because in 1918 the Latvian state was established, and Latgale became its constituent part. As a result, a dialogue between the national and regional identities, which continues up to the present day, has been formed in the public discourse.

Regional Identity: Theoretical Overview

Identity is recognised as the central element in the consciousness of every person, about oneself and about one’s place in the community (society). This allows an individual to recognise him/herself as being different, at the same time as finding a common bond with others in the creation of group identity. (Druviete 151)

The concept of “identity” is currently considered to be the most general and universal concept that describes a set of qualitative and quantitative characteristics associated with the peculiar nature of any given cultural or geographical individual (a personality, a group, a territorial community, or a territory). S. Hall notes: “identity is formed at the unstable point where the ‘unspeakable’ stories of subjectivity meet the narratives of history, of a culture” (Hall 135). Therefore, along with a person’s subjective feelings, the identity is shaped by history and culture. The concept of “identity” implies sameness, similarity, likeness. The problem of a modern person is an identity (both individual and collective) crisis. It is related to the destruction of many customary norms, the ephemeral nature of social processes, and the difficulty of integrating the past and the future, different communication flows and systems of social interaction at individual and collective levels.

Dynamism is an important feature of an identity; it (identity) is in the stage of development and variability, it is subject to a conscious will to the construction of the individual and factors of external influence. In the modern volatile world, in which everything is very dynamic, the construction of an identity and its awareness becomes a problem, as the natural desire of an individual is to feel something stable and unchanging, at least for a moment. Nowadays, a lot of people are no longer able to define their identity. Therefore, such notions as “hybrid identity,” “double identity,” “multiple identity,” “hyphenated identity / communities,” “shared identity” appear. As a reaction to the peculiarities of the socio-cultural situation of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, a lot of theoretical research on the problem of identity in terms of philosophy, psychology, culture, sociology, etc. (see Fukuyama, Burke, Erikson, Ricoeur, Leary, Tangney, Thompson, Weinreich, Saunderson, Woodward e.o.). However, despite a large number of studies, among scientists there is no a complete consensus on the understanding of the concept of identity and its constituent elements.

Most researchers admit that “a place/a living place” is a significant element for the identity formation. The analysis of the current situation allows us to correlate the identity crisis caused by globalization with the problems of national identity. Nationality begins to lose its significance in the structure of identity. As a result, the idea of stability of the national state also gets lost. Thus, a “local identity” which may include emotional and symbolic components important for the process of a human self-identification becomes cognitively and psychologically significant for many people.

The connection between a person and a place has been analyzed many times and it is undeniable. Psychologists and culture experts concluded that people have a universal need to associate themselves with a specific place. Home is recognized as the most important and necessary place for the existence of a person. Relationships between people and a place are always dialectical. “The relationship between a person and the place of his living is mysterious but obvious. Or: doubtless but mystic. The genius of the place, *genius loci*, already known by the ancient people, who connects intellectual, spiritual, and emotional phenomena to their material environment, is in charge of this relationship” (Vail, 5). A place is usually constructed by a person; and a person attributes it with a certain specific, emotional, and symbolic meaning. In turn, places form people and their characters, and, therefore, we can state that a local identity can be perceived as a result of the interactive interaction between the place and the person. This interaction also generates the sense of belonging. The described process proves that a local identity is created figuratively, and it identifies

who we are (Torkington 75-76).

Regions have become important research objects nowadays. There is no unified definition for a region, as the emphasis is laid depending on the science studying it. Providing a general definition, a region is a certain part of the territory which has common features. Regions are characterised by an internal uniformity of cultural, economic, and political processes (Vaidere *at al.*). “Often considered as referring to a part of a nation, the word can also denote supranational territorial entities development: development is often measured simply by calculating” (Dunford 2).

In terms of geography, regions are identified according to the following features:

- 1) a certain part of the territory has the known unifying features;
- 2) a certain part of the territory is functionally independent;
- 3) a certain part of the territory which has a unified economic, political, or administrative power (Dunford 2).

A region is necessarily a territorial demarcation, but within this there is scope for a variety of functional processes. It is also an institutional system, either in the form of a regional government or as a set of institutions operating in a territory. It may constitute itself as an actor in national and external politics, geared to the achievement of a social and economic project. It is only by appreciating the conjunction of these different logics within a territory that we can understand the regional phenomenon and its importance. (Keating 383)

Though European regions have a long history, the end of the 19th century is considered to be the beginning of the regions as the development of state structures, when national ideas became relevant, and the ideas of the establishment of many states appeared. M.Keating writes:

...we can identify three crises of territorial representation, coinciding with changes in the responsibilities and scope of the nation-state, and often with crises of the central regime or party system: in the late 19th century; in the 1960s and 1970s; and in the 1990s. The first two were played out in the context of the nation-state and resulted in new territorial settlements; the third is taking place in a new context, marked by global economic integration and European unification and thus escapes the confines of national politics. (Keating 384)

The term “glocalization,” which represents a challenge to simplistic conceptions

of globalization processes as linear expansions of territorial scales, reflects the development of regions in the era of globalization. Glocalization indicates that the growing importance of continental and global levels is occurring together with the increasing salience of local and regional levels (*Glocalization*).

The term was modeled on the Japanese word *dochakuka*, which means global localization. It had referred to the adaptation of farming techniques to local conditions. Though the term “glocalization” has a Japanese origin, its English usage can be attributed to a British American sociologist Professor Roland Robertson. Being interested in Japanese culture, R. Robertson realized that the term “glocalization”, which is used by Japanese marketing specialists, means goods of local origin but which are used around the world. “Robertson and other sociologists interested in the subject of global processes could not help noticing that many of the social categories and practices assume a local flavour or character despite the fact that these products were invented elsewhere” (Khondker 185). The globalization and glocalization processes are tightly linked. A British sociologist Anthony Giddens believes that glocalization provides a basis for revival of certain cultures (Giddens 31).

Regional/local identity has been enhanced nowadays as a possible protest against impersonality and universalism of globalization. The specific character of this phenomenon has also been recognized from the theoretical point of view — in the last 20 years, the interest in regional and local cultures, as well as in the theoretical aspects of regional studies has increased significantly. Regional identity is in the scope of interest of interdisciplinary research; it is studied from the viewpoint of cultural studies, political science, economics, sociology, geography, etc. Some aspects of regional identity are often examined in order to promote the economic growth of a region and to enhance the political stability in the state, thinking about a possible degree of the region’s sovereignty, as well as in order to determine peculiarities and changes of national and regional identity in the course of history (e.g. Hudson, 2001; Clayton, 2002; Jones, 2000). However, a regional identity is originally associated with the processes in the consciousness and self-consciousness of a person, which are reflected in the cultural and historical features. The fundamental basis of any regional identity is the forms of real expression that exist in social and cultural practice, but not abstract political and economic attitudes. A. Paasi writes:

‘Regional identity’ is, in a way, an interpretation of the process through which a region becomes institutionalized, a process consisting of the production of territorial boundaries, symbolism and institutions. This process concomitantly gives rise to, and is conditioned by, the discourses, practices and rituals that

draw on boundaries, symbols and institutional practices. (Paasi 178)

Regional identity is formed by many interrelated factors: relations with the landscape (natural and man-made); relations with the history, traditions, values, other people; relations with the social space of the region (institutional and infrastructure aspects); as well as the special self-identity of the region (*Latvija. Pārskats...* 16).

Historical Background for Formation of Latgale's Regional Identity

Despite the fact that the problem of regional identity has become particularly relevant around the world at the end of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st centuries, the beginnings of the regions are traced back much earlier. In the context of Latvia, we can speak about the development of the regions and their relations with the national authorities since 1918, when the independent state of Latvia was established. Nevertheless, the prerequisites for the development of regions and regional identity had been formed much earlier — for many centuries the regions, which later became part of Latvia, underwent different cultural and historic development. In Latvia, there are five cultural-historical regions — Kurzeme, Zemgale, Vidzeme, Latgale, and Sēlija. However, according to the Latvian Constitution, Latvia consists of four regions — Kurzeme, Zemgale, Vidzeme, and Latgale. Nowadays, due to economic and political considerations (since 2006), five planning regions have been officially defined in Latvia: Riga, Kurzeme, Latgale, Vidzeme, and Zemgale regions. Nevertheless, their borders do not coincide with cultural historical regions. The lack of defined geographic borders between the regions, as well as the lack of a clear understanding of the region (because there are cultural and historical regions, and planning regions) allows researchers to say that there is no strict difference between the regions.

Research shows that in Latvia the belonging to the state and the immediate place of residence is felt the strongest in the relationship between a person and a place, while the belonging to the region is assessed in the most ambiguous and relatively weaker way. The only exception is Latgale where respondents assessed their belonging to the region as tighter than belonging to their immediate place of residence (*Latvija. Pārskats...*). In modern Latvia, Latgale is the only region with its peculiar features. Here, the regional identity is fully expressed. Moreover, Latgale's residents actively support, preserve, and construct it. Modern researchers (Šuplinska, Runce, Leikuma, etc.) recognize that, since 2000, the process of recognition and construction of Latgalian regional identity has entered a qualitatively new stage: discussions on the importance of the Latgalian language as a regional language have

been revived; in the policy planning documents Latgale is recognized as a special region, the development of which should attract special attention and funding, etc. Therefore, nowadays there are prerequisites for in-depth study of the peculiar features of the Latgale region.

Researchers' opinions on the issue of Latgale's regionalism and the regionalism of other Latvia's districts differ. Most of the modern and earlier time culture experts, historians, literary scholars, folklorists (Salcevic, Suplinska, Apine, Strods, etc.) believe that Latgale is characterized by pronounced regional features that differ from other regions of Latvia. However, other researchers, mainly modern economists, political scientists, and geographers (Zobena, Grivins, Nikisins) point out that in Latvia it is problematic to talk about the specific differences of any regions, as Vidzeme, Kurzeme, Zemgale and Latgale, even being registered in the Constitution, remain, nevertheless, for the most part, cultural historical areas or, sometimes (for individual needs of the government institutions), territorial associations, but they lack economic self-sufficiency, political unity, and clearly defined borders (Zobena *at al* 12).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the expressed features of cultural and historical development (which determine the presence of a specific regional identity) are more characteristic of Latgale, although the economic and political features of the region are less expressed in this region. I. Apine writes:

Latgale's regionalism differs from the local cultural and historical features of the remote parts in Kurzeme and Vidzeme. A long-term mix of many fundamental differences which acquire an ethnic character is peculiar to Latgale. (Apine, Volkovs 120)

In order to understand the cultural and historical peculiar features of the Latgale region, it is useful to go back into the history of the region's development. Latgale is a cultural and historical region in the eastern part of Latvia. Territorial identity of the modern Latgale is traced back to the Principality of Jersika at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries, which in the Latin texts referred to as Lethia, and in the Old Russian records as Lotigola. In the 13th century Latgalian lands occupied the territory of modern Latgale as well as an eastern part of Vidzeme. The territory Lethia inhabited by Latgalians gave the name for the whole of Latvia. As a result of the invasion of the German crusaders in the 13th -14th centuries, the lands of Latgalians (Latgals) were divided between the Livonian Order and the Archbishopric of Riga. After the Livonian War (1558–1583) the Latgalian lands became part of the Polish-Lithua-

nian 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 the Swedish rule. In 1772 after the first partition of Poland, Latgale became part of the Russian Empire. First, it was part of the Pskov Governorate, later – the Vitebsk Governorate, i.e., “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” (Kursite 17).

The origin of the name “Latgale” is also peculiar and controversial. “Latgalians” as the name for people or a tribe was used in the Livonian Chronicle of Henry, the Primary Chronicle, and later in the chronicles of the 16th century. After that, this name disappeared for many centuries, and it was substituted by the name Inflanty Voivodeship as a province of the Polish-Lithuanian State. Only at the beginning of the 20th century Latgalian activists of the Latvian National Awakening and patriots restored the name “Latgale.”

Eventually, the peculiarities of Latgale’s region acquired qualitative features and influenced the ethnic processes. In researchers’ opinion, the following aspects mark Latgale’s regionalism:

1) Its geopolitical status, specifically, its border with the eastern Slavs. Latgale has intensive ethnic contacts with Russians, Belarusians, Lithuanians, Poles, and Jews. As a result, there is a specific ethno-cultural environment here which is determined by the symbiosis of many cultures.

2) Its historical isolation from Kurzeme and Vidzeme. In 1772 Latgale became part of Russia, therefore, the organization of the economic life here was different from other Baltic States. For example, in Latgale there were no separate farms as there used to be on the rest of Latvia’s territory, although there were typical villages. Its geographical position was not so favourable as in other Latvia’s regions, where large cities and ports could develop. As a result, Latgale’s farms were smaller in size and poorer. Socio-economic underdevelopment slowed down the processes of cultural development.

3) The dominance of Catholicism is one of the main characteristic features of Latgale’s regionalism. As Latgale remained Catholic within the Polish-Lithuanian State, it was not affected by the Reformation, as the rest of Latvia was. Researchers of Latgale’s history and culture emphasize a stable place of Catholicism within Latgalian culture and consciousness.

4) The long-term influence of the Polish culture is still noticeable. It is

confirmed by a number of material cultural monuments in Latgale, for example, sacred architectural buildings, Polish landlords' residences, which influenced the aesthetic taste of the inhabitants, and formed the external architectural image of Latgale. Polish book collections and libraries played an important role in the education of Latgalians. The Polonization of local residents was held under the influence of the Polish culture.

5) The objective features of Latgalian regionalism enhanced under the influence of emotional and psychological factors, specifically, the fact that the attitude of residents of the other Latvian territories and the official government to Latgale was often repulsive, Latgalians were perceived as others. (Apine, Volkovs 110-119)

Researchers often put a question in what way and why Latgale managed to preserve its specific culture for centuries, experiencing a strong influence of the Polish and Russian cultures. Answers vary — some scientists believe that a peculiar mixture of folklore and religion is important, as well as the preservation of their own language and literary tradition; others point out that Latgalians' unity and strength were fostered by a common socio-economic situation of people: all Latgalians stayed rather poor over the centuries. In the run of the original cultural and historical process, Latgalians have developed their own unique identity that is expressed in culture, literature, and perception of the world.

Reflection of Regional Identity in Publicist Narratives and Literary Narratives

One of the most important stages in the history of Latvian people, the Second Awakening — a national movement that led to the proclamation of the state of Latvia in 1918 — started at the beginning of the 20th century. Authors of literary works actively react on the events in the spheres of politics and culture. Therefore, in literature there are attempts to restore the code of Latvianness, to renew the values of the past, and in this way, to learn and create a national identity. Literature created that time in the Latvian language actively developed, getting acquainted and being immersed in the European cultural heritage, and it covered the most significant stages of Europe's cultural development in a few decades. Therefore, at the beginning of the 20th century Latvian literature and language were ready to reflect on their cultural features and rights in this way raising the national consciousness and promoting consolidation. The attempts to raise the national consciousness were also made in Latgale. However, the activity of public workers was complicated there by the Press Act adopted in 1865 which prohibited to publish books with Latin letters. There-

fore, in fact, Latgalians had no opportunities for self-expression. The Latgalian intelligentsia started to work for the abolition of the ban on press, as well as to raise the national consciousness in any other possible ways. They founded associations which made it possible to come together and discuss realia of cultural and political life; the cultural life became more intense. In 1904 the ban on press was abolished, and, straight away, books in the Latgalian language started to be published legally. The Latgalian intelligentsia began to publish materials that Inflatians or Latgalians were also part of the Latvian people, although they speak and write in their own Latgalian language which differs from the Latvian language in other regions. Gradually, the Latvian intelligentsia heard the Latgalians' attempts to express themselves, and they paid attention to the previously overlooked region of Latgale and its cultural-historical and socio-economic peculiar features. Exploring the Latgalian special nature, both Latgalians and Latvians emphasized its original history, way of living, folklore, and national awareness of Latgale's people. The gradual emergence of interest in Latgale can be observed by researching publications on Latgale and Latgalians in Latvian periodicals.

Looking at the most popular periodicals and articles of the first decades of the 20th century which emphasized the idea of Latvian identity, we can state the gradual emergence of interest, which began in 1900, and the rapid popularization of the Latgale region, which began since 1907. In the period from 1900 to 1905, Latgale was mentioned exclusively in the context of considering the aspects of Latvia's historic development emphasizing the peculiar features of Latgale's (Inflanty's) development. At that time, Latgalians were called Inflatians or the Vitebsk governorate Latvians. For example, in 1901 two periodicals, *Balss* and *Baltijas Vēstnesis* published an article "About the Strength of Latvian People at Ancient Times" (*Par Latviešu tautas spēku senākos laikos*) in which Latgale was mentioned as a place where the Russian power and Russian culture were most vividly revealed in the 11th century as there were two Russian fortresses in Koknese and Jersika.

Since 1905, more extensive reviews of not only the historical development of Latgale, but also its present development, which emphasized Latgale's cultural and economic backwardness, appeared. For example, the article "One More Word in the Case of Inflatians" (*Vēl kāds vārds inflantiešu lietā*) published in the newspaper *Apskats* in 1905 said that all regions where now Latvian people live belong to the same state, therefore they should have been united, but it does not happen. The Inflanty is especially separated as it is determined by its historic peculiarities. The Inflanty's backwardness is described through several paragraphs. It is mentioned that there is no active cultural life there, especially there are no

communities, associations, theatre performances, exhibitions, etc. Nothing happens in the Inflanty — people live in their villages, they do not receive any periodicals from other regions. The Inflantians live according to their ancestor's laws, and they have no idea about new research, including new things which they might need in their life. This detailed article vividly describes the features of the formation and characterization of Latgale's image in the first decades of the 20th century.

In 1907 there was a more active interest in Latgale and Latgalians; there were articles which tried to create a positive image of Latgale. Fransis Trasuns, an active Latgalian public figure, was one of the most popular culture professionals who promoted and defended Latgale. In the newspaper *Zemkopis* he regularly informed Latvian society about what happened in the Latgalian culture, economy, education, etc. He fought against the stereotype of Latgalians' and Latgale's backwardness, pointing out that Latgalians live not far from Latvia's central regions, and they share a common mentality and culture with other Latvians. F. Trasuns published his reviews in the Latgalian language which reflects the cultural peculiarity and is a vivid indicator of the regional identity. However, publications in the Latgalian language in the Latvian-speaking press caused a certain alienation of Latvia's population, as the Latgalian language has its peculiar features and it is not completely understood by the Latvians.

1908 was a significant year, as it was the time when the newspaper *Rīgas Apskats* published the article *On the Accession of Latgale to the Baltic States (Par Latgales pievienošanu Baltijai)* which discussed to which state Latgale should have been joined. The article said that, for example, the Catholic clergy believed that Latgale should be joined to Lithuania, as these lands have a common faith; the clergy were scared of Latgalians converted to Lutheran faith. The article also mentioned that there were very few educated Latgalians, the majority of them spoke Polish, and the farmers' opinion was not known:

A Latgalian is so ignorant that he cannot see further than his cleanliness; he believes completely and trusts his priest and clergy. Peasants almost do not know the Baltics, they do not know the conditions in which our farmers live, how they manage their farms, etc. A Latgalian knows Latvians as farmers, innkeepers, and traders, who he looks at with hatred, who he perceives as his devastators. (*On the Accession...*)

Since from 1911 in the Latvian periodicals there was a huge interest in Latgale. The central as well as specialized and regional periodicals published the reviews on the

region commenting on its economic, social, and cultural development paying special attention to its agriculture.

It is possible to conclude that there was a rather big interest in Latgale and Latgalians in the Latvian information environment, although, the focus was on the peculiarities of its economic and cultural development which could not be spotted on other territories inhabited by the Latvians. In the first decades of the 20th century Latvian periodicals reflected the image of Latgale which existed in the Latvian society as a “backward” part, as well as the controversial attempts to change the stereotypes of Latvian people about Latgale and Latgalians. To a great extent, the objective assessment of the cultural situation as well as the views of Latgalians on the possibility of existence and development of their culture determined such a negative and pessimistic image of Latgale. It should be noted objectively that the writing in the Latgalian language started to develop only in 1904. Before that, there were only a few works in the national Latvian language written and published. There were only rare theatre performances in Latgale. A serious awareness of literary and historical facts started only in the 1920s of the 20th century. Looking at the events in Latgale’s literature that happened over the past decades, local reviewers and critics in the 1920s of the 20th century were often rather skeptical about the possibility for further development of Latgalian literature, indicating that so far there were no great achievements. Assessing the situation from the outside and feeling the skeptical attitude of Latgalians to the preservation of their culture and identity, writers and culture specialists who wrote in the literary Latvian language, also expressed their negative attitude.

However, gradually Latgale managed to attract the attention of people from other parts of Latvia. Besides that, having taken the decision to join the newly-established State of Latvia in 1918, Latgale turned out to be related to the rest of the territory politically and economically as well as culturally. The state formed a single legislation, and introduced a single literary language. As a result, the Latgalian language acquired the status of a dialect, and the literature published in it was perceived as a peripheral phenomenon. Latvian writers started to create works where the action took place in Latgale, in this way, inviting their readers to pay more attention to this little-known region. Latgalian text referred to the Latvian periphery, to a provincial text, and therefore, it formed its own model of the world, at the same time reflecting Latgale’s regional identity.

Antons Austrīņš was one of the first Latvian writers who showed Latgale in his literary texts. He published his first short story Čiuļi in 1909, although, Latgale was only briefly mentioned in it. However, in 1915 Austrīņš published two short stories

about Latgale — *Tirgus diena Stalidzānos* and *Sirmā stunda*, where the action took place in Latgale; its people, their everyday routine, and nature were described. It is Latgale that Austriņš connected the origins of Latvian people and the idea of spiritual revival to; his short stories have an autobiographic basis. Since 1909, his first visit to Latgale, the author paid special attention to the study of this region's features; he participated in the meetings with Latgale's culture experts, collected newspaper articles on Latgale, wrote down dialect words, created a collection of Latgalian toponyms and proper names. Austriņš wrote numerous short stories about Latgale which were published in the collections *Māras zemē* and *Neievērotie*. His contemporaries had a critical attitude towards Austriņš's commitment to and idealization of Latgale, as this region in the consciousness of Latvia's people had an image of an uneducated and undeveloped province. Reviewers believed that Latgale in the works by Austriņš was too idealized; the author, for unknown reasons, had a strong attachment to this land, and they were looking for explanations for the changes in the writer's worldview (see Virza, 1930; Paegle, 1920; Sudrabkalns, 1919).

In the second decade on the 20th century other Latvian writers began to address the Latgale theme. For example, Kārlis Skalbe at the beginning of 1918 published his travel writing *No rudzupuķu zemes*, Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš showed the spiritual strength of Latgalians in his essay *Jāzeps Vaskāns* written in 1919. Ādolfs Erss, who published a short story *No burvju kausa* in 1914, wrote a lot about Latgale; he depicted Latgale in a lot of his works: *Latgales stāsti* (1926), *Vecā Latgale* (1931), *Muižnieki* (1931), *Krusts ceļmalā* (1938), and others. Erss neither idealized Latgale like Austriņš, nor admired its nature or St Māra, although his prose was filled with love towards this land. Erss was attracted to Latgale because it had ancient features remaining. Austriņš in the majority of his short stories underlined that historic changes did not influence Latgale; Erss depicted Latgale of a little bit later period, and he could already see the changes which he did not like. Therefore, in the foreground there were those features of Latgale which had preserved since ancient times. Erss paid attention to unusual, magical phenomena, therefore he was attracted to Latgalian castles and estates, in the depiction of which the features typical to Edgar Poe's prose appeared – mysticism and mystery which nevertheless were based on realistic and precise descriptions.

The position of a narrator to a large extent determines the similarity of Latgale's images created by Latvian authors (Austriņš, Erss, Skalbe, Jaunsudrabiņš, etc.). For these writers, Latgale is a beloved, though a foreign, land. This fact directly influences the narrative perspective — an observation from the outside. In Austriņš's works it is also shown in terms of the plot — a large number of

his plots are based on the description of travelling. Therefore, the discovery of Latgale's special nature is mainly based on visual material and things experienced during travelling. No matter how much Latvian writers would like to understand all Latgale's features, it is still impossible, as they remain strangers to this land. It also determines the importance of the category of mysteriousness in Latgale's descriptions by Latvian writers. These writers often looked at Latgale from the viewpoint of travellers, or guests, which is why Latgale's highlighted features are similar: a cult of Catholicism, an idea of preservation of ancient values, mysteriousness of Latgale's nature, etc.

In the first decades of the 20th century, local Latgalian authors Francis Kemps, Francis Trasuns, Andriivs Jūrdžs, etc. also clearly emphasized the Latgalian theme in their works. As compared with Latvian writers, Latgalian authors have some peculiarities in the perception of Latgale, which are related to the opposite prospect of narration — an observation from inside. It is noteworthy that, despite the special commitment to the study of the region's cultural and historical features, there was no single image of Latgale in the early 20th century fiction literature, especially in the prose, as the features of the region which, when looking at the known and familiar things remain unchanged, were not really emphasized. That time Latgalian short fiction focused on the creation of an interesting plot and intense action. A relatively low level of quality of this literature also should be taken into account, as this was an initial stage of the development of Latgale's literature. These two factors determined that there was a minimal number of descriptions of Latgale and peculiarities of its environment in the prose by Latgalian authors. However, Latgalian literature provided detailed descriptions of everyday life, and emphasized the everyday realia of Latgale's people; at the same time, works written in the Latgalian language reflect the peculiar features of the language structure and lexical-semantic peculiarities, which is really significant from the viewpoint of the ethnic mentality. Latgalian authors, reflecting the everyday life of their people, reveal the mystery of this land, which, in turn, try, but cannot do the authors writing in the literary Latvian language and who have the view from the outside.

Latgale's specific features are more strongly reflected in Latgalian poetry than in the prose, as writers' patriotic feelings and their desire to emphasize Latgalian cultural values determined the poetics and themes of the poetry to a greater extent. They depicted the same objects which attracted the attention of Latvian authors: Latgale's Catholic churches, especially Aglona, the image of St Māra, and the nature are compared to Italy and mainly is based on the Catholic tradition which is relevant both in Latgale and Italy. The poetry by Latgale's authors emphasizes the

opportunity for achieving a spiritual harmony in Latgale, but not in any other region of Latvia.

Alberts Sprūdžs made a significant contribution to the development of Latgalian literature and the formation of the Latgalian text in Latvian and Latgalian literature. He was a Latgalian who wrote in Latvian, in this way introducing Latvian readers to the Latgalian literary tradition, which he continued, as his works are characterized by both the mentioned features of Latgalian prose of the early 20th century, and a relatively high quality of his writing style. Reviewers compare the authors who wrote about Latgale in the Latvian language with the builders of a bridge which united Latgale with the rest of Latvia (Kraujiņš).

Travelogue as a Technique for Describing a Regional Identity: External and Internal Examples of Identification

It is accepted to distinguish between external and internal identification in the research into a regional identity. External identification is the definition and description of a regional identity from the outside, from the viewpoint which does not belong to a particular region. We speak about internal identification when we analyse the peculiar features of the region which have been determined by the residents of this region. In fact, both forms of identification interact and form a common understanding about the identity of a region in society.

Travelogue is one of the most widely-spread techniques applied by Latvian and Latgalian authors when they tried to describe peculiarities of the regional identity in the first decades of the 20th century. Such descriptions also have certain features of documentary, as the authors mainly relied on their personal observations while travelling around Latgale. Although they also assigned their texts certain features of fiction in order to make the material more exciting, and in this way to attract more readers' attention. In order to create a more complete picture of attempts to define Latgale's national identity, it seems reasonable to compare two texts that introduce examples of both external and internal identification. Antons Austrīņš's collection of short stories *Māras zemē* (1919) written in the Latvian literary language is one of the brightest examples of external identification. The book *Ceļojums pa Latgolu* (1924) by a Latgalian writer Kristops Brems (real name Nikodems Rancāns) exemplifies an attempt at internal identification. It should be noted that in the early 20th century, descriptions of travelling were a popular genre in the Latvian literature, but they mainly described travelling to other countries — Italy, France, or Russia. The mentioned works about Latgale, from the point of view of the theme, are significantly different from the descriptions of travelling that dominated at that time,

as they depicted one of the regions of Latvia.

In Austriņš's collection of short stories *Māras zemē*, the described journey is divided into a few stages (one story usually describes one or two stages); they do not have a single special aim, the described objects change — a temple, people, a birch, a lake, etc. The journey does not create a main line of narrative, it is only a way which helps you observe; the main thing is the objects and the spaces that the narrator visits to get an idea about the life in Latgale and understand its secrets. A mystery and mysteriousness are one of the most significant categories in Austriņš's *Māras zemē*. The journey allows the main character to explore and learn as much as possible, thus approaching the disclosure of the mystery. The main character is interested in everything, but only particular objects give food for reflection, and lead to revelation. Travel descriptions are mythologized. The character usually goes on a trip by boat, small parts of the journey he makes on foot, thus, having the opportunity to make his way more interesting. Then again, he travels by boat, which he gets for free from fishermen, or mowers, who need to swim to mow the grass on another meadow. At the same time, as soon as travellers begin to worry that they will not make it on time, or that they will not find transport, or they will not meet the person who can tell them the way, suddenly there is an unexpected solution to the situation, and no one remains disappointed. From time to time, the inexperienced traveller gets scared of the proximity of nature, then he feels sadness and thinks of eternal loneliness, but these feelings and thoughts soon go away with the change of the situation.

The idea of the search for an individual spiritual harmony by the main character is realized in the semantics of the journey. A new space — Latgale — denotes a new stage in the development of the character, receiving a new experience that harmonizes his personality. The journey through Latgale in the life of the main character symbolizes the way out of a deadlock, and he projects his experience to the people, in this way promoting Latgale as a symbol of spiritual awakening of the people and the humanity. During the journey, the main character tries to gain a unique experience, something that is peculiar only to Latgalians. It means to learn the secret of Latgale, because, in this ethnic and unique experience he tries to find universal values common to all people.

Brems in the preface, which is an integral part of the collection, provides a detailed description of the background and reasons of the journey. He does not emphasize a didactic function of his work. However, he openly describes an everyday situation, when a narrator hosts guests from various countries and they tell exciting stories, whereas the narrator himself is not a traveller, and he can only listen. The

preface is written in the form of a conversation, which attaches the narrative with an illusion of intimacy and truthfulness. The description open to everyday routine makes the text clear and close, as a result, a reader feels like a trusted person of the narrator, his contemporary, neighbor or even friend. Further, in the description of the journey two forms of narration are used — letters to the wife and the traveller's notes, which sustain the intimacy previously attached to the text. Brems abundantly uses colloquial words and expressions; a certain naivety and truthful, undisclosed emotionality are typical of the narrator, which, in general, creates the presence effect and the impression of reality, even when it comes to wonderful and fabulous events. The narrator's route is random, he does not have a specific purpose. The most important thing are the people and realia he meets on his way. The places visited and mentioned in the text are largely invented and they are often described in a grotesque way. Unlike the journey described by Austriņš, Brems's journey did not happen in reality, it was made up with the intention to educate and teach peasants, and to satirize vices and to praise virtues of that time. The journey here is simply a well-chosen form of literary work, but not the purpose of the description. In both Austriņš and Brems's opinion, Catholicism and Latgale are one whole, they are inseparable. The name of Austriņš's collection perfectly confirms this idea, as there is a significant influence of the Christian Virgin Mary, whose cult is especially important for Catholics in Latgale's Māra.

The book *Ceļojums pa Latgolu* published by Brems in 1924 offers its readers to immerse themselves in the essential nature of Latgale's life and mentality by means of an intense and interesting plot. As Ilona Salceviča accurately characterizes this work:

The book includes 10 moralizing, even didactic pieces of short fiction written in the rich, vivid, and lively folk language. In the form of grateful travel essays, it describes the pictures from the life in Latgalian villages and provincial towns, highlights and satirizes vices — alcoholism, laziness, stupidity, ignorance, garrulity, gossip, slander, etc. Kristops Brems travels around Latgale, and everything he experiences is expressed in his essays and letters to his wife. His observant eye notices both the good and the bad. (Salceviča 34)

Latgalian literature reflects those peculiar features of Latgale which Latvian authors did not have a chance to discover, especially, details of everyday life. If Latvian writers turn to descriptions of external things, Latgalian authors better perceive the everyday life of their people. Moreover, works written in the Latgalian language

reflect the structural peculiarities of the language and its lexical-semantic specific nature, which is really significant in terms of ethnic mentality.

The perception of Catholicism also determined the perspective of the narrator's view. Despite the fact that both *Austriņš* and *Brems* find Catholicism is an integral peculiar feature of *Latgale*, and a sincere faith characteristic of the *Latgalians*, *Austriņš* notices and emphasizes only the external manifestations of Catholicism, although *Brems* draws attention to the certain attitudes of Catholicism towards ethics and morality. The land of *Māra* attracts *Austriņš*'s traveller *Konrads Krenklis* with its mysteriousness, one of the reasons for which lies in Catholicism. The main character tries to grasp the essence of Catholicism mainly by visiting churches. According to the stories the narrator used to listen to in his childhood, a Catholic church has an amazing power. The Catholic Church has an ambivalent image — it both attracts and repels the main character. The unity of material and spiritual is an important feature of the image of the temple. *Latgale*'s people manage to organically combine the spiritual and material spheres; they are both an integral part of their lives. The fact that markets are organized around churches is the evidence for this; on holidays, leaving their houses, the *Latgalians* follow two inseparable purposes — to pray to God and to do the shopping (*Austriņš* 7). In the mind of the main character, it is impossible to imagine *Latgale* without its Catholic churches which add to it a special character. *Latgale*'s people have an exaggerated faith, which *Krenklis* is ironic about, nevertheless, he is attracted to a Catholic church, which he, not being Catholic, finds exotic: *Krenklis*, being an educated man with a keen mind, can critically assess the influence of the Catholic Church in *Latgale*. However, he has a susceptible perception and sensuality of a romantic hero. The search for *Latgale*'s mystery to a large extent is connected with the search for the main character's spirituality, peace, and harmony. Thus, we can explain his affection for the church — to its ornate vanity, a loving cult of *Māra*, and spirituality. The image of *Māra*, which has a special meaning in *Austriņš*'s *Latgalian* text, attracts *Krenklis* to the Catholic Church: *St Māra* is a symbol of *Latgale*, and at the same time, it is a symbol of the renewal of spirituality. The image of *Māra* attracts the main character most of all, and it personifies *Latgale*'s mystery. The image of *Māra* combines the Christian and barbaric, and this synthesis is projected on the whole *Latgalian* space.

A Catholic church is not always included in the general idyllic description of *Latgale*. *Krenklis*'s observations at a church often make a dissonance with his childhood memories of his father's tales. In his memories, the church seemed to be a miracle, which is perceived as an image from a fairy tale that beckons the main character. Having attended the church, he changed his ideas dramatically, he

is scared of both the external and internal space of the church. Even Christ's image causes terror but not piety. He is attracted only to St Māra and the procession.

The structure of the society and status of all levels of the society can be seen at the church, as all Latgalians come to celebrate the festival. In general, people do not have any individual features, they make a crowd which mechanically, blindly perform a liturgical ritual without thinking about its nature. Only beggars and cripples stand out in this crowd.

A traveller from Vidzeme still cannot fully understand the values of Latgale's people, and therefore, the mystery of Latgale remains undiscovered. Watching people at the church, where it would be possible to go deeper into their spiritual space, Krenklis does not understand their behaviour, and their feelings remain unclear to him. In the last short story of the collection *Viena diena klānos*, Austriņš asks: "Where does this magic power of Latgale come from, and what is really this long-suffering land? Neither the soaked road, nor the yellowing birch, nor even my quiet companion, who, maybe, solved this mystery, but did not give me the answer" (Austriņš 112). Latgale's mystery is its special image which is made of Catholic churches, lakes, autumn leaves, people, etc.

Not only churches, their decoration, behaviour of parishioners, celebration of religious holidays reflect the importance of Catholicism for Latgale. Latgale's everyday life also emphasizes it, for example, a Catholic tradition is clearly observed in the decoration of the house. Not far from the house there is a cross or a chapel; in the house, there is a corner with icons; on the doors, you can often see the inscription +K+M+B, made with the chalk consecrated on the Three Kings' Day. The traveller from Vidzeme is explained that all these attributes are necessary as real Catholics live here. Although, Krenklis has an ambiguous attitude to Catholicism, as in many of its manifestations he sees the stiffness and ignorance, the attributes of Catholicism still mesmerize him, because he considers the image of St Māra to be the symbol and guardian of Latgale.

Brems's narrator is a Latgalian, a Catholic; in addition, he is a man of faith with high standards of ethics and morality. These features determine the reflection of Catholicism in *Ceļojumā pa Latgolu*. This work mentions no other confessions, their churches, or adherents — Latgale here is only Catholic. Unlike Austriņš's narrator, Brems's traveller absolutely does not see any negative manifestations in Catholicism, since the author of the work, Brems, is an educated priest whose goal is to educate people in the faith in God, in real morality and ethics. It is significant that in the first story the narrator faces a positive Catholic feature of Latgale, which he praises, and which he is openly happy about. In other stories, the narrator refers

to satirizing of various negative features of people. In the narrator's opinion, the lack of faith in God and irregular church attendance are the reasons for many ethical and moral problems. This idea is realized in a lot of stories. The story *X... draudzēs bazneica* describes a neglected church which is unpleasant to be inside. During the service, the priest asks people for help to clean and repair the church of the parish, but everyone has their own reason why it cannot be done. In order to more completely describe the situation Brems, describing the people's behaviour in the church, uses grotesque, which causes irritation. In this way, the author connects the inability of people to behave decently in the church (or in any other public place), their laziness and lack of faith, their unwillingness to listen to what the priest said and think about the meaning of life. According to the author, only a believer who regularly attends church can be truly virtuous. The whole story is devoted to the poor who beg at the Church. They deceive other people, they are lazy, and they are not ashamed of being near a sacred place. After the service, the beggars go straight to the pub, they no longer look crippled or miserable, and they have a good time. The narrator points out that he saw such beggars only in one community, thus indicating that moral people, nevertheless, predominate in Latgale.

During the journey, the narrator meets people with different vices — lazy-bones, beggars, drunkards, fools, etc. They have one feature in common — the lack of faith in God, as a true believer is a virtuous person. Virtue and sin in the conceptual structure of the world are opposed as the fight between God and Devil which breaks out in the soul of every person.

Austrīņš and Brems describe Latgale in different ways emphasizing different peculiar features. Austrīņš finds it important to grasp the nature of Latgale. He strives to do it by observing types of people, way of living, peculiarities of nature, customs, including religious rituals. Brems pays more attention to religion judging people depending on whether they are true believers and virtuous. Not only the fact that one of the writers represents the view from the outside (external identification), and the other one defines the characteristic features of his region (internal identification) influences the difference of opinions of these two authors. Both the purpose of the writing and details of the author's biographies are also important. Austrīņš was a writer whose fate forced him to be a fugitive, and he found shelter in Latgale at that difficult time, so his vision of Latgale, mainly, inherent positive features; it is perceived as the land of spiritual awakening, as it preserved the ancient values. K. Brems was a priest, whose goal was to educate society, therefore, Catholicism and morals of people which are cultivated in the church are in the center of his attention. Despite the differences in their opinions, both authors create an image of Latgale in

the society of that time. They begin attempts to identify Latgale's identity by means of a literary text, and the image of Latgale created by them laid the foundation for the understanding of the identity's features of this region which has preserved up to the present time.

Conclusion

There has been a significant increase in interest in regional and local cultures as well as theoretical aspects of regional research during the last 20 years. Origins of regions can be found in the past. In the context of Latvia, we can speak about the development of regions and their relations with the national government starting from 1918, when the independent state of Latvia was established. However, the prerequisites for the development of regions and regional identity were formed much earlier. The regions which later joined the Latvian state had had different cultural and historical development for many centuries. Peculiarities of regional development are especially clearly visible in Latgale, which, in the researchers' opinion, has the expressed ethnic character of its own. In the minds of people, this region is special and it is different from other areas of Latvia, in terms of cultural and religious contexts, as well as in the context of perception of nature and human mentality.

Looking at the most popular newspapers and magazines of the first decades of the 20th century which published news about Latgale, it is possible to conclude that the interest of Latvia's people in this region increased significantly since 1905. Periodicals emphasized the peculiar features of the economic and cultural development of this region which could not be observed on other territories inhabited by Latvians. Latgale was reflected as "backward" in terms of cultural and economic development.

The public interest in Latgale as well as the significance of national-patriotic ideas in the early 20th century and the Latgale's Awakening created the situation when both Latgalian (Kemps, Trasuns, Jūrdžs, etc.) and Latvian authors (Austriņš, Erss, Skalbe, Jaunsudrabuņš) turned to the description of the Latgale region. Latgale writers have certain peculiarities in the perception of Latgale that are related to the view from the inside, which determines the content and evaluation aspect, for example, the literature written in the Latgalian language gives a comprehensive description of everyday life details, emphasizes the daily life of people; at the same time, works written in the Latgalian language reflect the structural features of the language and its lexical and semantic peculiarity. Nevertheless, these works to a much lesser extent formed the ideas of Latgale in the Latvian society than the works written in the Latvian literary language, as they were not widely known to

readers. For the writers who wrote in the Latvian literary language, Latgale was an extremely beloved, although a foreign land. Therefore, the discovery of Latgale's special nature is mainly based on visual material and the experience gained during the travelling. No matter how hard Latvian writers wanted to dive into the Latgalian identity, to grasp all its features, it is still impossible, as they remain foreigners for this land. It also determines the importance of the category of mysteriousness in Latgale's descriptions by Latvian authors. These writers often looked at Latgale from the perspective of a traveler, or a guest, therefore, the highlighted features of Latgale are the same: the cult of Catholicism, the idea of preserving of ancient values, the beauty and mystery of Latgale's nature, the peculiarities of the people's nature and behavior, the flair of the Latgalian language, the peculiarities of historical development. Unlike the negative image of Latgale which dominated in periodicals, fictional literature showed a much more positive image of Latgale: it is the land where spiritual awakening is possible, whose people have a great inner strength, and which attracts with the beauty of its nature. The above-mentioned features of Latgale's regional identity, which are emphasized in literary text, though also represent the individual author's model of the world, at the same time reflect both the social position of the time when these works were written, as well as form ideas about Latgale in the minds of people up to the present day.

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Post-symbolist Irony on the Latvian Stage: The Staging of Van Charles Lerberghe's *Pan* and Maurice Maeterlinck's *Le Miracle de saint Antoine*

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Abstract The construction of the Latvian literary space follows many paths; one of the most important of which is the translation of quality literary works into Latvian. Being both the linguistic creation exercise that shapes the literal language and the source of literary culture and inspiration, the reception of works, especially when they are represented on stage, provokes not only literary controversies but also questions the societal order. The study of the staging of van Lerberghe's *Pan* and Maeterlinck's *Le Miracle de saint Antoine* of the 1920s aims to identify and analyze the change of reception of two authors in the Latvian cultural arena.

Key words Van Lerberghe; Pan; Maeterlinck; Le Miracle de saint Antoine; Latvia; irony; symbolism

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Introduction

A translation that offers the reading of foreign literature is not only a work of language, but also a transmission of culture that forms a new system of taste. The job for the translator, the publisher, or the director, when examining theater, would be to maximize the benefits of these translations by referring to Pierre Bourdieu's sociology of culture including the economic capital or the symbolic capital, whose reali-

zation forms two sets of translations: safe values (translation of recognized classics and contemporaries) and literary novelties.¹ The latter is rather risky, but the desire to perceive non-crystallized values that generate noisy discussions and controversial opinions or embarrassments, both in content and form, carries a potential truth of the literary future, which is why this one is even more attractive for the main actors of this transmission exercise.

Five years after the acquisition of state independence of Latvia in 1918, during the 1923 season, the National Theater staged 270 performances among which included 21 original pieces and 15 translations (Anonymous 11). Although the theater pursued national strategies, it declared its second cornerstone to be classic tragedy and comedy, citing such writers as Shakespeare, Moliere, Gozzi, Goldoni, Byron, Holberg, Schiller, and Goethe (Anonymous 13). It should be noted, however, that the theater also directed contemporary foreign plays of the time. After national independence, other theaters in Latvia engaged in the same strategy. In order to accumulate symbolic capital, the interaction of literary, linguistic, and cultural translation takes place, and the product interpreted by the director materializes as the translated text in another language and in another cultural environment. The case of the comical pieces *Le Miracle de saint Antoine* by Maeterlinck and *Pan* by Van Lerberghe, staged in Latvia respectively in 1920 and 1925, is special because the two authors in the 1920s enjoyed a fame acquired by their symbolist works which did not contribute to the understanding of the irony of these, but perplexed both critics and the spectators.

As for Maeterlinck's piece, note that the Latvian public's understanding? Interpretation? waiting horizon² was determined not only by the reputation forged of symbolism but also, by one of Flaubert's works, one of the key works of symbolism, a prototype of dream literature (Müller-Ebeling 18), namely *Le Tentation de saint Antoine*. It was accessible to Latvian readers at the end of the 19th century in

1 On the importance of translations see the article by Jean-Marc Gouanvic, "Les enjeux de la traduction dans le champ littéraire," *Palimpsestes* [En ligne], 11 | 1998, mis en ligne le 30 septembre 2013, consulté le 17 août 2018. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/palimpsestes/1531> ; DOI : 10.4000/palimpsestes.1531

2 The horizon of expectation is a concept of Hans Robert Jauss that he thus formulates: "the system of objectively formulated references which, for each work at the moment of the history in which it appears, results from three main factors: prior experience that the public has of the kind of which it comes, the form and the theme of previous works of which it presupposes the knowledge, and the opposition between poetic language and practical language, imaginary world and daily reality." In Jauss, Hans Robert, *Pour une esthétique de la réception* (Trad. de l'allemand par Claude Maillard, Préface de Jean Starobinskii Paris, Gallimard, 1990) 49.

Russian¹ and German² translations, before being released in Latvian in 1924. The Latvian translation by the Francophile by the name of Edvarts Virza³ came out, in fact, four years after the staging of *Le Miracle de saint Antoine* whose reception is included in our field of research. Latvian critics congratulate the translation of Flaubert's work and formulate the crucial point of it: "the conflict between religious thought and the voice of flesh" (Sūna 439). *Saint Antoine* by Maeterlinck moves away from the flesh to the body⁴ in the light of a theology of incarnation, the body designating the human condition, the only way to be present in this world. The incarnation implies corporal finitude and raises questions about death and fear, which is reminiscent of the "theater of anguish" initiated in 1889 by Van Lerberghe's *Les Fleureurs (The Trackers)* and Maeterlinck's *L'Intruse (Intruder)*. The body with its nakedness is at the center of Van Lerberghe's *Pan*. The piece is dedicated to Camille Lemonnier (1844–1913) naturalist master of Belgian literature, who writes *a posteriori*:

Pan is a drama of ideas rather than facts, a drama as one might imagine a Bjoensterne-Bjornson. It seems that in realizing it the poet wanted to remain close to the deep sources of being that so deliciously illuminate *La Chanson d'Ève*⁵. We feel it, this time again, taken back to the origins, to the exaltation of the beautiful virgin instinct, and it is, through a force where the same comical feeling is revealed as that of Maeterlinck in his *Saint Antoine*, I to mean a mixture of ancient myth and Flemish buffoonery, the praise of the bare and

1 Flaubert Gustave [Флобер Гюстав], *Искушение пустытника [Iskouchenie poustyynnika]* [litt. La Tentation d'un ermite] [*La Tentation de saint Antoine (1874)*] langue : russe, trad. S. P. Yakoubovitch, Moskva [Moscou], Russie, L. F. Sneguiryov i N. V. Marakouev, 1879.

2 Flaubert, Gustave. *Die Versuchung des heil. [heiligen] Antonius*. Aus dem Französischen mit einem Vorwort und erläuterten Anmerkungen von Dr. Bernhard Endrulat. Strasbourg: Wolff, 1874.

3 The work is published in French in 1874, in Latvian in 1924: Gustavs Flobērs. Svētā Antonija kārdināšana, tulk. Ed. Virza. Rīga: Leta, 1924.

4 This change is legitimate, because as noted by Fabrice Van de Kerckhove, Maeterlinck deceives the viewer from the beginning: "Maeterlinck has fun deceiving expectations [...] it is another Antoine that is Antoine de Padua, dear to the 'humble' more than to the literati. And the genre chosen is not that of miracle or mystery, but the equally medieval one of farce." Kerckhove, Fabrice Van de, "Le Rire de Maeterlinck" in Maeterlinck, Maurice, *Le Miracle de saint Antoine* (Bruxelles: Editions Labor, 1991) 58.

5 *The Song of Eve (La Chanson d'Ève)* is the collection of poetry of symbolic inspiration by Charles van Lerberghe published in 1904.

initial soul among the conflict of morals and theologies. (Lemonnier 263)

During the Symbolist period, in search of new sources of inspiration, Maeterlinck and Van Lerberghe were passionate about Pre-Raphaelite paintings, “eager to stand out from French influences, judged to be so contrary to this Flemish temperament that they wish to put forward” (Brogniez). Thus, for their comic pieces, they followed the Flemish tradition and also drew on “the soul all naked and initial” which was in line with the Latvians’ search of their national and literary individuality.¹ Based on these deep sources, was the comedy of Maeterlinck and Van Lerberghe striking for the Latvian viewer? How is social satire supported by irony received in a cultural area that is not his, and in what way is meaning built? In this perspective, I will examine the change of reception of the work of two authors produced by the staging of *Le Miracle de saint Antoine* and *Pan*.

Latvian Literary Context

Latvian literature, whose beginnings date back to the 17th century, encouraged by national awakening, accelerated its development in the second half of the 19th century and made remarkable progress in literary evolution. This ongoing process of the formation of a Latvian literary and cultural space was one of the essential factors leading to the proclamation of an independent national state after the First World War. Although the inclusion of Latvian territory in the Russian Empire and the political and economic domination of the German nobility before state independence had created a number of restrictions, particularly with regard to linguistic usage, this situation nevertheless opened the way two important cultural spaces, and through them, also allowed access to the achievements of other cultures. Indeed, translations and adaptations abounded.

The new Latvian nation was dynamic and curious; young intellectuals traveled to study at foreign universities and gained important cultural experiences. At the turn of the century, the quest for a literary identity tended to transcend the boundaries of the two cultural areas, which was stimulated not only by discontent with the dominant power, but also by the search for a broader perspective. Thus, Edvards Virza, whose literary activity begins with erotic poetry of symbolic inspiration

1 Latvian literary mythology emerges from the folklore that supplies the material to the literary Andrejs Pumpurs for the creation of the epic *Lāčplēsis* reflecting the struggle of the pagan hero against the conquerors and the Christian bearers and also marks the opposite of the mystical knowledge and Christianity institutionalized and hypocritical. This epic was written between 1872 and 1887 and published in 1888. *Lāčplēsis* is considered a national epic. His motifs are repeated in Latvian literature, in the fine arts and in music. *Lāčplēsis* has been published 17 times.

Biķeris (*The Chalice*, 1908)¹, and who is also an important translator of French poetry² in a pathos that is undoubtedly slightly hyperbolized, testifies to the need for new horizons:

All that we have been able to take to the Germans in art, public opinion and other cultural fields, we have already taken. Guarantees and commitments for the future development of our people consist only in seeking to free us from these impressions. What we have to return to and whose culture is inexhaustible to us is France. (Virza 267)

Nevertheless, the Russian cultural and literary space seems more attractive because it opens up more to other cultures, particularly to French and Belgian symbolism, and thus this intermediary literary reception contributes to the development of Latvian modernism.

The diversity of translated literature and the development of Latvian literature is favored by the high level of education of the population. Thus, the report of the Latvian Delegation to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference states:

[...] among Latvians there is a very rich original literature and many classical translations. There are no illiterates among Latvians. [...] There is a secondary school in Latvia for 26,000 inhabitants and in Germany there is a secondary school for 51,000 inhabitants.³

1 The collection of poems was published in 1908 and aroused a sharp criticism for the daring to reflect nudity, passion and intimate relationships, as well as the appreciation of talent, certainly, still immature, as retrospectively recognizes the literary Latvian Viktors Eglītis in the criticism of the third book of poetry Virza *The era and the read* (*Laikmets un lira*, 1923). V. Eg. [Viktors Eglītis], Edvarta Virzas dzejas, Latvijas Kareivja Literariskais pielikums, Nr. 44 (04.11.1923.): 8. sk. 18.07.2018. https://periodika.lndb.lv/periodika2-viewer/view/index-dev.html?lang=fr#issue:/p_001_iklp1923n44|issueType:P

2 Virza brilliantly translates the poems of the French authors, these translations are published in two collections *French Lyric Poetry of the 19th Century* (*Franču lirika XIX gs.*, 1921), *French Lyric Renaissance Poetry* (*Franču renesanses lirika*, 1930).

3 Memorandums par Latviju, *Valdības Vēstnesis* 1 (1919): 4. Sk. 18.07.2018. https://periodika.lndb.lv/periodika2-viewer/view/index-dev.html?lang=fr#issue:/p_001_wawe1919n001|issueType:P Before the First World War, there were 2.55 million people in Latvia and 1.6 million in 1920. In 1925, after the return of refugees, the population of Latvia reached 1.85 million, but in 1935, this number reached 1.95 million. Tautības un etniskās grupas 1918-1940, Iedzīvotāji, "Tilides Datorenciklopēdija Latvijas Vēsture" © Tilde, 1998-2012.

Latvian translations of the works of two Belgian authors, Maeterlinck and Van Lerberghe, appeared in the columns of the literary press at the turn of the century, during a period of 1 to 13 years after the release of the original texts.¹ The recognition of our authors is undoubtedly supported by the appreciation of the literary milieu of Paris, as in the article by Mirbeau² on Maeterlinck, and by the aura of the northern exoticism of the Belgians (Denis 106-107).

Latvian literary tastes are influenced by two major cultures: German and Russian³; however, the literary press is open to foreign currents and interested by critics of this literature, judging by the number of articles, whose translations appear in literary journals or in columns of literary sections of newspapers from the time. Russian symbolism (Valeri Briussov, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Andrei Bely, Alexander Blok, Constantin Balmont and others), inspired by French symbolism, becomes an intermediary and popularizer of texts in Latvian literary space. The symbolism of which Mallarmé expresses is captured in this reference: “to suggest, here is the dream,” and it is a challenge, for the Latvian literary language for the tradition is relatively recent and new. The translations of exquisite analogies, transfer of one cultural area to the second, is not an easy task, but it opens up an infinite space of literary creation, which extends beyond the rational, and that is why, for Latvian writers, this is even more interesting, not only in terms of lexical creation and innovative syntactic, but also from the point of view of the exploration of literary creativity and an expanding worldview.

In Latvia, there is not a consolidated symbolic current, so it is important to only mention certain authors who temporarily turned to symbolism during their literary career.⁴ Certainly, there are common trends, but the absence of unity is not

1 The only exception is Maeterlinck's play *The Blue Bird* (*L'Oiseau bleu*) because the play is translated from Russian and published a year before the French publication. For translations of Maeterlinck's pieces see Valke, Simona Sofija, “Maurice Maeterlinck dans la réception lettone.” Simona Sofija (sast.). *Morisa Māterlinka ideju transfēr /Transfert d'idees de Maurice Maeterlinck* (bilingvāls zinātnisku rakstu krājums/recueil bilingue d'articles scientifiques. Rīga: Zinātne, 2014) 66.

2 Mirbeau, Octave. “Maurice Maeterlinck.” *Le Figaro*, (1889). <http://www.scribd.com/doc/7617742/Octave-Mirbeau-Maurice-Maeterlinck-> [sk. 09.08.2018.].

3 The territory of Latvia is part of the Russian Empire, but the German-Baltic nobility retains a notable influence, not only economically and politically, but also as a cultural bearer.

4 We can cite the collection of poems already mentioned *The Chalice* (*Biķeris*, 1908), the novel by Haralds Eldgasts *Starry nights: the Story of a Soul* (*Zvaigžņotās naktis: kādas dvēseles stāsts*, 1905), the poem of Rainis *Ave Sol!* (1910). On Latvian symbolism see chapter “Symbolisms” in Tabūns, Bronislavs, *Modernisma virzieni latviešu literatūrā*, Rīga: Zinātne, 2008: 37-47.

surprising because French and Belgian writers take the same path, as noted by Paul Aron: “Most writers who claim it are never granted a common literary position, an aesthetic, or technical choices” (Aron 19).

In the press at the turn of century, the translations of the pieces, poems, and essays of Maeterlinck were published along with surveys and articles covering his work. Van Lerberghe, who did not possess the brilliant aura of Maeterlinck, rarely appeared in the press—the translations of his works were published, but there are no articles evaluating his contribution; he is only mentioned in global overviews.

From Symbolism to Irony

The contemporaries Van Lerberghe and Maeterlinck, who have friendly relations and a literary proximity, were born in Ghent, and, at the age of adolescence, attend the Jesuit college of St. Barbara with an interest in literature and its current trends.

In the 1890s, Van Lerberghe wrote the drama *Les Flaireurs* (1889) and, a little later Maeterlinck wrote his drama *L’Intruse* (1890). The two pieces have interesting similarities in this period before death as a sign of human vulnerability. Van Lerberghe is even criticized for his plagiarism which Maeterlinck refutes publicly. The Latvian reader did not miss the similarities between the two stories if he read the story of Van Lerberghe *Sélection surnaturelle* (*Supernatural Selection*, 1905) translated by A.A. in 1911. The footnote of the translation highlights the similarity already mentioned and sketch a short biography of the Belgian writer (Van Lerbergs 113-114).

The importance of Flaubert’s *Le Tentation de saint Antoine* to Van Lerberghe’s eyes reveals a letter, which he wrote in 1893 with vague dates:

Maeterlinck told me one day that he wanted to move away from symbolism to get closer to reality and to make ‘life’. I know he is happily unable to do it, and I told him I was enjoying it. It is always a little for the bourgeois that one writes *Madame Bovary* or *L’Éducation sentimentale*. There will always be enough of these books, while the *Tentation de saint Antoine* of the *Légende de Saint Julien hospitalier* are rare. These books are obviously written for poets. And we are poets, is not that your opinion? (Van Lerberghe 57)

Symbolism, including painting, focuses on the past, myth, religion and the spiritual world, and its instrument of the afterlife is mainly poetry, but it is also present in theater and prose, which translate through symbols the revelations of transcendent reality.

The vertical analogies that Charles Baudelaire describes in *Correspondances* (1857) verbally creates complex images that, according to Stéphane Mallarmé, should not say, but suggest Sense production also explodes in the sound of the text, creating an unexpected mix of music, creating a mood and suppressing the routine of words, accentuating the possibility of simultaneous polysemy and connotations. In the movement of the hereafter, a religious note echoes, where corporeal reality and the material world are exposed to the spiritual space. In the symbolic theater of Maeterlinck, human bodies tend to fade, leaving puppets carrying ideas and senses in their place.

One of his books is titled *Three Little Puppetry Dramas* (*Aladine et Palomides, Intérieur* and *La Mort de Tintagiles*, 1894), but this is also characteristic of Van Lerberghe, because his drama *Les Fleureurs* is dramas for puppets (Otten 315). The disembodiment of the dramatic characters, the literary phenomenon entering the final phase, fades away gradually as the characters become more carnal, but the tendency to the transcendental world is preserved.

In addition, at the turn of the century, innovative symbolism techniques became obsolete and transformed into parodied material, including characters disembodied from symbolism. At the publication of Maeterlinck's *Le Miracle de saint Antoine*, which the author defines as a farce, the perception of his symbolic work changes, leading to a divided vision of the totality of the seriousness of certain symbolic poetic techniques and a different reading. One example is the disembodiment produced by the repetition of words, their semantic exhaustion, when they lose their meaning in the monotonous sonority, preserving only the function of maintaining communication.

The authors themselves also turn to a down-to-earth reflection, experimenting with the intrusion of the transcendent reality (mythical) on a daily basis, to specify — the intrusion of Greek and Christian mythical reality, but the same transcendent reality. It has become tangible, and it is no longer the third invisible figure of Maeterlinck.

To bodies in flesh are added the words in flesh bringing the everyday, clarifying contextually the meaning of words and attributing to communication another dimension of the beyond, which is no longer perceptible intuitively. As it was in the text of the symbolism with its rich range of polysemy, connotations, and allusions, but intellectually — intellectually and through the comic prism. The mechanism of the comic, which foresees the distancing of reality, to set in motion another point of view distinct from the norm, is akin to the distance of outmoded literary phenomena. I want to emphasize that this is the situational irony, based on the hierarchy of

values intrinsic to the time and culture.

Situational Irony

In these two pieces, the tool for overcoming bourgeois dogma is irony. In the irony that “not only does reading give meaning to a second degree, but this second degree is indispensable to avoid misguidance of understanding” (Hellégouarc’h 69). In this case, the object of interest is the phenomenon of imitation and the ironic distance of the source text or, in this case of social criticism, along with the ironic vision of particular groups in society.

Maeterlinck announces *The Miracle of St. Anthony* as a farce and thereby refutes another interpretation of genre, that of the miracle, which is what one would expect from the title of the play. Therefore, the miracle here is an extraordinary fact, attributed to the divine intervention and not a genre of medieval theater. The kind of farce whose plot is generally based on deception, evolved considerably during the 17th century thanks to the introduction of dell’arte elements in the mechanism of the piece. One of these elements is the misunderstanding or simply a misunderstanding when someone is taken as someone else.

The plot of *The Miracle of St. Anthony* is quite simple. On the day of the funeral, the saint arrives in a prosperous middle-class house in Flanders belonging to the dead Miss Hortense whose mortal remains are still at home. The old servant Virginia believes in the true sanctity of Antony and consents to his intention to resuscitate the deceased, even if she should give up 3,300 francs, the amount that the mistress bequeathed to her. At this moment, the holy halo is illuminated, and this is repeated whenever something good happens. Another attitude is adopted by Miss Hortense’s family, the nephews, M. Gustave and M. Achille, and the maître-d’hôtel, Joseph, try to get rid of the saint, and two other characters, Cure and the Doctor, also participate in this deterrence. However, they do not succeed in diverting Saint Anthony from his intention, and in the second act, the audience witnesses St. Anthony resurrecting Miss Hortense. The doctor tries to explain it rationally. The resuscitated woman wakes up in a terrible mood and orders Virginia to chase Saint Anthony, who looks like a beggar, away because he stains his carpet with his dirty feet. So St. Anthony deprives her of speech. The family is not happy because they want to recover their aunt without flaws. Meanwhile, the gendarmes arrive to guide Saint Anthony to the police station, and one of them seems to recognize a certain madman who has repeatedly escaped from the hospital, but he is not sure. St. Anthony is taken away, Hortense dies for real, and the public is confused — was it really a maniac or a madman, or was Miss Hortense perhaps never really dead at all?

The characters are comical in their own way, and we can detect two reasons for this: first we laugh at the hypocrisy and reluctance of the rural bourgeois to deviate from the customary order — the rejection of the miracle or the reversal of values.

VIRGINIA: Miss Hortense! ... She lives! Look, she's scratching a spot of candle! ... She's looking for her glasses! ... Here they are! here they are! ... Saint Anthony! ... Saint Anthony! ... O miracle! ... Miracle! ... On your knees! ... On your knees! ...

Mr. GUSTAVE: Come on, come on, shut up! ... Do not talk nonsense, this is not the moment ...

Mr. ACHILLE: There is no need to say, she lives ...

A CONVIVE: But it's not possible! ... What did he do to her? ...

Mr. GUSTAVE: This is not serious; she will fall back ...

Mr. ACHILLE: But no, but no, I assure you ... See how she looks at us ...

Mr. GUSTAVE: I do not believe it yet ... In what world are we? ... There are no more laws ... (Maeterlinck 38)

The second comic group are the characters of St. Anthony and Virginia, the two represent the exposure of the old and poor of the world. St. Anthony is wearing dirty clothes, his feet are bare, which contrasts comically with the halo scintillating occasionally. But here, Maeterlinck's benevolent laughter is lighter than the squeaky parody of the rural bourgeoisie.

The irony of society, as an extra-textual phenomenon, as a recurring spring in comedies is similar to the well-known didactic goal of Molière: “[...] the theater has a great virtue for the correction. The most beautiful traits of a serious morality are less powerful, more often than satire [...] We want to be mean; but we do not want to be ridiculous” (Molière V). If the intention of correction is based on the shame of one's actions taken when one recognizes them publicly as amusing and ridiculous, then the derision, in turn, involving the lowering, provokes a protest because it is not only personal but also a violation of values.

The processes of the farce, the simplistic plot and the characters typified and caricatural, serve to introduce what is characteristic of the comedy register, namely, the reflection on different worldviews — the confrontation of different eras. Indeed, the intentions of St. Anthony in the world of the early 20th century are strange and incomprehensible.

The collision of two different worlds also occurs in Van Lerberghe's *Pan*, but this time it is a clash between Christian bourgeois opinions and paganism centered

on the rhythms of nature. During the creation of his masterpiece of symbolic poetry *The Song of Eve*, Van Lerberghe embarks on a different style of work; he begins to write *Pan*. At this time, in a letter dated August 8, 1903 and sent out from Bouillon in Belgium, Van Lerberghe expresses his feeling towards nature:

And you know that for me, one of the charms of the campaign is to be able to live, as far as it is humanly possible, outside of humanity that I hate. I have nothing human to say either in my verses, in my tales, or even in this play, *Pan*, remained in the state of a formless form. Therefore, nothing better than to remain in the middle of nowhere (Van Lerberghe 292).

This satirical comedy *Pan* is introduced by Plutarch's citation about Pan's death, and in the epigraph of the second act, a quote from Michelet alleges that Pan lives and reigns over the mystery of life. The action takes place in Flanders, in a shepherd's hut at the seaside. The shepherds Peter, Anna, and their daughter Paniska welcome Pan into their hut. He has been resurrected and emerges from the sea with his entourage of Gypsies. Paniska is chosen to be the bride of Pan; wearing a transparent dress, she goes with him to the orchard. In the hut of shepherds enter the religious and municipal authorities of the commune who try to drive Pan from their communal territory. Pan appears briefly in the room, at first sleeping, wrapped in a cloth that recalls both the tunic and the shroud; when he wakes up, Pan says his name. At other times, there are negotiations about the status of Pan, and about his expulsion or possible integration into the life of the commune. In the third act all these plans fail, and the piece ends with a crazy dance of the naked Paniska singing about the resurrection of Pan.

As in Maeterlinck's play, there are two groups of comic characters—naive shepherds and rural notables. In his satire, Van Leberghe opposes the spontaneity of the rites of living nature to the sclerotic regulation of bourgeois morality and the institutionalized church. The comic borrows, in some places, the form of parody as is the case in this exchange where the process is observed by the character of abbot.

THREE YOUNG GIRLS GYPSIES: [...] Hi, o our sister, O Blessed Virgin.

PANIASKA: Why do you say blessed, sisters?

THE THREE GYSPIES: Because of you / Our God / made choice.

PANISKA: And why do you weave, / In my hair, / These flowers, / Those red flowers, / My sisters?

THE THREE GYSPIES: Because in you / Our King / Has chosen his wife, / And all the flowers / Go open, this night.

PANISKA: I am only his humble servant.

ABBOT: Sacrilege! Parody! (Van Lerberghe 30-31)

The first idea is to consider that both pieces deal with different religious frames. Was not the great Pan killed by Christianity? However, note the important structural similarities of the pieces, namely the introduction of a stranger in a casual and banal environment that upsets the usual order of things. This technique was also used in the dramas of symbolism; however, in symbolism one did not question nature and the identity of the mysterious stranger, because the mysterious one had the right of existence. In both of these comic pieces, the existence of the mysterious is called into question and rational explanation is sought. There is also the integration of undesirable aliens into the established order. If irony as a rhetorical process arises in the interaction of the characters, the irony of situation is directed against the inflexibility of the established order and the inability to break from stagnant forms. The two opposing groups of comic characters may provoke laughter using comic techniques, but the irony of situation against characters representing bourgeois morality whose caricatures appear in the plays of Maeterlinck and Van Lerberghe are more pronounced.

Belgians on the Latvian Stage

The premiere of Van Lerberghe's satirical comedy *Pan* takes place on December 3, 1920 at the National Theater of Latvia. Already before the show, publications on the history of Van Lerberghe appeared in the press. The most detailed and comprehensive article on five pages is published in the magazine *Skatuves Vēstnesis*. The title of the article, "Pan," is accompanied by an explanatory subtitle and instigator, "because of representations of the satirical comedy of Charles Van Lerberghe in the National Theater of Latvia" (Freinbergs 35). Its author, Kārlis Freinbergs, already in the first sentence refers to what a connoisseur of literature and theater would expect from Van Lerberghe, "Pan in the room is a symbolic character." A reference to the past, to the symbolism of the author's work follows from a detailed presentation of Pan mythology and analysis of the play, with references to Spinoza and Nietzsche. On the cover of the magazine we admire the lithography of Pan and Paniska, made by an expressionist painter, the well-known Latvian artist and stage designer of the play, Oto Skulme. On the eve of the first production, the theater office publishes an introductory article in the official journal of the Constituent Assembly of Latvia *Valdības Vēstnesis*, stating that the staging could not be shown because of censorship and welcomes this event despite the opposition of pseudo-moral philistines

(Teātra birojs 3). The National Theater of Latvia was founded in 1919, therefore the commentary on censorship refers to the time when Latvian territory was included in the Russian Empire. In any case, the staging of Van Lerberghe's satirical comedy *Pan* is an important and expected event in the second season of the new theater.

As a first step, the newspaper *Valdības Vēstnesis*, in the "Art" section, reports on the show directed by the talented director Amtmanis-Briedītis and invites viewers to buy tickets on time. But at the beginning of next year, the case comes to the Latvian Constituent Assembly, where a complaint that requires the ban of the show is filed by the Latgale¹ group of deputies. The ruling circles, especially the Catholic clergy, see in this play the propaganda of corporal nudity, the idealization of free love, and the scorn of the Catholic Church. The Minister of Education, Plāķis, is forced to defend himself at a meeting of the Constituent Assembly on February 1, 1921 and to admit that the National Theater did not respect his suggestions to delete the play from the repertoire (Latvijas Satversmes sapulce 1). So, a vast controversy comes to life in the press on this subject. Amtmanis-Briedītis always follows the discussions and participates in the Constituent Assembly meetings, which he considers as a direct result of the satirical part of the show.

According to unanimous critical judgment, Amtmanis-Briedītis found the ideal harmony between unified fantasy and the real world because the fantasy world is generated by human nature and the power of feelings. (Dzene 36). The show is significant and influences his creative activity throughout his career; however, the scandal eclipses the artistic value of his show. What is positive is that the scandal raises the debate not only of morality, but also of the right to talk about everything. A few years later, looking back, the remarkable Latvian literary critic Theodors Zeiferts writes on this subject:

The press broke the controversy over the aesthetic and ethical elements of this piece and on the body nudity and on the idea of approaching holiness in works of art in general. If, on the one hand we warned the youth against this piece, on the other hand (from the Social Democrats) it was recommended for the youth, who had to get rid of the pharisaical pseudomorale and led towards the natural beauty of the forms of life (Zeiferts 6).

The staging of *Le Miracle de saint Antoine* of Maeterlinck in Latvia is based on the show created by Maeterlinck's first wife, actress Georgette Leblanc — when the two plays, *L'Intruse* and *Le Miracle de saint Antoine*, are played during the same

1 A Catholic region of eastern Latvia.

theatrical evening.¹ This “diptych” does not succeed in European cities. Alfred Kerr, writer and influential German critic, blames Maeterlinck recently discovered, who has already managed to enter the third phase of creativity; in the second phase, with *Monna Vanna*², he abandons form, in the third, with *The Miracle of St. Anthony*, - attempts to destroy mysticism with irony (Van de Kerckhove 73)³. Maeterlinck’s play is performed five years after *Pan* in one of Latvia’s largest cities, Liepāja, staged by Janis Zariņš. The play is presented for the first time on February 8, 1925 in the new Liepāja Theater. The choice of the director to produce this show is the fruit of a quest for theatrical creation, and the theater seeks to accommodate the taste of the public, but it also wants to follow the latest trends in the theater, adapting his repertoire at the time.

After the show, the newspaper *Strādnieku avīze* publishes a criticism (se 4), in which it is recognized that Maeterlinck is not the right author for the Latvian public and our dynamic era. What to do with Maeterlinck?! Exclaims the critic. The beginning is bad because the scandal is half empty. “Anthony could do without spotlights, the sacred halo was more often around his belly than around his head.” Speculators were stunned, the public misunderstood, concludes the critic.

In response, the director Jānis Zariņš expresses, very courteously, his point of view and explains his intentions. Referring to the Russian tradition in staged pieces of Maeterlinck (Komissarzhevskaya, Stanislavski, Meyerhold) and describing the original approach of Vakhtangov in the show of *Le Miracle de saint Antoine*, created in 1920. Fabrice Van de Kerchove notes that, after the symbolism, Maeterlinck returns to traditional theatrical forms, including farce, while the Russian theater masters Meyerhold and Vakhtangov, on the contrary, push their plays to move away from the institutionalized theater. The Latvian director Zariņš is trying to integrate this against movement.

In his article Zariņš regrets that before the show he did not provide the necessary explanations and explains that he was inspired by the original approach of Vakhtangov, in which the Russian director uses the grotesque and caricatural expression form (Zariņš a 4). Separating the two groups of comic characters, Vakhtangov portrays St. Anthony and Virginia as ordinary people, but Miss Hortense’s family

1 This is reported in the Belgian newspaper, which writes about Mme Leblanc’s European Theater Tour. *L’Art Moderne*, Nr. 35, 30 (août 1903) 304.

2 *Monna Vanna* is the play of Maeterlinck, published and staged in 1902. This staging, which is a huge success in Germany, however has a shared opinion of the critics, is no longer a play of the theater of the symbolism of Maeterlinck.

3 All the quote see in the van de Kerckhove’s essay “Le Rire de Maeterlinck.”

in a grotesque manner with caricature characters. This makes it possible to accentuate the opposition and to give the status of reality to the mystic, but to create the bourgeois milieu in an exaggerated, grotesque and caricatural manner. In addition, Vakhtangov plays mainly with a white and black palette in the show (Zariņš b 4). With this reference to the great director Vakhtangov, Zariņš tries to justify his unsuccessful attempt. But on one point the critic and the director agree — Maeterlinck's time was beyond 1914 or he has not yet come, in any case, to the public; this playwright is not interesting. In this case, the discussion with the audience about the ideas of the piece fails.

The nuance of Maeterlinck's theater and the passivity of Van Lerberghe's prose, and, to a lesser extent, the symbolist period, undoubtedly shaped literary tastes in Latvia. This was encouraged by interested writers, apologists of Belgian symbolism, and their opponents at the beginning of the 20th century. The sharp attacks to the "sickly" expression of symbolism, the questioning of the valorization of unspeakable sensations and silence go beyond the borders of the literary domain, so it drives even more discussions, counter-attacks, maintaining popularity, as well as marking a turning point in the history of literature. Symbolism also inspires parodies and contributes to the development of the understanding of a new comic style. The two pieces imbue irony with the reception on the mysterious message in the bourgeois milieu. The challenge is clearly expressed verbally and is the opposite by means of symbolic expression. The opponent of the mystery is thus eradicated by his own means — irony and mockery. The dramatic action, rooted in the scenery with the traditional and recognizable characters, provokes and is perceived not only as a criticism, but also as the caricatures of the values. Emotional anger keeps interest, but not necessarily gravity, and the scenic expression of the 1920s in Latvia raises the question not only of morality, but also of the possibility of criticism and the limits of satire in a democratic country where religion is separated from the state.

Putting their pieces among the comic works, Maeterlinck and Van Lerberghe can afford to say what in serious speech would not be possible because it is too unacceptable. This aspect of comedies often attracts directors, because, given that the theater is a public forum, the general audience is at the disposal of a message that does not correspond with current conventions. The lightness of the comedy uniting people with laughter as a reducing agent of tension, confers an aura of non-seriousness, while, at the same time, providing the capacity of the spectator to understand the cause of their own laughter. Thus, the spectator is subject to a test, or the test of his capacity, one tests not only sense of humor, but also one evaluates the intellec-

tual capacity. In light of the serious reputation of the two authors in the literary field of Latvia, the latter is particularly important, all the more because of the intellectual tactics (on which are also based scientific and research activities) there is a tendency to question what is considered the norm, and the departure from the norm is the basis of development and prospective thinking.

Conclusion

Symbolism, with its intrinsic values, exhorted Latvian writers to fight for independence of the literature of ideology and public utility. The battle was tough and undeniably contributed to the creative freedom, literary development, and self-confidence of Latvian authors, which is a *sine qua non* for the future of national literature. An attachment to universal human values that transcends national consciousness and do not serve the validity of the principle in order to achieve important national or ideological goals, paradoxically, is at the root of national literature. National identity that requires national literature is an essential goal to which ideologues attempt to subjugate literature. Human values and literary aesthetics are clothed in the affirmation of the nation and express its inherent original characteristics, environment, traditions, situations, etc. At that time, Latvia gained its national independence and national literature and theater art are officially recognized as important cultural sectors and can identify literary achievements, including that of symbolism whose contribution to literature came as early as 1911 by André Barre. “Symbolism attempted a quadruple reform: poetic reform, prosodic reform, syntactic reform, lexicographic reform” (Barre 390). Yes, every writer contributes in his own way. This learning has also taken place in Latvia.

The analogy favors not only language, but also the system of literary images that can integrate references, allusions, and connotations, drawn and translated from the world heritage of cultural and literary values. Symbolism, besides the great themes of literature, like love and death, introduces another subject — the Unknown. But in the 1920s, the challenge is increased by the interpretation on the stage. This wish is undoubtedly inspired by the Russian success of the directors Stanislavski, Meyerhold, and Vakhtangov, especially with the plays of Maeterlinck, who with their shows demonstrate a further degree of reliability and talk to the public. The directors are also attracted by the plays of this post-symbolism movement, as interesting and stimulating dramaturgic material. The two plays, before being staged in Latvia, have acquired a shocking reputation, and this fact attracts directors; it also seduces their apparent simplicity — the farce and satirical comedy. The comedy is in contrast to the preceding plays, but the main contradiction lies in the

fact that the preceding principle, which postulated the autonomy of literature and the daily tragedy, has radically changed in form and content. The introduction of the unknown into everyday life is not transformed into tragedy but generates comedic situations. Although the mystic is always present, he is challenged in his very nature, which forces us to consider other explanations to an inexplicable presence, rationally acceptable explanations, that is to say, madness or dream or nightmare.

In the volumes of the history of the Latvian theater, without fail, the episodes with Van Lerberghe's *Pan* is always mentioned. On the other hand, *Le Miracle de saint Antoine* of Maeterlinck hardly appears. Can we draw parallels between Maeterlinck's and Van Lerberghe's plays in Latvia? I would answer that it is possible only if one takes into account their common literary past. The characteristic irony of modernism is capable of appealing to the Latvian viewer, if it has a strong voice, that is, courageous and provocative means of artistic expression. On the social level, the spectacle of *Pan* brings up the debate still current on frontiers of derision, the slow *Saint-Antoine* de Maeterlinck is aware of the dynamism of the new nation-state of Latvia after the war. In the creative field, at that time, the works of the Belgian authors pass from the status of innovative reading material to another group of texts, namely, ones that interest the directors to speak to the Latvian public and, along the same lines, use the mechanism of irony to reveal what the foreign text pretends to hide.

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Reception of Opera *Salome* by Richard Strauss in Aspazija's Novel "The Autumn Nightingale"

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Abstract One of the most striking characteristics of the Latvian culture and literature in the first decades of the twentieth century is the focus on diverse cultural and literary currents dominating the Western Europe cultural space. Having been greatly influenced by the phenomena of other cultures and literatures Latvian literature reveals transformations in human's individual and collective consciousness. The change of the paradigm of culture can be traced via the analysis of the reception process of significant "alien" impulses and their impact on "one's own" cultural space. The aim of the article is to study the importance of the monumental opera *Salome* (1905) by Richard Strauss in Latvia's cultural space of the first half of the twentieth century and its reception in literature by analysing Aspazija's (Elza Rozenberga; 1865–1943) novel "The Autumn Nightingale" [Rudens lakstīgala] (1933). The "alien" discourse in Aspazija's novel becomes "one's own" pre-text and a significant tool for depicting the atmosphere in the nation's biography and the perception of woman in the end of the nineteenth century society.

Key words cultural space; cultural context; *Salome*; opera; reception; Latvian literature

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Introduction

“Comme la princesse Salomé est belle ce soir!”

“How beautiful is the Princess Salomé tonight!”

“Wie schön ist die Prinzessin Salome heute Nacht!”

“Как прекрасна принцесса Саломея сегодня ночью!”

“Cik skaista ir Princese Salome šovakar!”

Traditionally, the concept “cultural space” is interpreted as a physical (geographical) space where one nation or part of its community cultivates certain cultural values. When one national cultural space interacts with another, the values that get imported most frequently are those which cannot be found in one’s own cultural space, but for which the national cultural space is spiritually ready. The periods of cultural transition and transformation, which signal the change of traditions, never relate to only one definite territory and nation, since any cultural space falls within a wider cultural context characterized by an informed choice of specific cultural values and models.

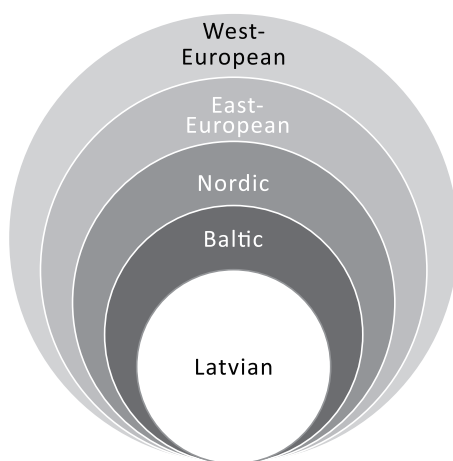
Culture, and consequently also cultural space, is a changeable reality; affected by the shifting contexts different cultural forms are in a constant process of changes. The dynamics of these processes is demonstrated by the transition periods which materialize in between the establishment of different social systems, namely, when the changes in the consciousness of the individual representing a specific cultural space are observed and when the old models still continue to exist but do not function any more, while the new ones are in the phase of formation. According to the Polysystems theory by Itamar Even-Zohar, there is a constant competition between the conservative and the innovative systems enhancing the inter-systemic transfer, thus within the framework of a polysystem the dynamics of a constant process is ensured (Even-Zohar).

West European early modernists’ creative works have received much attention all over the world, including cultures of small nations. Since the beginning of the twentieth century the vital inspiration for the Latvian literature has been the image and symbol of the erotic and dangerous woman Salomé, the female character in Oscar Wilde’s (1854–1900) one-act tragedy *Salomé* (1891), originally written in French and then translated into English. Hedwig Lachmann’s (1865–1918) German translation of Wilde’s play became the source for the German composer of the late Romantic and early Modern eras Richard Strauss’ (1864–1949) opera in one act *Salome* to his own libretto. The paper is aimed at studying the importance of the

monumental opera *Salome* by R. Strauss in Latvia's cultural space of the first half of the twentieth century by analysing the novel "The Autumn Nightingale" [Rudens lakstīgala] (1933) written by Latvian writer Aspazija.

Latvian Cultural Context

Many cultural artefacts of "large" nations have a monumental nature and they influence other nations, since the roots of any culture involve borrowing and adopting. The culture of Latvia, as the culture of any "small" (also "new" and immature (Rosseau)) nation, is in general characterized as heterogeneous – the feature that is being formed in the result of different historical, political and social circumstances and events. Latvia had been subjected to other countries since the thirteenth century till 1918, after a short period of independence it was occupied again regaining its independence in 1990. This ensures a unique cultural context and testifies to an undeniable influence of other cultures on the change of the paradigm of Latvian culture (including that of literature).



Graph 1. The Principal Creators of Latvian Cultural Context

If the transformations in human consciousness nowadays are to be looked upon as a conversion from the national to the global structure of culture, then in the history of every specific nation there is a stage(-s) when an opposite action takes place, namely, from the diversity, multi-formity, hybridity or absolute "literary vacuum" of culture to national cultural purity, the latter being the basic criterion for the appearance and existence of every "small" nation.

The second half of the nineteenth century in Latvian cultural space is marked

by two essential developmental stages which include both the tendencies of purification and globalization / modernization: 1) from the 50-s of the nineteenth century the processes of the formation of Latvian national consciousness are taking place, when, with *Latvianness* becoming a basic principle, the literature of national awakening is emerging; 2) at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century (especially from the 1890-s), for the first time in the history of its development, Latvian literature purposefully focuses on the general processes and values of European literature which become an integral driving force of Latvian literature. These events testify to a rapid dynamics of cultural processes and to transformations in human's individual and collective consciousness.

The ambivalent and polyphonic spirit of the aesthetic changes in West European culture of the end of the nineteenth century testified to artistic re-orientation; the new culture of Latvia also gravitated towards this, thereby, in an accelerated way and to a certain extent by leaps, moving towards the general cultural tendencies of "large" European nations, especially towards those cultural novelties between which the time distance was minimal. At Europeanization of the Latvian culture, the specific values of the national cultural heritage, and values of European cultural heritage of the past centuries were united with those of the present, because "[...] for the first time, West European cultural sources were widely open for the Latvian Nation. This is why the first [...] pioneers of the great cultural current [in Latvia] were completely engrossed in writings of nations of old and new cultures. The thoughts they thought were West European thoughts, the feelings they felt were the ideals of great nations, which in their fancies of quick-growing took shape of a voluptuously beautiful and imaginary consistent new world where poets and dreamers were governors and masters" (Klaustiņš 124-125).

An active participant of this process in the nineteenth century Latvia was the social anti-provincialism and female equality movement of "Jaunā Strāva" [New Current], and among them also the writers of the European and world level, prominent poets, playwrights and active public and culture figures Rainis (Jānis Pliekšāns; 1865–1929) and Aspazija (Elza Rozenberga; 1865–1943) (later husband and wife), whose activities are tightly linked with western Europe, especially Germany, and the culture of German speaking nations. Three decades later, while pondering on the setting of the novel "The Autumn Nightingale," Aspazija chooses the gone by times, i.e. the time of 1890s in Latvia, however in the exposition the main character — young opera singer — is performing the role of Salomé in opera, which is the event of the twentieth century. Thus, while describing the past events of her own and her contemporaries' lives at the end of the nineteenth century Latvia

(the period of “Jaunā Strāva”), the future event (opera *Salome*) is represented in the novel as such that has seemingly taken place already. By synthesizing the historical and cultural events from two centuries while depicting a specific culture historical epoch of Latvia, the retreat from the historical truth is made to symbolically depict the border situation of not only Latvian culture, but also the perception of a woman in the society and the woman’s self-awareness. The time when the novel was being created and published (1933) coincided with a current wave of popularity of Richard Strauss’ music in Latvia.



Picture 1. Opera “Salome” by R. Strauss in the National Opera on May 7, 1934.

Photo from the magazine *Atpūta* No 498, 1934.

In the role of Salomé – Milda Brehmane Štengele; Jokanaan – Ādolfs Kaktiņš

One of the examples is reviving of the opera *Salome* by R. Strauss in the National Opera in 1934 (Picture 1), the first of such waves being undeniably the beginning of the twentieth century. Individual’s (also nation’s) identity having been incorporated in a specific cultural space becomes a variable entity in the result of interaction between time, space and different cultural contexts and discourses (Freeman).

Salomé in Latvian Culture in the Context of West-European Reception

Salomé initiates in Latvia O. Wilde’s personality cult and the beginning of

Modernism, linking together into one system the tendencies of French – British – German – Russian – Scandinavian modern literatures and their influences. The role of Germany as an important transfer of both bringing the images and symbols of O. Wilde's Nietzschean-type works to Latvian culture and in connection with the first production of R. Strauss' opera *Salome* is one of the most actively discussed issues in Latvian periodicals of the beginning of the twentieth century.

Wilde and Strauss' "tandem" and opera *Salome* were rather frequently discussed in Latvian periodicals of the first half of the twentieth century. The precedent of the Latvian reception of *Salome* was the event in Germany – on November 15, 1902, producer Max Reinhardt¹ offered a private staging of *Salome* in Berlin *Kleines Theater*. Among the 300 elite guests there was also composer R. Strauss, whom Gertrud Eysoldt's rendering of Salome, bringing "anarchic, "animal" traits of Salomé to life grandly" (Kohlmayer 118), inspired for work at the opera (Evangelista 7).

The tragedy *Salomé* was shown on the stages of the greatest cities of Germany and in the Empire of Austro-Hungary, as well as in other countries, however the reflection of all these events of cultural life in periodicals published in the first half of the twentieth century in Latvia was outshone by the monumental work, the premiere of R. Strauss' opera *Salome* in the metropolis of the German opera — Dresden.

The development of Wilde's *Salomé* from French original into English, via Beardsley drawings, Lachmann's translation, Reinhardt's production, i.e. Eysoldt's acting, shows a process of increasing radicalization and brutalization of the character of Salomé, who is removed from the historical context of early Christianity and shaped with increasing clarity into an icon of eruptive sexuality. (Kohlmayer 119)

Latvian periodicals more than once informed about the changes concerning the date of the performance in Dresden, mentioning obstacles and difficulties "that arise during staging this opera, because it is the longest one-act opera hitherto written, moreover, the text of opera music is absolutely similar to that of Wilde's drama" (Opera *Salome*). The misinterpretation of facts was corrected later, when it was discovered that the composer had shortened the text almost for a half but had

1 On Max Reinhardt in the context of the twentieth century Germany and Latvia, see: Radzobe, Silvija, "Makss Reinhards," 20. *gadsimta teātra režija*. Ed. S. Radzobe (Rīga: Jumava, 2002): 504-543.

precisely followed R. Wagner's principle of composition according to which melody had to emerge from word (Kohlmayer 119).

In 1907, the newspaper *Rigasche Zeitung* gave the analysis of both the tragedy *Salomé* by O. Wilde and the sensation opera by R. Strauss. In the article, O. Wilde's bond with the latest tendencies in literature was discussed (Hofmann "Eindrücke..." 3-4). This article stressed the idea that O. Wilde's *Salomé*, shown as "the glorification of hysterics," is a novelty. In its turn, R. Strauss' "language" or "Wagnerian ecstasy" was characterized not as an original creation but rather as "a dialect from the homeland of Isolde" derived from R. Wagner's music. Contrary to Wilde, who was marked as a brilliant bearer of the new epoch, R. Strauss, in critics' opinion, did not offer innovative musical thinking, but still was characterized by virility (Hofmann "Nachwort..." 19-20). Episodically, the name of R. Strauss could also be read in the context of O. Wilde's and H. von Hofmanstahl's life and work. Such evaluations can be explained by the fact that Wilde was given full honour as the original creator of *Salomé*: in Latvian periodicals of the end of the nineteenth century Wilde was first introduced by mentioning the ban of *Salomé* on the basis that it was illegal to depict Biblical characters on the stage ("Rakstnieciskas..."), but the first decade of the twentieth century was the first peak of Wilde's popularity among Latvian early Modernists who saw him as their "guiding star." The tragedy *Salomé* by O. Wilde was translated into Latvian a couple of years after the premier of R. Strauss' opera — in 1907 (by F. Jansons) and in 1912 (second version in 1939) (from French by J. Akuraters), namely, during the time when *Salomé* was an equally important segment of modern culture in both Germany and Russia¹ (the impact of both cultural spaces upon Latvian culture is undeniable).

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Latvian literature created a number of works that quoted, referred to or argued with the image of a demonical and erotic woman (the poem (1905) and the story (1906) "Salome" by Birznieku Sofija; "Sfinksa" by Zemgaliešu Biruta (1906) a.o.); in later years, in the 1920-s–1930-s, by synthesizing the images of *Salomé*, Sphinx, Judith, Nora, Hedda Gabler, Latvian invariants of *Salomé* and hybrid formations of the New Woman were created in poetry, prose and drama by the next generation of Modernists ("Salome" by Kārlis Dziļleja (1925), "Salome ar Johanana galvu" [Salome with Jokanaan's Head] by Marta Endzelīne (1927) a. o.) (Kačāne). The texts basically referred to O. Wilde's tragedy, in a few works by Latvian authors the opera *Salome* (the dance of the seven

¹ The translations of *Salomé* in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century: V. Adruson, L. Adruson, K. Balmont (ed.) (1904), anonymous (1906), E. Brik (1907), K. Balmont un E. Andrejeva (1908), M. Likiardopulo (1908). (Polonsky 164; Roznatovskaja 70).

veils) had been used as an inter-text.

At the beginning of the twentieth century some of Wilde's plays were staged in Riga city Russian theatre, nevertheless, the first production of the tragedy *Salomé* in Riga Latvian Theatre (Interimtheatre) took place on October 2, 1918 under the restrictive circumstances of German occupation (in the role of Salomé — Milda Riekstiņa (M. 6.); director — A. Freimanis (Kundziņš 59). The first stage version of *Salomé* in the independent Latvia was shown on December 27, 1920 in Daile Theatre, produced by Eduards Smilģis — the supporter of the theory “art for art's sake” (in the role of Salomé — Tija Banga, Anta Klints) (Sniedze 106). The premiere of the opera *Salome* after the libretto of O. Wilde's drama took place in the season of 1922/1923 — on February 24, 1923.

More and more often the Latvian periodicals evaluated R. Strauss' work positively, especially in the 20-s and 30-s when the composer's contribution was being re-evaluated and the composer was considered the first of all musicians who, prepared and freed from fear by Nietzsche, had descended to “the night of humaneness” (quoted — German critic Dr. Volbach) (Sproģis 15) and whose contribution best of all manifested itself in the context of O. Wilde's *Salomé* and H. von Hofmanstahl's *Electra*. It is just the opera version of the play that becomes a media of the avant-garde art work which incorporated the nature of transformation, firstly, from English to German and from a literary text to a musical one, synthesizing into the genre of *Literaturoper* (literature opera), popular at the beginning of the twentieth century; and secondly, it marked the general shift from France as a performer of a leading role in Europeanization the image of the New Woman to the cultural space of Germany and the Empire of Austro-Hungary (See: Walton 217-228).

Opera *Salome* by Strauss and the Novel “The Autumn Nightingale” by Aspazija

In 1921, the outstanding Latvian poet and dramatist Rainis dwelled upon the evaluation of Wilde's *Salomé* in his diary notes and expressed a very negative opinion:

I strongly dislike when love is combined with bloodshed. Love — the acme in human's life — spiritual — as a phenomenon, and it is combined with the inferior — bloodshed. As in *Salomeya*. This can be done only by a barbaric, uncivilized person. The fact that this play is such a success shows how wild this time is. I wanted to read *Salome*, but could not read it till the end — I feel

disgust. [...] the whole life shows that the European culture is still brutal, only covered with a veil. (Rainis 52)

Despite such a dramatic assessment of the tragedy *Salomé* on the part of Aspazija's husband Rainis, the opera *Salome* by R. Strauss is an entity for characterizing the epoch's border situation, cultural-historical landscape and a version of the New Woman in Aspazija's novel "The Autumn Nightingale" published in series in the magazine *Atpūta*, 1933 (the subtitle of the novel is "The Novel from the 90-s" [Romāns no deviņdesmitajiem gadiem] (Aspazija). (See Picture 2 and 3).



Picture 2. Aspazija on the Cover of First Page of the Magazine *Atpūta* No 430, 1933



Picture 3. Starting the Publication of the Novel "Autumn Nightingale" in the Magazine *Atpūta* No 430, 1933

The novel is considered semi-autobiographical. It depicts the period of "Jaunā strāva" in Latvia; the characters representing the cultural life in Riga are projected with the author of the novel herself (Arta Augstkalne) and Rainis (Jarmuts Asmins) — the then new editor of "Dienas Lapa" (in the novel — editor of "Jaunā Diena").

The love story of both writers began in 1894; at the end of the nineteenth century, they both experience an active period of individualism and a dynamic stage of seeking one's own self. In the 30-s of the twentieth century, Aspazija, now a mature writer who has already realized many of her intentions, through a narration in the third person, through a vast description of cultural-historical materials and an emotional depiction of spiritual atmosphere that go beyond the limits of the turn

of the nineteenth and twentieth century, looks back on the life of a modern woman (also on her own) as well as on that of Latvia at the end of the past century, or at the individual and national identity.

The novel begins with a description of an evening in a crowded theatre hall, where an unpopular but extremely talented singer performs on the stage, and the opera-goers are fascinated by her debut in the role of Salome, among the audience there is also Jarmuts Asmins:

This evening in the theatre was the fourth one when Salome was performed with the young actress in the title role. The opera was repeated time and time again, and it almost outrivalled the theatre performances that were shown on the same stage. (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 31)

In the context of the epoch, cultural life in the novel is characterized through mentioning 1) the difficult economic conditions that interfere with work and existence of culture institutions, and therefore in the premises of one theatre (Riga Latvian Theatre is mentioned) both plays and opera performances performed by a specially organized opera company are shown; 2) the restrictive circumstances of censorship, which initiate rather than stop seeking for free manifestations by modifying different art forms. *Salome*, often called "a small opera" (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 32.), is characterized in the novel as an adequate work for expressing oneself through music even under the restrictive circumstances of censorship:

The censor was also sent the score of Wilde's Salome along with its libretto. In notes he, of course, did not understand anything, they looked to him like flypaper stuck round with flies, but the text after all was taken from the Bible [...]. (Aspazija "Rudens..." 32)

An important aspect of Aspazija's novel in the context of this theme is the fact that the protagonist of the novel is an opera singer in R. Strauss' opera *Salome* in the period when this opera has not yet been created in the historical reality. Philipp W. Stockhammer notes that history is always being interpreted in an individual way, and all important world historical, and consequently also cultural, events are locally adapted and become part of the process of hybridization, since the diachronic nature of history is inevitably related to changes and hybridization:

History is always perceived and recorded locally and individually. This means

that the so-called grand narratives of world histories are locally appropriated in a process which [...] might be termed hybridization. [...] every historical perspective is diachronic and most diachronic developments are connected with change. Change, however, is often inseparably connected with the phenomena of cultural hybridization. (Stockhammer 3)

For Aspazija essential is not the chronological truth, but rather the description of the transition period situation and the image of a new, free, confident and determined woman. In the novel, the staging of the opera *Salome* is laconically declared as the beginning of a new stage in Latvia's culture: "With this the epoch of opera began then" (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 32).

Aspazija and drama are as indivisible as Aspazija and poetry, however, if poetry implies deep feelings and musicality of soul (Aspazija, "Mana..." 259), then drama relates to the conflicts of human soul. Opera, in turn, as Aspazija says, is the emblem of great European nations which has to be rooted in the traditions established in the past; in the young Latvia, opera performances basically introduce alien values and thus are connected with "alien" and "high" art, which stands in stark contrast with the form how culture is manifested by "smaller" nations – heavy and rustic, but "one's own" theatre. To Aspazija's mind, unlike the theatre which is the cultural institution of the whole nation, but is undervalued by the Latvian government, the status of opera, including the outward splendor and elegance, singles it out as the place of representation, relaxation and relish for an upper class representative of urban space (Aspazija, "Opera vai..." 627-628). If theatre is concerned with the specific features of Latvian culture and is national by nature, then "we can't speak about our national opera as yet" (Aspazija, "Opera vai..." 628) since it is trans-national and embodies trans-cultural world values. Latvian opera emerged and started to become professional only during the period of independent Latvia, drawing ideas from West European opera, especially from German or, to be more precise, from German — Austrian opera which then dominated in intensity and influence. Within the context of three opera schools — Italian, French, German — just the latter had been given the decisive word in the history of opera by the Latvian periodicals, it was characterized as being especially close for a Latvian, since a deeply national and fantastical spirit together with truly German and profound thoughts permeated by romanticism, as well as modern psychologism singled out this school as being unique and spiritually close for a Latvian (Sproģis 14). In her memories, Aspazija characterized German opera as "very well-functioning" and professional. (Aspazija, "Atmiņas..." 408). The periodicals

published in the first half of the twentieth century considered Carl Maria von Weber, Richard Wagner, and R. Strauss to be the strongest foundation of the German opera.

The opera *Salome* by R. Strauss, just like the erotic and emotional heroine Salome, is a unique culture value and the manifestation of extreme individualism and freedom. Without denying what is specifically national, via the image of protagonist Arta Augstkalne, a former country (provincial) tutor and simultaneously also a mysterious sphinx, Aspazija reveals not only woman's, but also Latvia's (Latvia — a woman/mother) longing for changes, her need for transformations and inner freedom which through the artefacts of world-scale or "alien" cultures open greater opportunities for understanding "oneself" and "one's own" individual self-confidence, as well as the future prospects of "one's own" culture and social activities in the context of European innovative tendencies. The beginning of the so-called opera era is a symbolic declaration of a new start in nation's history. The author synthesizes things that are close and known ("Many of them had quite good voices, trained in choirs and at song festivals under the guidance of famous leaders." (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 32)) with what is European and modern, overstepping the boundaries of historical truth in favor of ideological ones.

The name of the protagonist has not been chosen by chance: Arta — art; Augstkalne — high + mountain (in the feminine gender) or "art that gravitates towards a high mountain" (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 34). The "high soprano" of the performer of Salome's role — the symbol of the prime origin of female — rises over Latvia's "joint choir" in terms of professionalism (standing for the outward, visible part of manifestation); this woman is also full of pride and energy and is approximated to Brunhild from *Nibelungenlied* (standing for inner psychological conflict):

Several [singers] have been tried in this role, but all of them were quite inexpressive, lacked fire, emotional intensity and especially refined psychology that this role required.

Was it in general possible to find such [a singer] among the Latvians who were such simple, gentle souls? This role was to be played with excited, torn nerves, which composed, though intelligent and gifted, persons did not have at all. We could somehow do with the voices, but acting, this erotic and semi-crazy acting which the role required — who could have been able to perform it? (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 32)

The transformation process of a strong but contradictory individual is demonstrated

via mentioning the past, i.e., Arta's old life with her husband-alcoholic, full of phantoms and humiliation, does not exist anymore, but the opera stage is only a platform on the way towards the understanding of the new world, it is the space of initiation to inner freedom. In the novel, opera is a symbolic border-space, it should be crossed just like "the Rubicon of the past" (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 84), because:

Stage alone was not enough for her, she thought about the stage of humanity. Being a strong person with a centrifugal gravity in the system of suns and planets, she wanted to unite and create out of the mist new luminaries round herself, so that through them she herself would break out brighter and would be able to radiate light in the darkness. (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 59)

In the novel, Arta is a symbol of a transition stage and dynamics, "We are people of transition, we are a road, not a goal" (Aspazija, "Rudens..." 76).

Deeply symbolic is protagonist's tight link with the Latvian Germans and German culture which she, just like the author herself, knows well since the very childhood. When the soloist, often called "the divine nightingale" and "the artist blessed by God," and critical reviews about whom could be read in both German periodicals and newspapers "Rigaasche Rundschau" and "Rigaasche Zeitung" published in Latvia, was dismissed from opera due to her social activities, thanks to the German family she received the invitation to perform in Germany. But Aspazija's heroine, though being a representative of "pure art" and a Latvian version of *femme fatale*, becomes also the advocate of social life and new truth in "one's own" cultural space, since according to the protagonist's and also author's belief a great artist must be also a great person. Having received a stimulus for the development from the "alien," but simultaneously close cultural space, the way to the individual feminine self should be paved further by herself.

Opera is the symbol of contradictoriness of philosophical search in the time when the musical drama of romanticism enters a new developmental stage, synthesizing the ideas of F. Nietzsche, A. Bergson, A. Schopenhauer and O. Wilde. Consequently, "woman" in the novel is viewed within a wider system of categories — "man," "society," "beauty," "art," "love" — in the transformation phase of ethical and aesthetic values. By transforming the text of the play into the system of semiotic sounds, the composer reveals deeply hidden anarchical and feminine rather than animalistic feelings in a human soul.

The masculine in the national discourse symbolizes national heroic spirit,

strength and nation's aspirations for independence and freedom, whereas the feminine is appropriated to symbolize the reproducer of the nation and the bearer of its symbolic values. (Meskova 276)

The image of a decadent, demonic and manly domineering woman-destroyer is supplemented by woman's (artist's) creative source and delicacy of soul, namely, to make one's way from the stagnation of the past towards the ideals of the future we need fighting strength and womanness. The title of the novel testifies to this fact when the daybreak song of a nightingale overpowers autumn darkness. A nightingale, taken as a synonym for words "song" and "poetry," symbolizes human's (a poetess') striving for the skill of achieving euphony of a language and orator's dexterity; a nightingale is an allegory of a poet's teacher.

Conclusion

In Aspazija's novel, the re-evaluation of the recent past has been done with a time distance of about 30 years and there is nothing accidental in the portrayals of time, space and people. In 1894, the time which corresponds to the time depicted in the novel, Aspazija's first big work — the play "Vaidelote" — is performed in Riga Latvian Theatre, where the protagonist, finding herself in a border-situation between the conservative and the innovative, quite often the radical, revolts against prejudices and emphasizes the value of a woman as a person itself. For Aspazija, Salome is the symbol of inner strength, unyieldingness and victory, and thus the mentioning of Strauss' opera shows both the themes of her own plays and forms of manifesting a literary heroine's inner freedom as a road of searching for one's own personal happiness.

The value of the novel lies in synthesis of the past, present and future time in a crossroad situation of national cultural space, when not only the cultural context, but also its sub-text becomes the reflection of the epoch, thus testifying about a complicated model of the evolution of cultural space from homogenous to heterogeneous, rather than about an individual's simple way from the old system towards the new one. Aspazija's novel shows the link with the modern Western imagination but disputes about the notion "backwardness" (see Davies 28-31), when the culture of "small" nations is being seen from the perspective of "great" nations as a peripheral imitation of the culture of Western Europe (Baer 4). Aspazija's heroine as a performer of the role of Strauss' opera Salome is a woman of protest and a new archetype of the feminine. The main heroine, the same as the author, having been aware of various cultural contexts and inspired by the grand works of

the word culture, chooses her own path in life symbolizing the independence of both a woman in particular and the culture of Latvia in general. Thus, at depicting the atmosphere in the nation's biography and perception of woman in the society in a specific period of its history, the "alien" discourse in Aspazija's novel becomes "one's own" pre-text and indicates to changes in individual and nation's consciousness, and consequently to changes in a specific cultural space.

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The Concept of Literary Heritage: A Definition through Bibliographic Review

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Abstract The present article is a bibliographic review of the studies published on literary heritage from 1950 to 2017 in the bibliographic citation databases Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). The main objective of this paper is to define the state of art of the research on this topic. The data analysed are the number and evolution over time of scientific studies that have dealt with literary heritage, the list of the scientific journals which have published these studies and the list of the main authors, universities and countries that have worked on this topic. The paper also identifies the main topics of research on literary heritage. The results confirm that research on literary heritage is an increasing topic with multiple research lines. Beyond pure literary and book conservation perspectives, one of the research lines in rise is the heritage perspective. This research line conceives intangible and tangible elements related to literature as expressions of intangible literary heritage. In this scenario we conclude that research on literary heritage could benefit from a multidisciplinary approach that nourishes literary heritage studies from the experience obtained in other heritage related fields resulting in a significant improvement in research and outputs related to literary heritage.

Key words bibliographic review; cultural expressions; literary heritage

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Introduction

The concept of literary heritage is a part of those notions of which one presumes an almost intuitive understanding. However, it is difficult to build an accurate definition of this term. On the one hand, this is due to the complexity of the notions conforming it — the “heritage” and “literary” pairing — and, on the other hand, the polysemy it entails, which results in the need to reflect on this issue to be able to understand the scope and the multiple meanings this notion holds.

As mentioned before, the notion of literary heritage embeds the concepts “literary” and “heritage.” The latter is defined etymologically as property acquired from our parents; that is, something transmitted by our predecessors (Ballart and Tresserras). Even though heritage has this first meaning at individual level; by attaching a social and anthropological sense to the concept of heritage — broadening the perspective from the individual to the community — we reach the notion of cultural heritage.

What is understood by cultural heritage? According to Prats it can be understood as a social construct revolving around the following concepts: historicity, nature and genius. As a community we consider heritage those objects, buildings, landscapes, traditions or values which, before our eyes, are highlighted

by features of a historical nature, related to their geomorphologic attributes or other natural distinctive characteristics or referred to their authorship turning those items into remarkable and unique elements.

Even if such elements have been referred to as traditions or values, the concept of cultural heritage has been historically related to materiality. Thus, during the second half of the twentieth century, UNESCO's Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage limited the notion of cultural heritage to monuments, architectural works, sculptures, paintings, archaeological elements, inscriptions, cave dwellings and group of buildings, among others. However, the material consideration of cultural heritage fails to include a significant number of cultural expressions, without which, a considerable part of its wealth would be missing in our culture. Being aware of this fact, in the first years of the twenty-first century, UNESCO issued two documents that broaden the horizons of the cultural heritage concept, fully legitimising its immaterial nature. Thereby, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, defines cultural heritage as the "practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills — as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith — that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage;" a statement that must be complemented with the spirit of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which emphasised the need to protect and promote the diverse cultural expressions considering their value as a driver of intercultural development.

This progressive construction of the limits of the concept may lead us to believe in the existence of a material heritage independent from its immaterial counterpart, understanding them as two isolated compartments. Nevertheless, both material and immaterial attributes can be found in each heritage element- the symbolic nature of Picasso's *Guernica* goes beyond its material attributes. Likewise, the traditional Mexican *Día de los Muertos* presents some material features that confer this event a distinctive identity.

It is in this sense that we defend the need to foster a holistic view of heritage that can approach heritage elements from the understanding of its dual dimensions: both material and immaterial; a view deemed essential to consider all the factors to take into account when defining policies to protect heritage (Casanovas and Arcos-Pumarola).

This approach to the notion of heritage — being aware of its material and immaterial ontology — becomes essential for the analysis of the literary heritage specific notion, since by adding the adjective "literary" we are limiting

our field (scope) to the heritage that relates to literature and, therefore, we focus on a particular cultural expression which has its core of meaning in the cultural imaginary; that is to say, we are dealing with a type of heritage which finds its core in its immaterial dimension.

However, if we only regard a culture's literary heritage as the collection of stories, novels, poems, works... created within this culture itself and which follow a specific socio-cultural criterion—that is, prioritising only the immaterial dimension of literature, its content — we will be leaving aside all those material elements which, as a symbol, are loaded with meaning and evocative potential in the field of literature. This is the reason why the theory of literary heritage intangibility, which compares it with a literary canon, proves to be insufficient.

In this sense, we should ask ourselves: which are those elements? How do we understand the literary heritage defined as the set of tangible and intangible elements related to the literary universe (Munmany, *Aproximació*)? The conception we have agreed to name 'theory of the double sphere of literary heritage' transcends the literary work intangibility, including, on the one hand, the world related to the author, who becomes the key actor in this conception of literary heritage (Torrents); and on the other hand, the material extension of everything described in the work, that is, the literary territory. In this way, we find the real spaces described in the literary work and the author's personal and biographical universe— which comprises their intimate space and all the material elements in it, as it is shown by the increasing popularity of house-museums to highlight the value of an author's literary legacy. According to this, two spheres exist — author and work —, which connected to the territory and / or place eventually, give birth to the literary heritage, as can be seen in Figure 1.

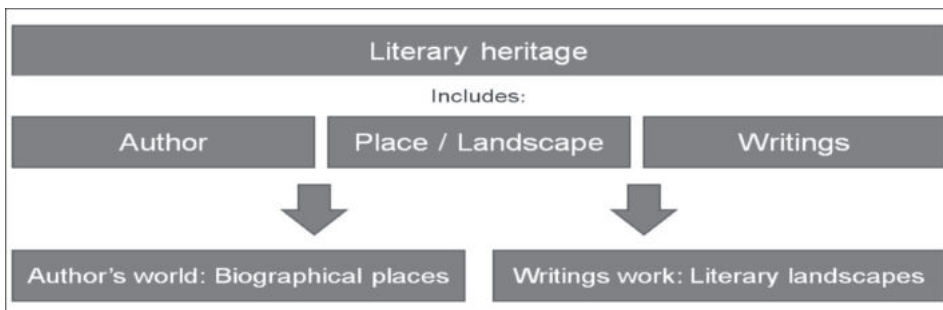


Figure 1: Formation of Literary Heritage. (Arcos-Pumarola and Conill-Tetuà)

Based on (Robinson and Andersen).

An example of the bilateral or bi-dimensional nature of literary heritage is discussed by Uccella taking the figure of Goethe as a focal point. As the author says, on his travel to Italy, Goethe stops at Torbole, a village located near Lake Garda. Goethe's experience admiring the landscape is transformed when reading poet Virgil's verses written centuries earlier in front of this same landscape. Somehow, Goethe enters Virgil's literary landscape in reading his work and the emotions stirred up by the scenery are intensified, as the Roman poet's mood is shared by Goethe.

After this episode, which Goethe describes in his travel book *Italienische Reise*, large numbers of culture lovers and curious Germans eager to follow Goethe's trail, visit the Italian village and research is done to find the guesthouse where the German author was accommodated. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Wiener Goethe Verein unveils a commemorative plaque there, to remember Goethe's stay.

Thus, we can see how the village of Torbole becomes heritage through Goethe; on the one hand as literary heritage belonging to Virgil's work and on the other, as a biographical space related to the German author.

In this way, Uccella, shows us the ability of literature to build a literary universe through the author's figure and their work, which shapes a cultural landscape (Donaire).

Sometimes, however, the concept of literary heritage transcends this idea and goes even further than the territory defined by the author and their work. Within the theories that offer a wider view of literary heritage, the poly-system theory proposed by Munmany (*Gestió*) must be highlighted. The author describes that the creation of heritage goes beyond the author's sphere and their work and it is the result of a (poly) system in which various agents intervene and, starting from the literary work, they can take part in the creation of distinct products generated by the literary heritage shared construct.

This diversity and coexistence of theories hinders the access from the academic world when posing research work on the literary heritage universe and makes it difficult to draw lines of research shared by the academic community, and this is mainly due to the fact we find ourselves faced with a highly diverse, prolific field in which a wide variety of cultural products are created.

In this sense and within the Western Europe framework, it is worth highlighting the presence of networks of literary heritage related facilities, which enable the creation of cultural products that enhance the literary heritage linked to those heritage centres. Some of these networks are the Fédération Nationale des Maisons d'écrivain & des Patrimoines Littéraires in France, Espais Escrits in Catalonia,

LitHouses in the United Kingdom or the Case della Memoria in Italy, among others.

Besides the literary facilities, literary heritage is also boosted by means of specific events such as literary years or celebrations, either related to the commemoration of an author's birth or death anniversary — see the case of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016 and the multitude of events generated around this date — or related to a fiction character, as shown by Bloomsday annual and international success, which currently exceeds Dublin's local boundaries. At local level, it also worth mentioning the initiative of book towns which extends to towns like Hay-On-Wye, in Wales, pioneering this movement; Montolieu in France or Bellprat in Catalonia among others; and whose aim is to boost local economy through literature related activities.

At international level, it should be noted UNESCO's initiative linked to the concept of Creative Cities — an approach that, since its very beginnings, highlighted the importance of the culture industry for the economy and progress of contemporary cities (Landry)-. Originating from this initiative, the network of UNESCO Creative Cities of Literature was launched at the end of 2017 and is currently made up of 28 cities worldwide. These cities have identified literature as a key factor to be fostered to improve their socio-economic development. In this context, the literary heritage and its enhancement play a major role at different levels- whether in tourism, education or in helping create and boost a city's storytelling and identity-.

Facing this broad field of study, we consider it is essential to carry out a review of the meaning the concept of literary heritage acquires in the academic sphere, to identify how this notion is used and what disciplines address this issue. We also consider interesting to define the existing research lines for the study of this concept.

Thus, this bibliographic review article aims at establishing a state of the art for the scientific literature published on literary heritage until December 2017. The main objective focuses on the following issues:

- Identify the number and evolution of the studies on literary heritage.
- Establish the main countries where studies on literary heritage have been carried out.
- Define the most relevant scientific journals that focus on literary heritage.
- Identify the main researchers who have worked on the concept of literary heritage.
- Define the research theme lines of literary heritage under which the research projects identified in this paper can be grouped.

Methodology

The exploratory work of bibliographic review presented in this paper has been carried out based on the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) reference databases. However, the first one will take a key role in this research for the reasons explained in this section.

Scientific database Scopus, created in 2004, and WoS, whose origins date back to mid- twentieth century, have become the largest reference platforms in the academic world for almost all spheres of knowledge. On the one hand, Scopus gathers almost 70 million references, among which we can find over 150,000 books, nearly 22,000 peer-reviewed scientific journals or around 8 million conference papers belonging to over 100,000 conferences worldwide, among others (as of November 13, 2017, SCOPUS listed in its website). On the other hand, WoS in all their different specific data base included in their Core Collection compiles a total of over 1,300 million references which date from the year 1900 up to the present, as well as over 18,000 peer-reviewed scientific journals (as of November 15, 2017, Clarivate Analytics listed in its website).

In relation to our area of knowledge -which can be searched, in broad terms, in the area of humanities in generic databases- Scopus presents a collection of almost 3,500 journals (as of November 13, 2017, SCOPUS listed in its website), whereas Arts & Humanities Citation Index -WoS Humanities specific database- gathers a total of 1,700 journals (as of November 13, 2017, Clarivate Analytics listed in its website). Thus, both Scopus and WoS can be regarded as internationally validated platforms and susceptible- according to their characteristics- of being considered object of study to develop the state of the art of a specific discipline.

In order to define our analysis methodology, we have to consider that both Scopus and WoS, despite including publications in other languages, always provide a minimum amount of information in English on each item as identification data. In this way, scientific studies included in this database always provide the title, abstract and key words in English. In the case of Scopus, we have decided to search in the database field 'Article Title, Abstract, Key-Words', through the concept 'literary heritage'. Likewise, we have searched in WoS database field 'Topic', which searches in the title, abstract and keywords of the papers; so, it is equivalent to Scopus database field 'Article Title, Abstract, Key-Words'.

We think that the concept of literary heritage itself is wide enough to define a search which results in a sufficiently substantial number of academic works that offer a general view of the state of the art of research on heritage education. It

must be noted that the search is narrowed by using quotation marks to avoid results containing only one of the two terms that make up the concept of literary heritage.

Therefore, our research is divided into two phases to respond to the objectives described above: 1) quantitative study on diverse variables and 2) qualitative research based on the critical reading of the abstracts of the selected studies will be added to this initial phase. This second phase makes it possible to define the theme lines from which the notion of literary heritage is approached as well as the main study methodologies used in these works. To carry out this qualitative study the number of received citations in the different documents will be considered the main criterion within this field of study (Borrego and Urbano).

Data obtained from WoS and Scopus will be considered for the first phase of the research, the quantitative study; however, the second phase of the research will be limited to the Scopus database for the following reasons:

- To avoid overlapping of papers that may distort the final results.
- Scopus contains more articles (229) on literary heritage than WoS core collection (210).
- Scopus features more updated articles on literary heritage than WoS; as shown in Figure 2, where the diverse publications in WoS and Scopus are distributed along a time axis of 67 years.
- According to the search performed in both databases, articles collected from Scopus (1.63) have a higher average citation rate than those from WoS (0.71).

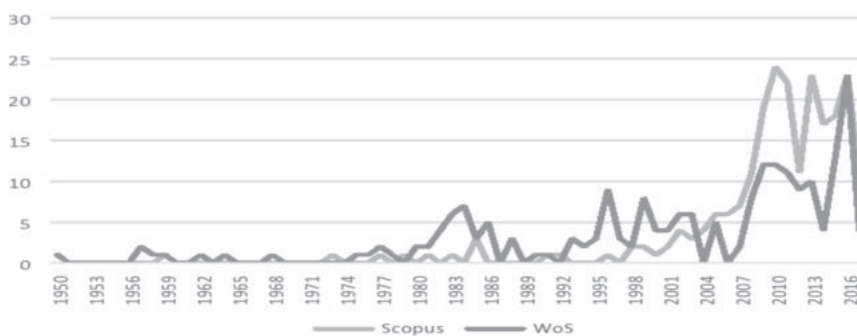


Figure 2. Comparison of the number and evolution of scientific publications on literary heritage between WoS and Scopus (1950-2017).

Source: Own elaboration (2017).

Taking into account the main objective set for the second phase of the present research (delimit and define the current research lines on literary heritage) it was deemed more consistent to limit the study to a database containing more extensive

information on the current research.

Finally, in terms of methodology, it must be noted that Scopus and WoS bibliographic databases are updated daily. The data presented here is limited to December 31st, 2017.

Results of the Bibliographic Review

Presented in the different sections below are the items that have been analysed in accordance with the specific objectives set for this research.

Number and evolution of scientific publications on literary heritage

Firstly, and after removing coinciding elements in our search, we have identified 210 titles dealing with the notion of literary heritage in WoS core collection, whereas in Scopus, this rises to 229 titles, dating the first publication from 1950.

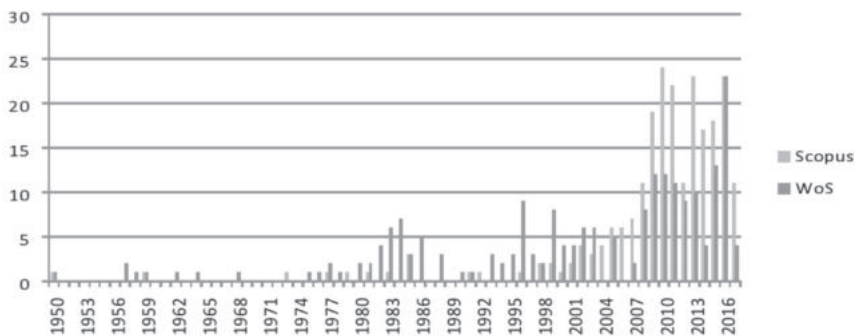


Figure 3. Number and evolution of scientific publications on literary heritage in WoS and Scopus (1950-2017).

Source: Own elaboration (2017).

Figure 3 shows how in the case of Scopus, scientific literature production on literary heritage remains anecdotal until practically 2005, as only 18 titles can be found from 1950 to 2000, with an average rate of 0.36 documents per year (nearly 8% of the total). This means that over 90% of the research literature production concentrates in the years 2000 to 2017 and it is around 2000 when an ongoing production development occurs. Thus, even though Scopus has been collecting works on literary heritage every single year since 1998, it is not until 2005 when the scientific production in our field of research experiences an increase. In 2005 the number of 5 documents per year is surpassed, with a total of 6 titles. The rise is particularly remarkable in 2009, with 19 works and in 2010 when the scientific production

reaches a total of 24 works. These two years can be considered a turning point, for research production has kept permanently over ten works per year since 2009.

A similar development can be observed in the case of WoS, where the barrier of 10 publications per year is broken in 2009. However, this database experiences an increase of publications on this subject at the beginning of the 1980s and in the mid-1990s. Therefore, this database can offer a longer-term view of the theme-related publications. However, and coinciding with Scopus, the proliferation of works on literary heritage does not start until the second decade of the twenty-first century.

Thus, to follow the change of trends happening from those years onwards, it is considered convenient to divide the research literature production generated in the period 1950-2017 in three sub-periods: 1950-2000, 2001-2010 and 2011-2017. So, if the case of Scopus is analysed in this way, the average rate of works generated per year is 0.3, with 18 documents which represent approximately 8% of the total in the first period (1950-2000); in the second period this average rate rises to 8.6, making a total of 86 documents, which represent 37% of the total; reaching an average of 17.8 publications per year in the last sub-period; that is, 125 documents or 55% of the total production. Figure 4 offers a visual image of how publications are distributed in each sub-period; confirming an upward trend in literary heritage scientific literature in the case of Scopus.

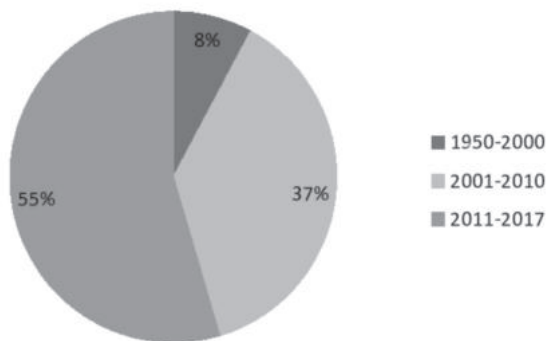


Figure 4. Distribution of the percentage of Scopus' publications on literary heritage during the three subperiods.

Source: Own elaboration (2017).

It is worth noticing that the figure for the last sub-period (2011-2017) almost reaches 75% of the total if the years 2009 and 2010 are included in this time span. In this way we can see how the quantitative analysis of scientific production shows a clear growing interest of the academia towards literary heritage over the past decade.

In the case of WoS, the data obtained lead us to a similar reading. However, it should be noted that the increase in WoS is not so remarkable as it is in Scopus, since there is a larger compilation of works over the different years in the twentieth century. If publications are sub-divided in the same sub-periods used in the former database analysis, the average rate of works per year from 1950 to 2000 is 1.58, collecting a total of 81 documents, which make approximately 39% of the total; this rate increases to 5.5 in the sub-period from 2001 to 2010, with 55 works, which account for 26% of the total works compiled in WoS; whereas this rate doubles in the sub-period 2011-2017 with an average of 10.5 works per year which result in 74 published documents; that is, 35% of the total. Figure 5 shows the percentage distribution of the works published in WoS.

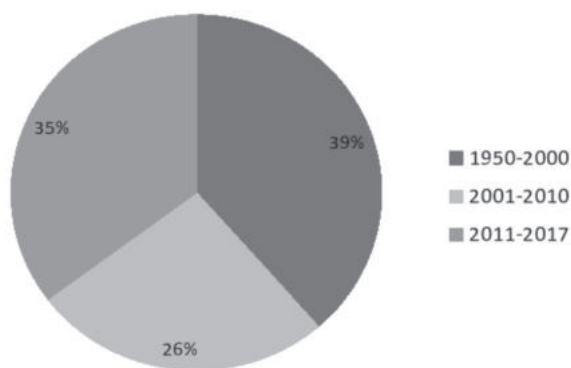


Figure 5. Distribution of the percentage of WoS' publications on literary heritage during the three subperiods.

Source: Own elaboration (2017).

Main countries with a higher volume of publications on literary heritage

In this section the countries with a higher presence based on the number of scientific publication collected in both databases will be identified. It should be mentioned that for data interpretation, only those countries with a minimum of 5 publications between the years 1950 and 2017 will be subject to analysis and that only those documents with accurate information of their country of publication will be considered.

Figure 6 shows that, in Scopus, the countries with a more fruitful production in relation to literary heritage are the United Kingdom (40) and the United States (36). These two English-speaking countries, along with Canada (8) and Australia (6) account for 90 publications, which means almost 40% of the total production; being the Anglo-Saxon academic world the undisputed leader concerning literary heritage research. At a significant distance of this first block of countries, we can find Russia

(10), the Netherlands (8), France (7), Germany, China and Kazakhstan (6) followed by Croatia and Italy (5).

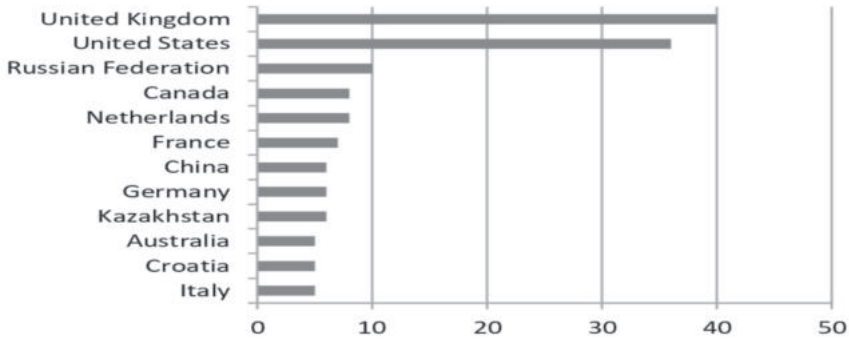


Figure 6. Main countries with a larger volume of publications on literary heritage during the period 1950-2017 in Scopus.

Source: Own elaboration (2017).

In the case of WoS, as shown in Figure 7, we find comparable results regarding the United Kingdom (21) and the United States (21) ranking in the first two positions in terms of production. In this case, however, the United States take the first place. These two Anglo-Saxon countries are followed by Russia (14), Canada (7) and the Netherlands (6) in the same order they kept in Scopus. The list of countries with the most publications is closed by France and Germany (5).

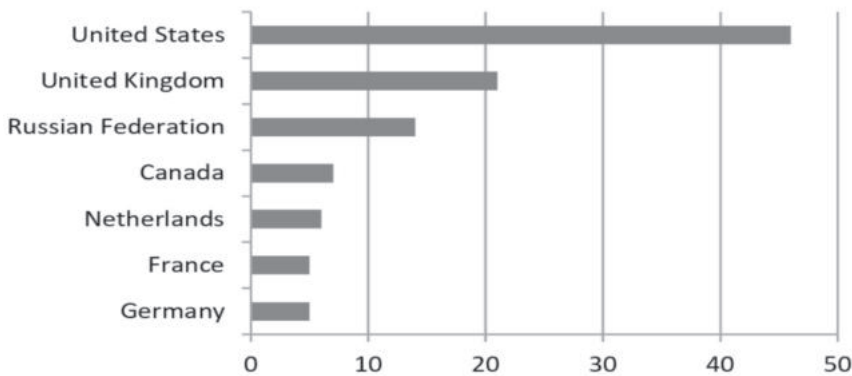


Figure 7. Main countries with a larger volume of publications on literary heritage during the period 1950-2017 in WoS.

Source: Own elaboration (2017).

We considered interesting to analyse which were the leading countries in literary heritage production during the period 1950 to 2008; that is to say, before the

turning point that was identified in the previous section, and from which academic production on literary heritage increases significantly.

In this sense, the results we can observe in Figure 8 show that the countries where the larger number of academic work on literary heritage is currently developed are also pioneers in studying this theme.

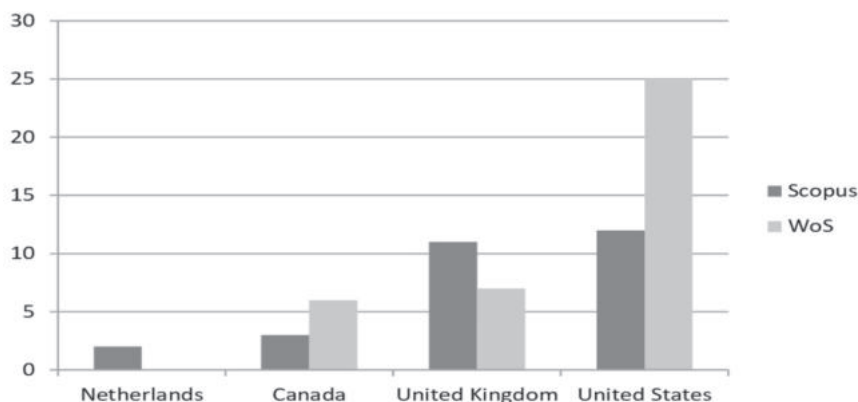


Figure 8. Main countries with a larger volume of publications on literary heritage during the period 1950-2008 in Scopus and WoS.

Source: Own elaboration (2017).

Main scientific journals where scientific articles on literary heritage are published

The research dealt with in this section, also quantitative, aims at identifying the main journals that address the subject of literary heritage. It should be noted, however, that the results presented here have a relative validity given the size of the sample. In the case of Scopus, only 119 works (51.9%) out of the 229 documents analysed correspond to scientific journal articles; whereas in WoS, 127 (60%) out of 210 documents are scientific articles.

In the case of Scopus, Figure 9 shows that the first publication worth highlighting is *Life Science Journal* (ISSN: 1097-8135 printed version), a journal dedicated to the field of life sciences, being the journal with the highest volume of works on literary heritage (6). Given the sphere of knowledge of this journal, the fact that it has the largest number of articles on literary heritage proves to be counter-intuitive. However, when checking the journal publication policy, we can see it states that articles discussing topics other than life sciences are accepted; including those works on other disciplines the editorial team consider for publication.

Then, we find the journals *Islamic Africa* (ISSN: 2333-262X printed version) and *Revista Transilvania* (ISSN: 0255-0539 printed version), with three articles each. Both journals dedicate to the area of humanities and specialise in

literature. Continuing with the analysis, we see there are up to twelve journals with two publications on literary heritage, whereas the remaining works are spread individually over a large number of journals.

We can see there are not any journals that clearly focus on the literary heritage work field; to the extent that, paradoxically, it is a ‘generic’ journal the one that leads the volume of publications in this field of research.

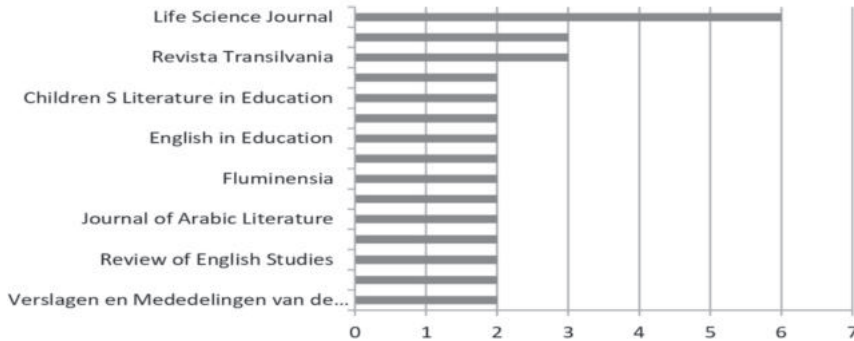


Figure 9. Main scientific journals where articles on literary heritage are published in Scopus. Source: Own elaboration (2007).

In the context of WoS, the situation is quite similar, as we cannot find a journal that centralises the academic production around the literary heritage topic. Instead, we observe that research production is distributed among a large number of publications. Thus, *Hispania* (ISSN: 2153-6414 printed version), with four publications, ranks as the journal with the highest amount of publications on literary heritage; followed by a list of eight journals featuring three articles each, as it is shown in Figure 10.

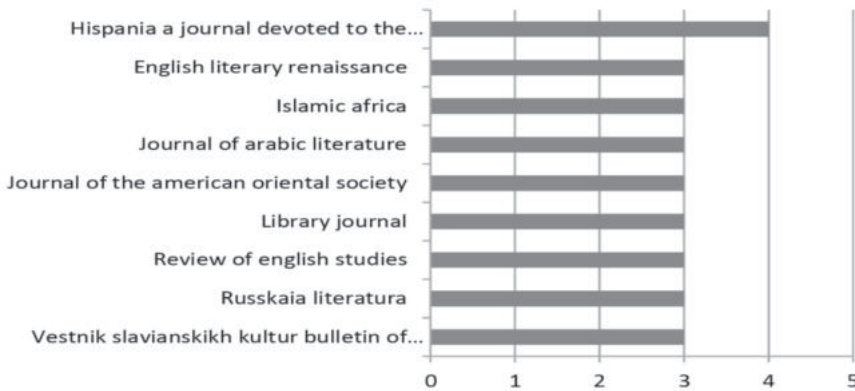


Figure 10. Main scientific journals where articles on literary heritage are published in WoS. Source: Own elaboration (2007).

Main authors and universities that have written scholarly work on literary heritage

This section presents a quantitative analysis of the main authors that have explored the concept of literary heritage. As stated in the previous section, graphs 10 and 11 show that there are not any authors that stand out for delivering a much higher production than the rest. Only seven authors with two publications each can be highlighted in the case of Scopus (Figure 11) whereas in WoS (Figure 12) five authors with the same number of published works are found. The rest of the authors have only published one work on the concept of literary heritage.

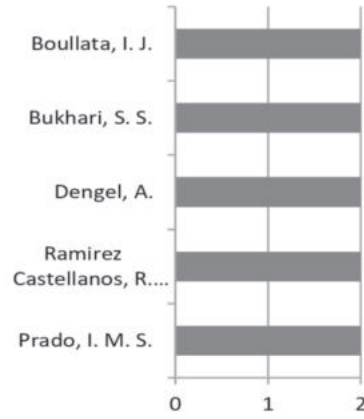


Figure 11. Main authors with works on literary heritage in Scopus. Source: Own elaboration (2017). Figure 12. Main authors with works on literary heritage in WoS. Source: Own elaboration (2017).

If we focus on the universities where authors develop their research rather than on the authors themselves, in the case of Scopus, Figure 13 shows that the University

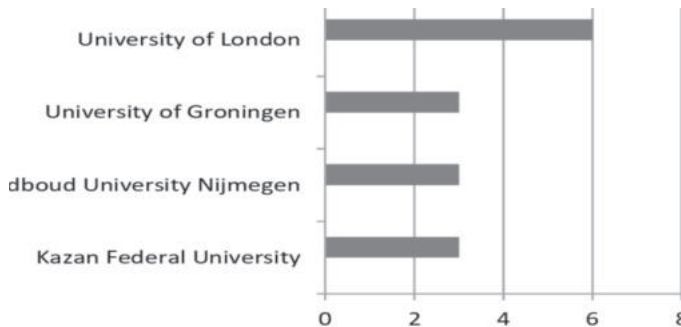


Figure 13. Main universities that have produced research works focused on literary heritage. Source: Own elaboration (2017).

of London leads the academic production on the topic being considered here, with a total of six publications by their researchers, which confirms the Anglo-Saxon world leadership in this area of study.

If the universities with three articles published by their researchers are added to this list, the number of universities increases by three; out of which two universities are Dutch (University of Groningen y Radboud University Nijmegen) and the other one is Russian, Kazan Federal University. The remaining universities and research centres only collect a maximum of two publications on literary heritage.

Relating to WoS, and according to Figure 14, only four universities stand out with a total of three articles each. These university centres are the University of London, University of Cambridge, the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London and McGill University.

This means that, as it happened with Scopus, the University of London is the leading centre regarding research on literary heritage- especially if the contributions of the School of Oriental and African Studies are added- On the other hand, it is confirmed that the Anglo-Saxon world, and, in particular the United Kingdom, proves once again to be the main research centre on literary heritage- however it must be considered that even though McGill University is located in Quebec, English is their working language.

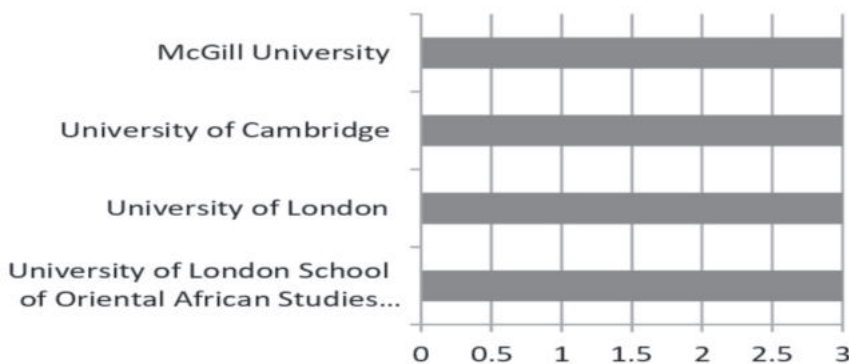


Figure 14. Main universities that have produced research works focused on literary heritage in WoS. Source: Own elaboration (2017).

Research Themes and Lines

This section presents the research lines identified through the critical reading of the selected abstracts. In order to divide the lines of research we have firstly focused on classifying the abstracts according to the understanding of literary heritage each one offered. Therefore, the first division is made at a conceptual level.

Then, the research approaches for each of these interpretations have been

defined with the aim to identify the major lines of research revolving around each meaning attributed to the notion of literary heritage.

Materiality of literary heritage

Understanding literally the concept of literary heritage, as property to be inherited, the book, regarded as the original material substratum of the literary expression, appears as the first source of literary heritage. Therefore, by turning the literary manuscript into a heritage item, this becomes our centre of interest, hence focusing the literary heritage research on the tangible element the manuscript embodies.

Different approaches can be taken for the study of literature tangibility; among which it is worth highlighting the use of modern technologies for the digitisation and conservation of records with historical value. Besides, the benefits of digitisation and other technologies concerning tasks within the field of archives and libraries such as classification and study must be considered as well.

In this sense, the different works by Bukhari and Dengel and other authors - (Ul-Hasan, Bukhari and Dengel) and (Jenckel, Bukhari and Dengel)- to facilitate the handling and study of the digitised documents using OCR are noteworthy. The work of Calanducci et al. and the article of El Bannay et al. are also worth mentioning. While the first work deals with the benefits of digitisation as well as the need of a good compiling system to make literary heritage accessible; the latter discusses the added complexities of the use of these technologies for texts written in Arabic.

Beyond the use of recent technologies for the creation, management and study of literary records, other approaches to the enhancement of heritage value in the material base of the literary expression can be found. Among them, the article of Connell on book collecting is worth highlighting because of the influence it exerts on other works.

The literary heritage as the immaterial legacy of the author as a creator

Another possible comprehension of the literary heritage concept which appears to be antagonistic to the approach described in the section above is the one that conceives literary heritage research as the study of the immaterial legacy generated and created by the author. In this way, the importance of the literary expression is put, on the one hand, on the set of ideas, values, feelings, etc. the creator-subject has generated and, on the other hand, on the study of the aesthetic quality of their texts.

Thus, the immaterial dimension of literature plays a prominent role in this research line. However, given the uniqueness of each author, the works developed

around this conception of literary heritage do not offer a single methodology. Instead, each of them adapts to the specific characteristics of the author. It is for this reason that we can find such disparate works as Izotova's, dedicated to the philosopher and writer Unamuno, which takes a philosophical approach to make the figure of Unamuno and his philosophical principles known through the reading of his literary works, Karo's article, which refers to Dostoyevsky and his descriptions of epilepsy as the starting point for research on the psychological impact of this phenomenon or on the cultural complexities underlying cross-cultural phenomena; as it is the acceptance of Shakespeare's works by Asian cultures (Yang).

Along with this approach to the intangible dimension of an author's literary heritage, it is also possible to define a research line that focuses on the figure of the literary creator to emphasise, however, not their intangible creation, but their biography. An example of this research line is Pereira's work, which focuses on analysing the boom of biopics on the figure of Jane Austen and how her own biography gradually becomes part of the British literary heritage.

What is common to all these works is the fact that the author becomes the focus of the discussion on literary heritage — whether to analyse their concept of cosmivision, the cultural context depicted in their works, the feelings described in the work, the language used or, simply, their life. In this way, this line of research keeps a personal approach around literary heritage.

The social being in literary heritage

Literature is a cultural expression in which a subject, the author, offers the audience a written work. The latter, the intended audience of the literary work, gets immersed in the work and, at the same time, is influenced by it. In this way, author, book and society become part of a whole. If the two research lines described focused on 1) the text and its materiality and 2) the author; this third line emphasises the social value of literary heritage.

Given the complexity of the object of study, a number of very different research sub-lines appear around the analysis of the literary heritage social being; for this reason, they will be dealt with individually.

Language. One of the ways literature influences our society is through transformation of our language. This is done through the introduction of new terms, the transition from oral to written culture, through a grammar setting for those languages that do not have a normative grammar, etc. One of the most paradigmatic examples in this sense is Shakespeare, who enriched the English language lexicon through his works in such a way that his influence is still noticeable in today's

everyday language.

Among the articles analysed in our research we have found examples of works that considered the influence of a specific work or author in their own native language, as it is the case of Kim's article, which deals with the language of Atticism, or the work of Silagadze and Ejibadze on the impact on society of the use of dialects as literary language and the perception of one's own language.

Collective identity. Communities build collective cultural imaginaries which are shared by the members of each community. The literature produced in a specific cultural context is a key source for the creation of that collective cultural imaginary, since this shared participation of common histories, places and characters reinforces the sense of collective identity of such cultural groups.

This premise is the base for research works on the influence of literature and literary heritage in the identity construction of certain groups as well as the valorisation of their historical memory.

Therefore, literary heritage can be understood as a part of a people's or community's intangible heritage, highlighting the close relationship existing between literary tradition, people and identity.

One of the most recent works examining this type of role played by literature is Shen's, which offers a critical view on the patriotic approach of most works of children's literature in China with the aim to stir up this feeling of identity. Another example worth mentioning, cited in a large number of articles, is the study of Sayfulina et al. which explores the relationship of Tartar literature and Sufism and the traditional beliefs of this people. In other cases, even if literary heritage is not the focus of the research, this heritage is understood as a key factor to build a collective identity. This is the case of Wilce Jr., who places literary heritage as an essential element for the construction of an identity, together with religion, ideology, ethnicity and nationalism.

Literary canon. The last point to be considered when examining the relationship between literature and society is the figure of the literary canon. This term refers to a body of literary works that strive to survive over time through the recognition of several actors who value their relevance (Bloom). These actors can be academic institutions, social groups, critical studies, or, even, other authors that acknowledge and recognise the influence of a specific author in their work. However, there is not a single literary canon, but a myriad of works that persist in society in different ways, thereby becoming literary heritage.

In this way, different articles on literary heritage linked to the notion of literary canon in its various meanings have been identified. On the one hand, Parlevliet's

work, stands as an example of work that refers explicitly to a literary canon chosen by the academia. The author examines how adaptations can help in the conservation and dissemination of a canonical literary heritage whose reading is in decline. On the other hand, Ascoli and Capodivacca's text within the study framework of Machiavelli, explores how this author is double influenced by two different literary traditions: a classical literary heritage selected by the academic institution and a new vernacular literary heritage increasing in popularity within the Florentine society. To conclude, another noteworthy work is Hill's influential book, where literary heritage is viewed as canon based on the author's individuality, considering the readings shared by Bataille, Klossowski and Blanchot; a view that coincides with our approach to the notion of literary heritage.

Literary heritage, landscape and memory

As stated in the introduction section of this paper, literary heritage can also, be understood as a phenomenon that goes beyond the dimensions so far explored in this paper, even exceeding the bounds of the purely literary or linguistic sphere.

In this sense, the impact caused by literature in the collective imaginary is such that it can leave an imprint on the landscape. Castilla-la Mancha, in Spain is an example of literary landscape with its vast brown plains dotted with white-washed windmills so closely associated with Don Quixote that identity of the work, author and territory blend into one, becoming a literary landscape. Thus, the literary landscape can be conceived as a part of the associative cultural landscape concept which UNESCO defines as that landscape which generates mental associations with cultural or religious expressions (UNESCO, *Cultural Landscapes*).

This effect caused by literature does not only concern landscapes but also more intimate spaces. Therefore, this line of research contemplates those works relating to intimate spaces and not so much to the literary work or the author himself. Besides, this line also includes works that study the figure of an author's house-museum or articles that explore the management of literary heritage under the approach specified here.

In this way and differently from the research lines explored previously in this paper, this line on literary heritage relates to the disciplines of human geography and tourism. Articles by Hede and Thine, stand out for their contribution to this research line by examining the visitors' perception of authenticity in literary heritage museums - consolidating the idea that literary heritage can be something tangible and linked to a specific location-. On the other hand, Gibson, researches on the relations between tourism, literary heritage and film adaptations. In the same

line, other studies offer a more applied approach, as in the work of Macleod, Hayes and Slater, which focuses on the planning of themed self-guided routes on literary heritage or the latest article by Patricio Mulero and Rius-Ulldemolins where literary heritage is presented itself as an asset of the city — in this case, Barcelona — that can be used to Project a desired image of the city within the framework of UNESCO's creative cities network.

Conclusions

The literature review carried out in this paper allows conclusions to be drawn regarding the current state of research on literary heritage.

On the one hand, the present research has confirmed that continuity of, and increase in publications related to the concept of literary heritage starts to consolidate at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century. This growth is most prominently led by the United Kingdom and the United States in terms of volume of publications; surprisingly, the number of publications in countries with a well-recognised literary tradition such as Germany, France or Italy is rather low. Besides, research on prominent literary figures such as Shakespeare or Joyce from a heritage approach is also limited. Moreover, it has been proven that there is not a scientific journal taking the role of a renowned publishing platform around literary heritage or any authors or benchmark universities that excel in number of publications.

To these quantitative data, the vast variety of literary heritage theme and research lines identified must be added. Even though most research lines study literary heritage from a literary point of view; this diversity has resulted in literary heritage acquiring a multi-vocal dimension.

These data, together with the evolution in volume of publications, allow us to conclude that literary heritage research has been scarce until quite recently. However, a clear upward trend has been observed, and literary heritage is undergoing a process of definition and consolidation of the various related research lines, which is demonstrated by the fact that all the different lines present current research.

However, such consolidation needs the following consideration: the increase in literary heritage research (2008 and 2009) arises almost immediately after UNESCO's promotion of the intangible heritage concept, on the one hand (UNESCO, *Convention for the Safeguarding of the intangible*), and of the preservation of cultural expressions (UNESCO, *Convention on the protection and promotion*).

When reading both of UNESCO's conventions it is made clear that 1) cultural expressions are closely related to the notion of intangible heritage and 2) the activities, cultural property or services derived from such expressions also belong to intangible heritage given their symbolic character. Thus, cultural expressions being embedded in intangible heritage, create a holistic and plural comprehension of intangible cultural literary-related heritage; holistic as it constrains to transcend the literary view of literary heritage and encompasses all those elements both tangible and intangible, activities and services which, filled with literature or related to it, feed on and interpret literature; and plural because, thanks to this comprehension, it allows the confluence of diverse disciplines to create knowledge on literary heritage.

Thus, the qualitative analysis carried out in the present paper concludes that such areas of knowledge as human geography or cultural tourism allow to delve into literary heritage from a different approach. For this reason, we consider it is necessary to encourage research on literary heritage from the research lines established by those disciplines and to foster working methodologies that go beyond mainstream case studies. With this purpose, it would also be interesting the creation of specific academic platforms that channel and give higher visibility to literary heritage research developed from a multidisciplinary approach.

Likewise, it is interesting to identify multidisciplinary approaches with a potential to generate knowledge around the notion of literary heritage. Along these lines, it is convenient to draw attention to, for example, the tourism and heritage education pairing as a space from which to develop research lines devoted to the visualisation and dissemination of literary heritage. It is also necessary to foster research whose objective is to innovate in literary heritage's didactics, as it has been done in other disciplines that have a wider experience in the use of heritage for educational purposes- a good example is the development of object-based learning as an ideal method for the teaching of history through historical heritage (Lonch-Molina and Parisi-Moreno).

In conclusion, the present paper research has aimed at successfully defining a state of the art of literary heritage research that can be taken as a basis for the development of research related to the field of immaterial cultural heritage, which presents itself as an object of study with a high potential and a wide scope.

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The Reflection of the Myths of Other Nations on the Persian Contemporary Poetry

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Abstract Having various applications such as religious, psychological, sociological, and artistic, the myths have been intertwined with humans and their minds from the very beginning and up to now it has still been the same. The special atmosphere that is dominant in poetry has allowed the myths to have a much clearer manifestation in poems. Most poets benefit from their national and cultural myths. However, at times, they also use the myths of other nations to convey their own social, political, and cultural messages. This issue is caused by the existence of international communications in terms of language, religion, and different cultures among various countries. Apparently, in our modern life such communications are not very little and as compared to the past, it is much easier for the poets and writers to become familiar with various cultures. In fact, to express various intentions, the Iranian contemporary poets have also benefitted from the myths of other nations, such as Greece, Rome, India, Egypt, and others. In this article, while considering the poems of four contemporary Iranian poets, namely Sohrab Sepehri, Ahmad Shamlou, Mohammad Reza Shafiei Kadkani, and Tahereh Saffarzadeh, we studied the extent to which the Iranian poets have paid attention to the myths of other nations. The findings revealed that the Iranian contemporary poets have mostly benefitted from the myths of Greece and Rome; however, they have not been inattentive to the myths of other nations.

Key words: Persian poetry; contemporary poetry; myth; Greece; Rome; India.

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Introduction

Myths and poetry are closely related in such a way that separating them from each other seems to be impossible. Many researchers have tried to explain this relationship. Since a long time ago, the Persian poetry has also had a special relationship with mythology and the role of the myths in the enrichment of its concepts has been confirmed by the critics. Since a long time ago, by referring to different myths, the poets of this country have expressed their social, political, and cultural messages in the form of beautiful poems. The presence of the myths of each nation in the poems of its poets is something common and necessary; however, at times it can be observed that the poets of a country have also benefitted from the myths of other nations and conveyed their messages by benefitting from these signs. The most significant myths that have a major presence in Persian poetry are the Islamic, religious, and national myths of the ancient Iran; but the myths of Greece and Rome, India, and other places have entered the Persian contemporary poetry and their study and explanation is certainly pleasurable.

In this era, the close relationship between the culture and literature of different nations via many translations of the works of different countries into various languages can be regarded as the most important factor of the familiarity of the poets with the myths of other nations and their application in poetry. Moreover,

by considering the Persian poems of four contemporary poets, namely Sepehri, Shamloo, Shafiei Kadkani, and Saffarzadeh, we intend to study the non-Iranian myths in different sections of Greek and Roman mythology, myths of India and Buddha, and the myths of other countries.

The Myths of Greece and Rome

After the Constitutional Revolution in the twentieth century in Iran and the translation of various Western works and the different trips taken by the poets to other countries, the ground has been paved for their familiarity with the myths and cultures of other nations, especially the Greek and Roman myths. Such myths have a considerable manifestation in the Persian contemporary poetry. Siren, Narcissus, Aphrodite, Megara, Apollo, Trojan, and so on are the most significant Greek and Roman myths that have been used in the Persian contemporary poetry. At times, the historical figures of these nations have also been transformed into mythological symbols and they have also been taken into consideration in the Persian poetry.

In his book, “the Sound of the Water Footsteps,” Sohrab Sepehri, a famous contemporary poet, speaks of one of the Greek myths in this way: “Conquering a city by three or four wooden horsemen” (Sepehri *Eight* 284).

These verses, in fact, are referring to the city of Troy which was set aflame by the attackers who had apparently been defeated and left the place. This story has been mentioned in detail in the 8th Song of Iliad (Homer 181) and also in Aeneid, that is, the 2nd book of the epic poetry (Virgil 59 onwards). Sepehri has only referred to a part of this story and he even avoids mentioning its name so that the reader can have a better chance of thinking it over. Another Greek myth which also appears in Sepehri’s poetry is the “Siren” or “Sierra:” Build a boat shall I / launch it will I/As such shall I ride/ Never shall I love the blues nor the Sea [...] the fairies emerging their head out of the water/and in the light of the loneliness of the fishermen/shall they cast a spell from the top of their ringlets (Sepehri *Eight* 363).

In these verses, Sohrab has taken “Siren” into consideration and, similar to Odyssey, he is trying to avoid being infatuated and deceived by these beautiful charmers. Siren or the Sea Fairy is at times portrayed as a creature with the body of a bird and the head of a woman and in other cases just as a woman. The sirens were the daughters of the God of the Sea (the Forks or Trident). Their singing was very beautiful and enticing and they could mislead the sailors with their beautiful voice and attract them to the fatal rocks on which they were singing. Odyssey, the legendary hero of Greece, could safely pass through their island since, following the advice of Sierra, the witch, he had asked his companions to fill their ears with some

wax and fasten him tightly to the mast so that despite their deception, the ship would not be misled and he could listen to their singing with no danger. According to another legend, a group of heroes known as the Argonets also succeeded in crossing the passage of the Sirens as a singer called Orpheus who was accompanying them sang so pleasant and heavenly songs that no one listened to the angels anymore.

According to some later legends, the Sirens who had failed as Odyssey had escaped and Orpheus was victorious, threw themselves into the sea and were destroyed. According to Avid (the Roman Poet), they had been very beautiful women who were the companions of the daughter of Demeter, the Greek legendary Goddess. They had been by her side when she was kidnapped. Since they had done nothing when she was being kidnapped, Demeter had turned them into birds with a head resembling the head of a woman (Grimal 128). The attractive voice of these sea fairies has also been mentioned in another verse by Sohrab: “The tarry wall! /Go away/the sorrowful end of the attractive voices! / Fall down” (Sepehri *Eight* 89).

This sorrowful end refers to death; as the heroes and sailors who were infatuated by the Sirens’ voices moved towards the fatal rocks which resulted in their death.

Narcissus is another Greek myth to which Sohrab has referred in his poems. Narcissus in Persian means Narges which is the name of a flower. While using this name, Sohrab has also referred to origin of this legend: “Oh, the oldest portrait of Narges in the sorrowful mirror/My attraction to you has also taken me/to the air of perfection/Perhaps” (Sepehri *Eight* 435).

In the ancient Greece, Narges has been the symbol of dying early. According to this myth, a handsome youth named Narcissus was infatuated by himself when he gazed at the reflection of his own face in the water and he was turned into a flower after his death. In China, similar to Greece, Narges means “the fairies of the eternal sea and since this flower blooms in the Chinese New Year, it will lead to prosperity after twelve months” (Hall 308). By using the word Narges, Sohrab intends to associate the mirror and the blood of this ancient myth. The words attraction and perfection also better support this concept. Narcissus has seen his own picture in the mirror of the water, and he is infatuated by it and, in a way, he has caused his own death as well as sadness and grief. In his own words, Sohrab, himself, has said: “Close to the water, Narcissus reaches the loneliest moment of his own life” (Sepehri, *Blue* 49). That’s why he regards the attractiveness of Narges as his leading light to reach a kind of perfection. Being so handsome was the reason that Narcissus had become very proud of himself and that he ignored everyone even the Goddesses.

Apparently, Sohrab was highly interested in the Greek myths. Sepehri was so

highly connected to these myths that, at times, he expected his readers to understand and remember the whole myth by merely referring to the name of a city. Please note the following verse: “Life is a slow blow/ upon the rock of Megar” (Sepehri *Eight* 323).

Megar is the name of one of the ancient cities of Greece which was located close to Athens. “According to the Greek myths, there is a rock in the city of Megar which makes a sound in case it receives a blow by a pebble and the reason is that once Apollo had put his harp on it” (Abedi 345). Sohrab has considered the attractiveness of this sound and has resembled the brevity and loveliness of life to the same blow upon the rock of Megar.

Icarus is another myth that can be mentioned among the international myths used in Sohrab’s poetry. In two parts of “Eight Books, Sohrab has referred to this myth. Of course, in each reference, he has included the myth in the context of a poem. In the poem named “Shasoosa,” Sohrab says: I leap/I leap/on a faraway plain/ my wings are burnt by the sun/and fall on the ground shall I while hating this awakening” (Sepehri *Eight* 140). After a few more pages, he has also written: “a face is smiling at death in the silvery water” (ibid. 143).

Icarus, the son of Deadarus, was an artist, craftsman and artisan of the ancient times whose innovative inventions including labyrinth and the brass cow are considered as his most original and noble works. Icarus could escape the prison by making wings both for himself and his own son. The wings were attached to his body and that of his son by some wax. Despite his constant warnings to his son regarding keeping his distance from the sun that would melt the wax away, his son flew so high in the sky that the wax was melted away and he fell down in the sea and was drowned” (Meghdadi 29). As a result, the burning of the poet’s wings in the sun and the face that smiles at death in the water are reminders of the melting of the wax on the wings of Icarus’s son and his drowning in the sea.

Among other contemporary poets, Shamloo is a poet who is interested in non-Iranian myths. He is highly informed about the Greek and Roman mythology and is impressed by the Western works. In the following phrases, Shamloo has juxtaposed the Greek myths and has conveyed his social message to his readers by the association of these myths:

“Forgiveness your gods would bestow upon Sisyphes/ the unfortunate Prometheus am I/ who has spread a food table / from the exhausted¹ liver /for the crows with no fate” (Shamloo 306) and in another verse, Shamloo has referred

¹ In Persian, the word “exhausted” has two meanings, namely being physically tired and being injured. Here, apparently, the poet has used it in its second meaning. However, he may have also taken the first meaning into consideration.

to the Achilles Heel as follows: “With the Achilles Heel/ he passed through/ the bloody field of fate” (ibid.727). Of course, Shamloo has used many Greek myths in his writings and, at times, a special myth is associated without making any direct reference to it. For instance, I wish I could / — only for a moment I wish I could — / let all these people be seated upon my shoulders/and take them around the bubble of the soil/to see with their own eyes/and to believe me/ where their sun is” (ibid. 658). Obligated to carry the earth upon his shoulders, “Atlas” is also associated with the Greek myths.

Shamloo also mentions the Roman myth Janus: “A fatal ugliness is/ your other side/Oh! The life-giving profile of Janus” (ibid. 974). Janus is one of the gods of the ancient Rome, guardian of the doors and had two faces: one facing the past which induced death and the other facing the future which promised life.

Saffarzadeh is also another poet of the contemporary period of the Persian poetry who has also been interested in the myths of other nations. Among the Greek myths, “Aphrodite” is the first myth which attracts her attention. In the following phrase, the poet has mentioned: “Impossible is taming the aliens /without the Aphrodite belt” (Saffarzadeh, *Movement* 41).

Aphrodite, the goddess of love, is more renown with her Roman title “Venus”. Being the most beautiful and seductive goddess, Aphrodite is regarded an alchemist goddess. She chooses her own lovers and is never the victim of any lover (Bolen 28). Although goddesses such as Hera, Demeter, and Persephone have been seduced by male gods, Aphrodite has always been successful and fleeing. Some regard her as the daughter of Zeus and others consider her as the daughter of Uranus. When Cronus castrated Uranus and threw his penis into the sea, a girl named Aphrodite, a woman (born from the waves) or (born from the god’s sperm) was given birth. Aphrodite was the wife of Hefesjos; however, she was in love with Ares, the god of hunting. In a competition that was held to choose the most beautiful goddess among Aphrodite, Hera, and Athens, Paris chose Aphrodite. Her favorite animal was pigeon and her special plants were the red rose and myrtle (Grimal 82-85). Being familiar with this myth, Saffarzadeh has used her name since it was due to the supports of Aphrodite that the extinction of the people of Troy was prevented after the collapse of this city. After the city was set afire, with the assistance of her father and son, Aphrodite could evacuate the Penates, the family gods of Troy, out of the burning city and settled them down in other lands of Rome. As a result, they regarded Aphrodite (or Venus in the Italian language) as the supporter and protector of Rome and the great grandmother of Julii [...] (ibid. 84). Saffarzadeh has regarded Aphrodite as the protector of the people against the invasion of the aliens.

Moreover, Aphrodite is equal to the Iranian Anahita, the Mesopotamian Ishtar, and the Egyptian Isis which are all mother goddesses and the symbols of fertility.

The Indian and the Buddhist Myths

Another group of non-Iranian myths which have been used more often in the Persian poetry belong to India and the Buddhist myths. India and the ancient Persia have had common myths although Iranians have forgotten many of them; however, some of these myths and some other myths that belong to India and Buddhism have appeared considerably in the Persian poetry. Buddha, Veda, Nirvana, and Narges [...] are some of these myths.

In other verses of his poem named “the passenger,” Sohrab Sepehri has written: “I am the interpreter of the sparrows of the Gang’s Valley/at the side of the road of “Sernat”/I have described the Sufi earring representing Tibet/ for the ears of the Benares girls having no ornaments/ Oh! The morning prayers of the Vedas /Put upon my shoulders all the weight of freshness” (Sepehri *Eight* 321).

The Gang is a sacred river in India which passes at the side of the city of Benares. The city of Benares and the Sernat Road refer to the great myth of “Siddhartha” who was changed into Buddha. Buddha means brightness and light. This person whose life has been wrapped in a halo of myth was born around six centuries ago before the Birth of Christ. He was a prince whose mother had died one week after his birthday and who was brought up by his aunt; however, he was always deeply contemplating. He was married at the age of sixteen and underwent austerity for a long time to grasp the true meaning of life and its suffering; but when he realized that austerity could not help him reach the truth, he quit it. Then, for a long time, he sat under a tree named Banyan which is also sometimes called Sepidar and thought deeply until he could find the truth and his being became quite brilliant and he truly became Buddha. He was looking for Nirvana and finally he could find it. Before giving birth to Buddha, in her dream, his mother had seen a white elephant coming down from the sky and entering his body. All the dream interpreters had predicted that she would have a son that would become the ruler of the world and he would truly become Buddha.

He was a freeman and, thus, he was self-confident. He never forced anyone to his creed/religion and he disliked it if anyone changed his religion abruptly. He talked to people very simply and he had actually found the true meaning of life. Shamsia believes that “Sernat” is the name of the same road by which Buddha travels to Benares and the first school of Jiddu Krishnamurtiis was also located at the side of the Sernat Road, close to the city of Benares. After discovering four

eternal truths, Buddha goes to Benares and makes a sermon.

“Veda” is also a collection of poems and religious songs of the Aryans whose most ancient part is the Book of Vedas which has been written at the time when Iran and India were joined together. It is comprised of 1017 pieces of poetry and 10500 verses and is, nowadays, still used in the religious rituals of the Hindus. It is one of the oldest texts which exists in the Indo-European language and its old age reaches 1700 to 1100 Before the Birth of Christ. Sohrab has also referred to the same sacred book of Hindus in another place: “The neighboring woman is weaving a net at her window/ singing/ I am reading the “Veda” (Sepehri *Eight* 343).

Due to the significance of the Buddha myth, Saffarzadeh addresses the Indian poet “Sharat” and says: “Sharat! What have you done that Buddha has gifted his fate to Japan?” (Saffarzadeh *Echo* 24).

Moreover, Saffarzadeh also mentioned the tree under which Buddha could reach the truth and said: “At that time near the river appeared a woman /... while opening her little umbrella under the Buddha tree” (Saffarzadeh, *Dam* 55).

The interest in the myths of India is not just seen in the poetry of Sepehri and Saffarzadeh. Moreover, in this regard, Shamloo has also mentioned that: “Sorrow surrounds him [...] and similarly Nirvana does surround Buddha” (Shamloo 51).

Shafiei Kadkani also mentions the myth of Nirvana as follows: “I know not where you are taking me/toward the sky/or to the silence of the soil/or toward Nirvana and the light/Where are you taking me so stealthily? (Shafiei Kadkani 431).

Nirvana is the outstanding goal of Buddhism and it is the final stage of the Buddhist creed on the way to reaching complete enlightenment, consciousness, and absolute tranquility. Nirvana is the state in which the human being is completely released from ignorance, suffering, lust, desire, dependencies and achieves complete wisdom. Moreover, it is the last stage of Buddhism and is considered as the ultimate goal of Buddhists.

Nirvana also appears in the poetry of Saffarzadeh: “the sound of the bells of the caravan encourages me to meet the Nirvana” (Saffarzadeh *Dam* 18).

Another verse in the poetry of Saffarzadeh leads us to another myth from India. This myth is actually “Rama.” Rama, one of the oldest kings of India, is one of the off-springs of Vishnu. Vishnu is one of the three main gods in India and plays the role of the protector of the world. Vishnu has various off-springs and different manifestations and Rama is one of those off-springs (Zekrgoo 72). In Rig Veda, Rama means darkness. Rama rules over the “Ivicies” and is the husband of Sita, the goddess of the Hindus. Based on this background, Saffarzadeh says: “Let’s sing with them/Rama is god/ Rama is the truth” (Saffarzadeh *Echo* 18).

Another concept that Sohrab has considered and used several times in his poetry in different ways is lilac and the myths that are related to it. Although lilac is also related to the Iranian myths, it seems to be much livelier in India.

The word lilac has been used twenty-two times in the poems of Sohrab. "Padme" is also the name of one of his poems. Pashae believes that the Indians have named Lilac as such and sung different songs in its praise from the ancient times until now. In India, it is a valuable secret both for the Hindus and Buddhists. They regard the life of human beings as the story of the lilac. From the moment when it blossoms in the water until the morning when it comes out of the water and opens its bud with the first kiss of the dawn, lilac is similar to a human being that has blossomed from a bud to a full bloom. In the history, Padma has been regarded as a sacred flower and it has reached the status of a god from that of a simple flower (Abedi 334). Yahaghi believes that Padma actually refers to a lilac which is in the fourth hand of Vishnu. Lilac is also known as the water flower, the flower of life and creation. "Lotus" is another name by which this flower is called. The research studies have shown that this flower has extraordinary significance in different countries and it has been related to the gods.

Various types of lilac have been worshipped in ancient Egypt and many areas of Asia. At the beginning, its sacred aspect was based on its watery environment since water was the ancient symbol of an old ocean from which the universe has been created. Lilac, moving on the surface of the water, was similar to the uterus. Both in the myth and the art of Egypt and India, the petals in full bloom represent a creator god. Since it is opened at the dawn and closed at the dusk, lilac is similar to the sun which, itself, is the Divine source of life (Hall 309).

At times, lilac took the place of the sacred tree and in its relationship to Brahmas and Vishnu, the sun of the gods of India is also associated with the lilac because Brahmas is born from a lilac and a lilac is grown from the uterus of Vishnu. Shakti, the wife of the gods, is also accompanying lilac. As a result, most of the gods and goddesses of India are all related to lilac. Moreover, lilac is one of the valuable secrets in the Buddhist teachings. It is the same paradise that has been promised by Buddha and it is also the sign of "Amitabhs," the god who is the leader. Moreover, lilac is one of the eight signs which existed at the back of Buddha's feet as a symbol of being blessed and blissful. Some also believe that the statues of Buddha and lilac "represent the same thing: the great serenity of a soul that is awakened in itself" (Burckhardt 159).

Shamisa considers lilac in India as a sign of the spirit of ether and purity which is rising from the swamp of the world; however, it is not contaminated by it and he

regards the same reason for the way the Jukis sit. He regards lilac as the secret of eternity and presence in all places as lilac can live both in the soil and in the water. Lilac is also significant because it has a circular shape and it can be the symbol of the carrousel and the wheel of life. Buddha regards lilac as the secret of the world (Shamisa 134).

Lilac also has a special status in the Iranian mythology and is related to the Nahid flower; it is considered as the main symbol of duality and from this viewpoint, the Iranian and Indian myths are similar to each other. Moreover, according to the myths, the semen of Zoroaster is preserved in the seeds of lotus in the Kayanase River and this is the reason why there is a relationship between Zoroastrianism and Sun Worship or Mithraism. Of course, this can be proved only on the condition that we accept that based on some myths, Mitra is not born from the stone but from the fruit of the pine or from the lilac bud. Apparently, Sohrab is familiar with these myths as he has considered the lilac as a mysterious flower and he is connected to this flower whenever he is in a state of fascination and supernatural attraction. The first time that lilac is mentioned in “Eight Books” is when Sohrab uses it as the name of a poem in which he mentions that the seed of a lilac is brought by the wind and whenever the poet refers to his own death, he witnesses the growth of a lilac in that place. All of the columns are covered with lilac and finally Sohrab says: “lilac covered all my life/it was all my soul” (Sepehri *Eight* 120).

In the poem of “the Mirror Flower” Sohrab (*Eight* 145) also mentions the blue steam of the lilac flowers and calls the god of the lilac plains. The verses of this poem are so juxtaposed to each other that it seems the poet is waiting for Succinates or the successors of Zoroastrianism or Zoroaster himself or is expecting the emergence of another Buddha. In fact, Sohrab is preoccupied with a mystic or spiritual contemplation. In another place, he refers to the place of the lilac blossoms as the Divine Heaven: “At that place, there are lilacs, there are doors to the Divine Heaven” (ibid. 222). He says: the gardener of the blue lilacs/the doors of consciousness were opened” (ibid. 150). That’s why when Sohrab returns from the spring of sleep, he sees that “there were birds that sang and the lilac was opened” (ibid. 241). The significance of the lilac seed, especially in relation to the Zoroastrian myth, has led Sohrab, while flying in an airplane over the skies, to see it on the earth in the following way: “I saw a train, taking the lilac seed and singing of the Canary” (ibid. 279).

When he reaches the stage of self-knowledge, he refers to lilac like Buddha: “It is my time, oh! The door on top/oh! The road give my message to the silent lilac” (ibid. 264). Since lilac is secret of mysticism and Sohrab thinks that not all people

can comprehend the truth of mysticism, thus he says: “Probably it is our duty/to seek the truth/between lilac and the century” (ibid. 299). The significance of lilac in different religions and myths of different people has not been hidden from Sohrab’s viewpoint and this is the reason why he has whispered to himself: “Under the rain, one should write things, one should speak, one should plant a lilac” (ibid. 292).

Perhaps planting a lilac is a type of expectation for the birth of the predecessor of Zoroaster, the birth of Buddha, the birth of Brahma or Mitra, each of whom could open a valve of truth to the materialistic world. The fact that lilac is not contaminated nor is it soaked by the water of the swamp, which are both signs of a type of detachment and disinterest in the materialistic world, is mentioned as distance by Sohrab: “Although a good pillow is the curve of the water /for the loving and fragile sleep of the lilac/a distance is always there” (ibid. 308).

On the whole, Sohrab’s viewpoint regarding lilac has been based on his knowledge of all the myths related to this beautiful flower and every time he has shown his awareness in a beautiful way.

The Myths of Other Nations

In addition to the Greek, Roman, Indian, and Buddhist myths, the Persian poets have sometimes mentioned myths from other nations such as myths from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and so on. In this section, some myths from the aforementioned nations shall be mentioned. In his poem, named “the traveler,” Sohrab Sepehri mentions a place: “The owl sings in the hanging garden” (Sepehri, *Eight* 284).

The Hanging Gardens are one of the Seven Wonders. These gardens were located in Babylon and it is said that these gardens “were built by King Nebuchadnezzar II for his wife, Amytis of Media. Apparently, the reason why these gardens are called hanging is that they were built in seven stories” (Shamisa 86). These gardens are now destroyed, and they are more mythological in state. This destruction is related to the singing of the owl. During his trip, Sohrab looks all around and with the following verses, he has also referred to this myth.

Another such myth that can be named in the poetry of Shafiei is the myth of the creation of the world with speech. This can be found in the myths of Egypt. Moreover, similar myths can be found among those of Mesopotamia. For instance, among the myths of Mesopotamia, when the gods want to challenge the strength of their son, Marduk, they ask him to destroy and recreate one of the constellations by the power of his speech. “A constellation did they put among themselves /Then their son Marduk was addressed/to influence the gods with his command, they asked him /Do command the constellation to be destroyed and recreated and let it be that way/

Say a word so that this constellation would be demolished! / He began to speak and the constellation was destroyed/ Once more did he begin to speak again and the constellation was recreated” (Mc Call 77).

Of course, the effect of the miracle of the words and the starting point of the Creation have also been mentioned in the holy Quran and the phrase “Say it and it shall be” actually considers the Creation of the world under the influence of the Power underlying God’s Speech. In the following verses, Shafiei has said: “At the beginning, there was only the Speech and the Speech was alone/ and the Speech was beautiful/you shall give the Speech its old glory/ Amen! / also the virginity of the first day, Amen!” (Shafiei Kadkani 350).

Among various verses and poems of Shafiei, we can see another non-Iranian myth from Egypt which is named Sphinx. “Sphinx” is the giant from the Egyptian legends and the myth of Oedipus is a combination of a human being and an animal with the body of a lion, decorated with the wings of an eagle and having the head of a woman. This legendary creature actually killed those who could not solve his riddle and the ancient Egyptians regarded him as the symbol of the sun. The statue of the great Sphinx which is located in Egypt is carved from a rock and it is 17 meters high and 39 meters in length.

“At night, close to the Nile River, and in the absence of astronomy/in the long shadow of Sphinx/where the light did illuminate/ the bed of the treasury of Pharaoh/ in the long shadow of Pharaoh/one can grab by the hand/the death that is like a callus on the body of life” (ibid. 330).

To convey the social message of his poem, Shafiei has benefitted from the Egyptian myth of Sphinx and has persuaded the mind of the readers.

Conclusion

Besides using their own national and religious myths, the contemporary and Persian poets, at times, benefit from the myths of other nations to express their own thoughts and ideas. Such familiarity has apparently taken place after the translation of the English works. Our research in this study has revealed that among the non-Iranian myths, the Persian contemporary poets have shown more interest in the myths of Greece and Rome. Such an interest has been more a result of their familiarity with the myths of Greece and Rome due to the translation of the poetry and prose works of the Western authors. Moreover, the myths of India have been of more interest to the Iranian poets. Such an interest can be a result of the period of the relationship between the cultures of Iran and India. For instance, the lilac is one of the common myths between Iran and India.

In addition, some of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian myths have also appeared in the Persian poetry and this point indicates that the Persian poets do not restrict themselves only to their own specific culture and benefit from the whole global capacity in order to convey their own message.

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Contemporary Light Novels: Subculture, Literature, and Morality

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Abstract The light novel is a new literary genre heavily influenced by the Japanese character-oriented subculture in the postmodern era. This genre does not belong to a traditional literary lineage but has emerged as the literary equivalent to contemporary visual subcultures. The main purpose of this genre is not to depict reality as does naturalistic literature but to imitate the fictional worlds represented in manga, anime, and video games. However, light novels are not fictional u/dystopias completely removed from reality and social ethics. To the contrary, they inevitably relate to distinctive ethical problems. This paper focuses on light novels and its ethical issues during the 2000s and 2010s, when the light novel matured as a genre. First, we examine Tsukasa Fushimi's *Ore no imōto ga konna ni kawaii wake ga nai* [My Little Sister Can't Be This Cute], one of the most important works in this era, relating to the Moe culture and its unethical consumption of characters' physicality. Second, we analyze the otherworldly fantasy genre, the most widely consumed genre in the 2010s, and consider its dual attitude to reality: escape from real-life society and sympathy for social minorities. This analysis clarifies the moral ambiguities and conflicts embedded in contemporary light novels.

Key words Light Novel; Naturalistic Realism; Moe Culture; *Ore no imōto ga konna ni kawaii wake ga nai*; Otherworldly Fantasy

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Introduction

Contemporary subcultures, such as manga, anime, and video games, exert considerable influence on Japanese media culture. In 2015, Japanese manga, anime, and video games were valued at approximately 2.3 trillion yen — a significant share of the total value of the Japanese culture industry.¹ Moreover, the ongoing classification and segmentation of Japanese consumers based on factors such as gender, age, and taste has led to the birth of various genres and cultural groups, such as *Otaku*.²

The rise of manga, anime, and video games also has impacts on contemporary Japanese literature. The most significant example is the light novels, a new literary genre primarily inspired by manga, anime, and video games. Emerging in the 1980s, the light novel does not belong to a traditional literary lineage but is the literary equivalent of the contemporary visual subcultures characterizing modern consumerist society. Historically, Japanese subcultures have been criticized by their focus on content perceived to be sexually explicit and overtly violent and consequently have often been considered to be relatively unethical genres (Schodt 28–29).³ However, this perception does not mean that Japanese subcultures are representational spaces

1 See Dentsū Communication Institute 75, 108, 118.

2 In a broad sense, Otaku refers to people strongly attached to or highly knowledgeable about a specific cultural product or to people who spend significant amounts of time or capital on a product. Otaku also serves as a “general term for people who indulge in a group of subcultures such as comic books, animated films, games, personal computers, science fiction, special effects, figurines, and other such things that are deeply connected to one another” (Azuma 8).

3 See Fredrik Schodt, *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga*.

devoid of moral considerations. In an effort to shed light on the ethical issues involved in Japanese subcultures, we focus on the light novel and seek to clarify how this literary genre inevitably evokes ethical issues regardless of their commercialism and entertainment value.

Light Novels: A Fictional World Separated from Reality

The term *light novel* originally referred to entertainment novels aimed at young readers and has been popularized since 2000, chiefly through the Internet. During the 1980s and 1990s, labels such as Kadokawa Sneaker Bunko and Fujimi Fantasia Bunko published novels heavily influenced by manga and anime. These novels typically involved characters inspired by manga and anime, and their illustrations also drew on the aesthetics embodied in manga or anime, which made light novels very popular among teenagers familiar with contemporary Japanese subcultures. These new novels typically had light, easy-to-read content, so they became called light novels, and the term gained usage among not only fans but also critics, publishers, and bookstore owners throughout the 2000s.

Eiji Ōtsuka's contrastive analysis of light novels and modern naturalist literature is especially relevant in the context of this paper. Ōtsuka finds the most significant difference between light novels and naturalist literature in the subjects on which they focus. He argues that naturalist literature's primary purpose is to provide frank, factual depictions of reality, and diverse genres of modern Japanese literature, including mysteries and science fiction, employ the same mode of description based on the underlying ideology of "naturalistic realism" (28). However, naturalistic realism is not effective in light novels because their purpose is not to portray reality but to imitate the fictional world represented by manga and anime. Ōtsuka, therefore, defines light novels as a literary genre that depicts fictional elements in the world of manga and anime (24).

Defining light novels as literature independent of the ideology of naturalistic realism, Ōtsuka usually calls them character novels. This classification is very significant because it recalls the character-oriented culture that has flourished in Japan since the 1980s.¹ Light novels clearly emerged amid the surge of this character-oriented culture. For instance, Kazuma Shinjō agrees that light novels are literary works strongly focusing on characters, whose dispositions and behaviors, usually derived from the storyline and narratives, are deeply connected to visual images of characters (124).² Approaching the rise of character culture from a different per-

1 See Eiji Ōtsuka, *Character shōsetsu no tsukurikata*.

2 See Kazuma Shinjō, *Light Novel chō nyūmon*.

spective, Hiroki Azuma contends that modern Japanese subcultures, including light novels, have enabled the creation of a virtual database aggregating various character types (78). This database, in turn, makes it possible to create a reflexive system for producing and consuming characters without relation to reality and narratives — a cultural phenomenon epitomizing postmodern Japanese culture (45).

These arguments suggest that light novels can be categorized as a new literary genre based on a virtual database of characters that has emerged in Japanese postmodern culture. Light novels do not relate to the ideology of naturalist realism or the desire to depict reality; instead, they portray fictional worlds and prioritize the emotional desire for the characters. Hence, character-oriented production and consumption become dominant in light novels, while real-life ethical problems and social norms are relegated to the backburner.

However, it is not accurate to insist that light novels are fictional u/dystopias entirely removed from reality. In this paper, we seek to identify the moral ambiguities and conflicts occasionally represented in contemporary light novels, focusing on the period¹ since the latter half of the 2000s, when light novels matured as a literary genre. To this end, this paper first examines Tsukasa Fushimi's *Ore no imōto ga konna ni kawaii wake ga nai* [My Little Sister Can't Be This Cute, hereafter, *Oreimo*], one of the most popular and important light novels during the late 2000s and early 2010s, relating to the Moe culture and its unethical consumption of characters' physicality. Second, we analyze the otherworldly fantasy genre (異世界もの), the most widely consumed genre in the 2010s, focusing on its dual attitude to reality: escape from real society and sympathy for social minorities. Through this examination, we clarify how, while deviating from naturalistic realism, light novels, as a subculture literature, re/connect with social ethics.

***Oreimo*: The Conflict between Characters' Physical Consumption and Morality**

During the 2000s, the recently emerged Moe culture characterized Japanese subcultures. *Moe* refers to consumers' strong emotional attachment to beautiful female characters in manga and anime based on illustrations and individual traits of these characters without reference to the works' narrative or message. This form of content consumption appeared in 1990s and flourished throughout 2000s, along with of the character-oriented culture. The feeling of Moe can be evoked by a wide range of

1 Yoomin Nam has examined similar issue before, focusing on Nagaru Tanigawa's Haruhi Suzumiya series. See Yoomin Nam "A Study of the Description of Actual Disaster in "Light Novels": A Focus on the Series of Haruhi Suzumiya." *Border Crossings: The Journal of Japanese-Language Literature Studies* 4(2017): 89-99.

characters and their traits, such as a beautiful blond girl or a young girl with unrealistic cat ears. Moe can also describe relationships between characters, and one of the most popular categories is the younger-sister Moe (妹萌え), featuring the protagonist's deep emotional commitment to a younger sister. As Moe culture spread, younger-sister Moe appeared not only in manga and anime but also light novels.

Meanwhile, in the late 2000s, the most popular type of light novel was the young-adult light novel(青春ラノベ), focused on ordinary junior-high and high-school student life (Higuchi 51). Tsukasa Fusimi's *Oreimo* achieved huge success in this genre and introduced elements of the younger-sister Moe to the young-adult light novel. Serially published from 2008 to 2013, *Oreimo* sold more than 5 million copies.

Its plot is as follows: Kirino Kōsaka, gifted with both intelligence and beauty, ignores the protagonist, her older brother Kyōsuke Kōsaka. One day, Kyōsuke learns that Kirino is a passionate fan of beautiful girls games, in which a male protagonist enjoys the chance to love several beautiful girls. Kirino asks Kyōsuke about this manic hobby and, considering this *Otaku* taste to be embarrassing, seeks his help to communicate and make friends with other people. During this, their relationship gradually improves.

However, strong emotional attraction to a younger sister, a blood relative, is a social taboo unsuitable for pleasure reading such as light novels, so Fushimi adopts the strategy of ambiguity to avoid this ethical issue. A significant characteristic of *Oreimo* is that it features beautiful girls games in which “a single man (the protagonist) is surrounded by several beautiful girls or women, who have intense feelings of love for him” (Enomoto 145). In addition to Kirino, several beautiful girls appear in *Oreimo* — such as Manami, the siblings' childhood friend, and Kuroneko, who shares Kirino's *Otaku* taste. The inclusion of these heroines prevents Kyōsuke and Kirino's relationship from developing into a romantic one, eliminating suggestions of romantic love between brother and sister.

However, in contrast to beautiful girls games whose story diverges based on the protagonist's choices, novels typically progress along a linear timeline, and the protagonist does not have several loves simultaneously. Beautiful girls games, therefore, can prepare happy endings for each heroine, called, for example, “Manami's Ending” (エンド), but novels can have only a single ending. At the end of *Oreimo*, therefore, the protagonist Kyōsuke must choose one heroine, and he eventually settles on Kirino as his romantic partner.

Reflecting on writing *Oreimo*, Fushimi confessed that he planned to write the “complete Kirino ending” (完全なる桐乃エンド). Just as the author uses the term

“ending” (エンド), the protagonist Kyōsuke imagines himself as a major character in a beautiful girls game and chooses to follow Kirino, using game terminology such as “click” and “forking paths.”

Even though it’s my younger sister, I like her.

Some beautiful girls game protagonist decided this. And I ...

“Choose Kirino.”

I feel like I heard a phantom clicking sound. But the choice of forking paths has already been left far behind. I cannot backtrack, and I don’t have any intention of doing so.

I yell the same line I did at some point.

“I will ...”

This time, I will say my true feelings without lying. “I ...”

“I ... LOVE my younger sister Kirino ...!”

I have looked really hard, but there is no way out. There is no good place to compromise. All I can do is keep going straight ahead.¹ (Fushimi 12: 355–356)

In the end, Kyōsuke and Kirino decide to get married. This marriage ending legitimizes their choice within the narrative structure of the beautiful girls game, but the story also inevitably conflicts directly with the social taboo of incest.

Accordingly, the author employs a strategy, making the extreme compromise of limiting the marriage’s duration. Kyōsuke and Kirino hold a marriage ceremony with only them present and do not swear to love each other forever. Instead, they limit their pseudo-marriage to the short time until they both graduate from school. Furthermore, the marriage’s details remain undisclosed, so the essence of their marriage, including their sexual relationship, also stays extremely ambiguous.

Fushimi expressed awareness of this ambiguity, stating, “at Dengeki Bunko, it is very difficult to directly write an exhilarating story where everything is decided and people rush down a forbidden path” (Notof and Kazu)². The Dengeki Bunko label exclusively consists of light novels for teenagers published by Kadokawa. Fushimi’s statement can be interpreted as indicating his awareness that this theme was inappropriate for light novels. In short, the author’s originally intention and the

1 This quotation is translated from Japanese to English by this article’s authors.

2 Notof and Kazu. “*Ore no imoto ga konna ni kawaii wake ga nai* saishukan Fushimi Tsukasa sensei e; Last ni tsuite jikaisaku ni tsuite nado interview!” Akiba Blog, 14 June 2013. <<http://blog.livedoor.jp/geek/archives/51398941.html>> (accessed 23 Jul. 2018).

label's media conditions for teens combined to make love between near relatives ambiguous, and the story concludes with the compromise of a sexually unclear, time-limited marriage.

Readers' reactions, however, revealed that this strategy was not entirely successful. Amazon Japan, as of July 2018, had 612 reviews of the twelfth and final volume, including 263 positive and 281 negative. Reviews of the preceding eleventh volume were generally favorable, so the negative reviews of the twelfth volume stand out, indicating readers' disappointment with the ending. The most striking reviews are ethical criticisms of the incest: "[I] wanted [the author] to avoid the ending of serious incest." "If the author wants to do an incest story, he should not glorify the older brother." "Why did it shift to incest at the very end?"¹

Apparently, many readers viewed Kirino as the subject of younger-sister Moe until the eleventh volume. As described, Moe features an emotional commitment to virtual beautiful girls appearing in Japanese subcultures. Contrasting Moe with fetishism, Tamaki Saitō emphasizes that fetishes are feelings directed at real subjects or objects, whereas Moe feelings are directed at fictional characters. (188)² Also, as noted, Hiroki Azuma explains that in modern *Otaku* culture, the database of fragmented features of female characters that evoke Moe functions well, and female characters can be recursively produced by combining these features from the database without reference to reality.³

In the 2000s, the response to the Moe culture led to the coining of the expression "younger-sister Moe," lightly description of the esoteric culture making younger sisters objects of brothers' romantic interest — an originally taboo subject. *Oreimo* became representative of this movement in light novels. Readers saw Kirino as the subject of younger-sister Moe; in short, she was consumed as a signifier of fictional younger sisters. Japanese subculture often depicts teenaged girls too sexually without raising ethical issues (Yokota-Murakami 129)⁴. In *Oreimo*, until the middle of the story, Kirino also remains no more than a fictional character evoking feelings of Moe.

However, some readers had intense emotional resistance to the ending of a limited-time marriage because Kirino, whom they had viewed as a semiotic younger sister, became a vivid, active, physical presence that recalled reality to their minds.

1 See "Ore no imōto ga konna ni kawaii wake ga nai (12) Fushimi Tsukasa." <http://amazon.co.jp/dp/4048916076/ref=cm_sw_r_tw_dp_x_nUs0xbK0KJYCJ>(accessed 23 Jul. 2018).

2 See Tamaki Saitō, *Character seishin bunseki*.

3 See Hiroki Azuma, *Dōbutsuka suru postmodern: otaku kara mita nihonshakai*.

4 See Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, *Manga wa yokubō suru [Manga Desires]*.

In other words, the ending made explicit the incest implicit in younger-sister Moe, and readers then noticed and criticized its lack of morality. The limited-time marriage in *Oreimo* thus demonstrates that light novels can lack autonomy as works of fiction. The readers' negative reactions show that when characters consumed as objects of Moe develop real physicality, light novels are then interpreted according to social norms and gain strong potential to raise ethical questions.

Otherworldly Fantasy: The Dual Nature of Escape from Reality and Empowerment of Social Minorities

In the ongoing history of light novels, their readership has become diverse and expanded to readers in their 20s and 30s in the 2010s. Simultaneously, mainstream light novels have changed from young-adult novels to otherworldly fantasy, a new trend of stories in which a protagonist living in modern Japan is transported to another world. In many cases, these stories' settings are fantasy worlds completely separate from the real world. This genre spread rapidly after the hit of Kawahara Reki's *Sword Art Online*,¹ which still occupies a central position among light novels. These light novels representative of the 2010s feature distinctive ethical conflicts.

Many otherworldly fantasies have a socially unfortunate, vulnerable main character. For example, Rifujin Na Magonote's *Mushoku Tensei* (Jobless Reincarnation)² concerns a 34-year-old unemployed man who has locked himself in his room since his high school years. He calls himself "human trash" and regrets the ten empty years he has spent in his room. Later, after a collision with a truck, he is reincarnated in another world, where he can use his knowledge and experiences from the real world to relive an ideal life.

Considering such settings of otherworldly fantasies, Ichishi Iida points out that their main appeal lies in the sense of catharsis: the pathetic young man transported to another world gains excellent skills and approval from others he has not experienced previously (83-84). The most important cathartic element in the otherworldly fantasies is the main character's privileged position and abilities, which are often called "cheats" (チート). This term originally referred to changing a game's programming to gain player advantages, but in the context of light novels, it refers to the protagonist's far superior situation in outward appearance, skills, knowledge, and abilities. By providing characters with cheats and transcendent conditions, many otherworldly fantasies move away from the traditional literary motif of the

1 Reki Kawahara, *Sword Art Online*. 20 vols. to date. Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2009—.

2 See Rifujin Na Magonote, *Mushoku Tensei* [Jobless Reincarnation]. 8 vols. to date. Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2014—.

protagonist's diachronic growth through psychological and physical trial. That is, protagonists in otherworldly fantasies gain success through incredible advantages or cheats rather than personal progress or overcoming overwhelming difficulties. These protagonists, therefore, do not exhibit ethical attitudes, accepting their lives and taking responsibility for themselves in society.

Why did light novels colored by such a desire to escape reality take off in the 2010s? One important factor is the young generation's employment situation since the 2000s. As is well known, due to the dismantlement of the Cold War structure and the bursting of Japan's bubble economy, the long economic slump known as "the Lost Two Decades" began in the early 1990s. Moreover, as global capitalism permeated Japanese society, the traditional management system changed, forcing many young people into non-fulltime jobs, including temporary, part-time, and contract employment (Hayamizu 107-109).

Consequently, in the late 2000s, young people's employment and anxiety about the future become a serious social problem in Japan. For example, in the general magazine *Ronza* (2007), Tomohiro Akagi described the anxiety of working as a non-fulltime employee in Japanese society, where social and economic gaps had become increasingly static (55-57). Akagi strongly called attention to this issue, harshly criticizing the disparate social problems affecting mostly young people. In particular, his claim that impoverished young people secretly hoped for "war", which was no longer taboo in a society where social mobility and liquidity had become strictly limited, became a sensation in various media outlets, and his opinions sparked extensive discussion on young people's employment problems and poverty.¹

Given this widening social gap since the 2000s, otherworldly fantasies can be seen as a cultural response to the young generation's social conditions. As mentioned, many protagonists are young people who experience misfortune in the closed, claustrophobic conditions of real life but escape to another world, where they gain high positions and fame. These fantasy worlds stand as utopias where impoverished young people can be liberated from negative social conditions and enjoy a fast-paced life. These other worlds thus serve a similar function as Akagi enthusiastically asserted that war did.

Another major characteristic of otherworldly fantasies is the direct influence of video games. Since the 1980s, Japan has seen the rise of role-playing games (RPGs), represented by works such as *Dragon Quest* and *Final Fantasy*, set in worlds resembling medieval Europe and featuring adventurous heroes as the protagonists. Accordingly, the settings of otherworldly fantasy novels are not historically accu-

1 See Akagi Tomohiro, "'Maruyama Masao' o hippatakitai: 31sai freeter. kibo wa senso."

rate versions of medieval Europe but imaginary worlds inspired by video games. This influence can often be seen in the numerical values assigned to rate characters' abilities, as in RPGs. For example, in Tōno Mamare's *Log Horizon*, one character's abilities are listed as follows: "Name: Shiroe, level: 90, race: half-alv, occupation: Enchanter, HP: 8303, MP: 12088" (Tōno 18).

Otherworldly fantasies are usually faithful to game worlds and deeply connect to the preferences of the genre's main consumers, *Otaku*, who have an extremely strong interest in subcultures such as manga, anime, video games, and light novels. These consumers frequently become deeply immersed in fictional worlds and have been characterized as lacking social interests (Asano 107). The protagonists transported to game-like worlds in otherworldly fantasies, therefore, are meta-expressions of *Otaku* readers' self-images. Otherworldly fantasies rose to prominence in the 2010s as a new form of literary imagination intertwining light novels' depiction of fictional worlds and the *Otaku*'s desire to escape from social reality of young people's impoverished social conditions.

Although otherworldly fantasies realize the readers/protagonists' selfish desires for escapism, it should be noted that the main characters often express strong sympathy for social minorities living in the other world. These characters are usually oppressed by the majority and enjoy no guaranteed rights or place in their society — similar to protagonists' situations in the real world. For example, Tōno Mamare's *Log Horizon* has a clear class system, with the adventurer, who plays the PC game *Log Horizon*, at the top and the landowner, who is a non-player character, at the bottom.¹ Originally, landowners were tools for players to advance in the game, and even after the players are transported to the *Log Horizon* world, the class disparities between them are unchanged. Exploitation of landowners to make possible adventurers' lives is unconditionally accepted in the world of *Log Horizon*.

However, the protagonist Shiroe develops antipathy toward adventurers' disregard for human dignity and theft of the landowners' independence. Shiroe attempts to improve the social system, and after convincing other adventurers, he forbids discrimination against landowners, creates laws to support their independence, and tries to grant them the same rights and powers as adventurers. Consequently, landowners share information adventurers once monopolized, and they eventually obtain the same qualifications as adventurers and become able to form their own parties and act as independent adventurers in the *Log Horizon* world. The empowerment of social minorities recurs as a motif in many otherworldly fantasies novels.

1 A non-player character is not controlled by the game player but is programmed to speak certain lines and do certain actions.

As mentioned, otherworldly novels reflect an increasingly desperate society and allow socially inferior young people to reset their social and economic conditions and gain unexperienced success when transported to another world. The main characters unconditionally accept unfair advantages known as cheats to transform themselves into privileged heroes. Such storylines evoke emotional catharsis for readers and briefly relieve their feelings of entrapment in society.

However, otherworldly fantasies also feature the socially vulnerable whose situations overlap with the protagonists' real-life circumstances, encouraging readers to think carefully about social minorities. Protagonists often project themselves onto socially vulnerable characters, consider how to help them live like ordinary humans, and attempt to empower them. Of course, this sympathetic attitude cannot be found in all otherworldly fantasies but is especially strong in popular works such as Akatsuki Natsume's *Kono subarashii sekai ni shukufuku o!* (*KonoSuba: God's Blessing on this Wonderful World!*)¹, Takayama Rizu's *Isekai Yakkyoku* (*Another World Pharmacy*)², Aneko Yusagi's *Tate no Yūsha no Nariagari* (*The Rising of the Shield Hero*)³, and Tōno Mamare's *Log Horizon*. The most important characteristic of otherworldly fantasy, therefore, appears to be conflict between self-centered desires and moralistic concern for others: while reflecting the increasingly desperate real-world society and fulfilling *Okaku* readers' self-centered desire for escape, otherworldly fantasy also encourage readers to face ethical problems concerning social minorities and to reflect on what social situations rule readers in their real life.

Conclusion

Light novels are a new genre of postmodern literature based on not reality but on fictional elements embedded in Japanese subcultures. In this genre, the characters are reflexively produced and consumed by referencing an accumulated virtual database of characters' fragmented traits, dispositions, and settings. Consequently, light novels tend to deviate from the ideology of naturalistic realism and depict characters and worlds independent of reality.

As shown, video games are an especially important reference point for light novels. *Oreimo* features characters and a system from beautiful girls' games, while otherworldly fantasies incorporate the RPG worldview into the narrative's structural

1 Akatsuki, Natsume. *Kono subarashii sekai ni shukufuku o!* [*KonoSuba: God's Blessing on this Wonderful World!*]. 12 vols. to date. Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2014—.

2 Takayama, Rizu. *Isekai Yakkyoku* [*Another World Pharmacy*]. 6 vols. to date. Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2016—.

3 Aneko, Yusagi. *Tate no Yūsha no Nariagari* [*The Rising of the Shield Hero*]. 11 vols. to date. Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2013—.

assumptions. Acknowledging games' influence on light novels, Eiji Ōtsuka harshly criticizes their avoidance of ethical decisions because they lose connection with reality (143). Video games have various influences on light novels' plots, characters, settings, and worldviews, but declaring light novels' automatically devoid of ethics is premature.

Indeed, as this paper demonstrates, although light novels emerged as a new literary subculture, they are inevitably connected to social morality, both negatively and positively. In *Oreimo*, the younger sister character was first consumed as the subject of Moe but then unexpectedly gained vivid physicality. Moreover, while portraying increasingly desperate societies — a reality in Japan since the 2000s — many otherworldly fantasies attempt to depict the empowerment of social minorities. Of course, light novels, aimed at pleasurable escape, do not always foreground ethical problems. The main plot point of *Oreimo* is the emotional and semiotic consumption of the younger sister; in otherworldly fantasies, it is the protagonist's fulfillment of previously denied self-centered desires.

However, fantasy worlds and virtual characters cannot evade social norms. Although pleasure might be the first principle of light novels, their fantasy worlds can prompt readers to consider ethics — sometimes intentionally and sometimes incidentally. This paper does not present a comprehensive investigation of the history of light novels, but it explains how representative contemporary light novels, a fiction separated from reality and social morality, have highlighted conflicts and ethical problems since the late 2000s. Further diachronic research on the light novel, especially the influence of video games, could help build a more comprehensive understanding of these game-like novels' ethical standpoints.

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Dialogue between Mikhail Bakhtin and Eric Fromm in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

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Abstract William Golding's debut post-war novel *Lord of the Flies* is the tale of a party of English school boys who after a plane crash marooned on a desert tropical island. To establish their own model of community based on rules, order and democracy, they attempted to arrange an assembly, deciding to elect a chief. The democratic election was a kind of tug of war (power struggle) between Ralph and Jack which ironically instead of bringing peace and solidarity sowed the seeds of discord and enmity and led to a split and antagonism in that vulnerable fledgling community and potentially paved the way for the later conflict and confrontation between the two communities whose points of differences and type of values were significant. The present paper aims to study the formation of two communities under the leaderships of Ralph and Jack and examine their sets of principles and ethics in the light of Bakhtinian theories and those of Eric Fromm. The paper also demonstrates the way one community was based on such Bakhtinian dialogic and ethical values as "responsibility," "answerability" and "self-other" relationship whereas the other was based on monologic principles and those qualities, delineated by Fromm, such as individualism, total freedom and authoritarianism.

Key words Bakhtin; Eric Fromm; William Golding; Lord of the Flies; escape from freedom

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on William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy. **Gharibreza Gholamhosseinzadeh**, PhD in English Language and Literature, is an assistant professor at University of Mazandaran. He specializes in Bakhtin studies, literary theory and ecocriticism, and has authored two books and several papers on Bakhtin.

Introduction

The Russian theorist and critic Mikhail Bakhtin was a protean figure, a philosopher and an “unfinalisable” thinker whose name has become a “heteroglossia” in cultural and literary scenes. The versatile body of his theories as well as a complex and fully developed set of his concepts and notions which were appropriated by critics and scholars for a wide array of discourses and purposes over the last decades earned him a currency in the contemporary cultural arena as a cultural authority. Thanks to substantial amount of scholarly research, torrent of learned commentary, plethora of books and articles on corpus of Bakhtin’s thoughts and oeuvre from a wide variety of discipline along with several international conferences and a lot more small events devoted to him and his “Circle,” Bakhtin was credited as an “unfinalisable” thinker, theorist and philosopher. His originality, erudition and heteroglot activities made him a protean figure and a polymath, allowing to be appropriated for different purposes, discourses and ideologies. As such Bakhtin’s concepts and theories were utilised as an analytical tool, interpretive methodology and a hermeneutical horizon for examining varied phenomena including novels of different authors, social uprising, cinematic productions, and so forth (Brandist 1). His theories and concepts such as dialogism, multiplicity of voices, differences, infinalisability, transgression, carnival and chronotope and such ethical concepts as responsibility, answerability, respectability and I-Thou relationship appeared in such fields as anthropology, cultural studies, film studies, postcolonial studies, political studies, to name a few, which made up a substantial part of Bakhtin’s popularity in the world today (Vice 1-3). As a result, in this way the *dissemination* of Bakhtin and his legacy was sustained, his theories and concepts were utilised as an adequate fundamental starting point for any kind of discursive enterprise and critical reading, culminating to dimming his proper name “Bakhtin” but proceeding to heteroglossic Bakhtin.

Bakhtin: From Neo-Kantian Socialism to Ethical Philosophy

Bakhtin is “A thinker, whose main concern in everything he wrote was largely

ethical.” (Caliskan 3)

Bakhtin thought of himself more a philosopher, a moral philosopher and thinker, than a critic and literary and cultural theorist. This claim can be readily borne out by a brief survey of his total oeuvre, revealing the centrality of ethics in the corpus of his thought. Furthermore, such a claim can be proved by the vast amount of work and effort on Bakhtin's legacy over the last few years, and a concomitant revival of attention and interest in Bakhtin's early ethics and aesthetics which resulted not only in the return and reconsideration of ethics as the central philosophical concept but also in highlighting the significance of Bakhtin's early philosophical writings as points of reference for any ethical and aesthetic appropriation (Caliskan 3-4; Emerson 5-6, 21-23; Holquist 14).

In broaching the subject of Mikhail Bakhtin's early philosophical preoccupation especially his early ethical philosophy, it seems in order to consider both his avid and broad interest in philosophy which started from the prime of life and lasted over the 1910s and the contemporary socio-political situation of post-revolutionary Russia at the aftermath of the First World War in the 1920s. As for the former, it should be noted that at university Bakhtin passionately studied Latin and Greek classics and became a trained Latin and Greek scholar later. Later on, fortunately this unflagging interest in philosophy both intensified and broadened when Bakhtin joined a group of like-minded and pro-dialogic friends and intellectuals in “Bakhtin Circle” where a wide array of topics ranging from art, science, language, religion to philosophy were discussed and disputed. Since at this time Neo-Kantianism was the dominant school of philosophy in philosophy departments across Europe and the members of the Circle were affiliated to Neo-Kantian philosophy, young Bakhtin showed real enthusiasm for Neo-Kantian philosophy of the Marburg School, notably those of Ernest Cassirer and Hermann Cohen. However, as such, Bakhtin's philosophical aspiration varied and evolved so much so that prompted him to cultivate a wide array of philosophical and intellectual interests, drawing on a wealth of philosophical sources. Among the versatile sources (mostly germane to the topics, discussions and philosophical notion of the individual members of the Circle) that Bakhtin utilised Buber, Kant, Cohen (Marburg Neo-Kantianism), Shelling, Cassirer, Simmel and Husserlean Phenomenology were of those sources that fascinated the young Bakhtin and left their mark in small but telling way in the genesis and germination of a set of Bakhtin's philosophical writings and concomitantly became the anchor of his later theories, ideas and concepts (Holquist 2-5; Brandist 11-21).

The contemporary socio-political situation of post-revolutionary Russia in the 1920s, especially in the wake of two revolutions and the First World War was also a momentous period not only in the life and thoughts of Bakhtin but also the other fellow Russian thinkers, scholars and intellectuals. As for Bakhtin himself, it was a catalysing factor which resulted in the genesis and development of not only his philosophy, specifically his early ethical philosophy, but also a set of philosophical works, theories and concepts. In the early 1920s, Russia was in a chaotic state, devastated by civil war and pregnant with lots of other turmoils, socio-political unrest and instability. As a result, there was an urgent need for an intellectual current or a constructive philosophy which was pro-socialism in nature and orientation to save the country from such a corrosive situation and restore peace, stability and order. Indeed, a kind of cultural momentum, an intellectual leadership or an ethical philosophy was in demand whose (socialist) “responsibility,” “answerability” and commitment could be constructive and offer a road map to peace and tranquility. Undoubtedly, Bakhtin and the other fellow intellectuals and thinkers in the Circle of which Bakhtin was the senior figure were part of the solution. On the other hand, the Circle itself was in fact a sociologically significant phenomenon in which much like Jurgen Habermas’ “Public Sphere” the intellectuals discussed different socio-political issues such as freedom, democracy and so on. In Russia it was part of intellectual life which came into being as an “institutional phenomenon” and also as the legacy of the Russian tradition of discussion circle (*Krug*) where the fellow intellectuals and thinkers who due to the contemporary political condition had to secretly and clandestinely discuss current social and political issues, developing their critique of the cultural and ideological status quo (Brandist 11-12).

Furthermore, even the kind of philosophy to which the members of the Circle were affiliated was mainly a “*socialist* Neo-Kantianism” as well as an “ethical” one. More interestingly its members such as Herman Cohen and Paul Natorp were themselves socialists (Brandist 27-29). That is why, according to Ken Hirschkop, the terms and agendas of the Circle were associated with sociological conditions (Brandist 29). On the other hand, since there was not any civil society which was the direct consequence of lack of bona fide middle-class intellectuals, the Circle took advantage of abstract categories and came to reformulate political-oriented issues in ethical forms. Thus, they strove to “transform all political questions into ethical ones” (Brandist 29) which culminated to the emergence of Neo-Kantian Socialism.

On the other hand, a biographical survey of Bakhtin’s life will be very illuminating and reveal how Bakhtin’s own life condition due to the socio-political

condition of the contemporary Russia played a significant role in the formation of his ethical philosophy. His personal life was full of flux and “repeatedly disrupted by major political and cultural upheaval” (Renfrew 33). A chain of serious crises ranging from civil war, arrest, exile, Stalinist purges, the Depression to deteriorating health condition (bone disease and amputation), ubiquitously eclipsed his life, interrupting the normal pace of Bakhtin’s life. Indeed, the contemporary cultural and political situations of late 1910s and 1920s in Russia and the Soviet Union led to the emergence of a kind of dystopia which ruined not only Bakhtin’s public life but also the lives of a large number of scholars, critics and writers (some of them the member of “Bakhtin Circle”). The monologic and authoritarian Stalinist regime darkened the entire era and put the “Russian intellectual culture into a kind of ice age” (Renfrew 20-21). As a matter of fact, a kind of “*Death of the Author*” Bakhtin and the other contemporary Russian fellow intellectuals and scholars experienced which not only hampered the publication of their works but also led to a kind of self-effacement (*dialogically* significant) and denial of subjectivity which compelled them to publish their works under the names of their friends and colleagues (Emerson 19; Renfrew 20-21).

As a matter of fact, it was due to such a personal life condition and socio-political circumstances of contemporary Russia eclipsed by the dark Stalinist years (dystopia) during 1910s and 1920s that Bakhtin developed his own early idiosyncratic (ethical) philosophy which was a reformulated form of political issues, socialist in nature, ethical in orientation and utopian in construct (Morson and Emerson 97). Daunted by cultural and socio-political life of the mainstream society (dystopia), Bakhtin became preoccupied with a kind of philosophy whose central point was ethical and importantly based on the model of “self-other” relationship (Dialogism)--understanding and interacting with the other fellow human beings--and “in place of God, Bakhtin deified the everyday interlocutor. A creature made neither for prayer nor for parenting” (Emerson 5). It was indeed in line with such a kind of thinking that Bakhtin’s philosophical works with the centrality of ethics such as “Art and Answerability,” *Toward a philosophy of the Act* (1921) and *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* (1922-24) were composed.

Erich Fromm: From Ethics to Psychoanalyst Socialism

The German-American socialist psychoanalyst Erich Fromm (1900 — 1980), somehow the contemporary of Bakhtin, was a man of broad interests. As a psychoanalyst, sociologist and democratic socialist, Erich Fromm is mostly renowned for being one of the most distinguished psychoanalysts in America and

also his affiliation to the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory. As a result of his religious family background, young Fromm studied the Talmud to such an extent that his formative years were influenced by Orthodox Judaism. Thanks to such an experience, Fromm later on developed an interest in ethics and legal issues so much so that he studied law and then in 1919 sociology at Frankfurt University under Marx Weber's brother, Alfred Weber and Heidelberg. Through his friend and later his wife (Frieda Reichmann), Fromm developed an interest in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, whereupon he formed his own theories and methodology of psychoanalysis and utilised it in order to understand different phenomena vis-à-vis society and culture. His cooperation with an Institute for Social research which was affiliated with the University of Frankfurt associated him with the Frankfurt School which was a *Circle* (recalling Bakhtin Circle) of like-minded intellectuals and critical theorists whose senior figure was Marx Horkheimer. With the advent of Nazism and due to the socio-political situation of the contemporary Germany (akin to the case with Bakhtin and other fellow Russian intellectuals) not only Erich Fromm but also the other intellectuals and members of the Social Research Institute left the country and went in exile in the United States (Fromm 266-67).

As the psychoanalyst of society, social scientist and also a member of the Frankfurt School, Erich Fromm like the other fellow thinkers of the School in his works was preoccupied with the systematic analysis of socio-political condition of the contemporary capitalist society, "applying his social-psychoanalytic approach to cultural and social phenomena" (Fromm 267). In 1941 Erich Fromm published his book *Escape from Freedom* which brought him popular acclaim and reputation. In it Fromm much like Bakhtin and Michel Foucault adopted a *genealogical-psychological* study of "Freedom" and "Individualism" over a long period of time, starting from the Medieval World, proceeding to Renaissance and Reformation, up to the Modern World and finally the rise of Nazism. In fact, Fromm's study, telescoping the psychological-historical past of Europe and America, psychologically examined the trend of freedom and individualism in different historical and socio-political context (the process of "Individuation"), revealing how the longing and desire for individualism and then freedom drastically changed from what it was initially intended and grotesquely turned into a nightmare and terror (negative freedom) and eventually *escape from freedom*. Fromm argued that Modern European and American history have witnessed lots of endless efforts, clashes and battles for "freedom from the political, economic, and spiritual shackles that have bound men" (Fromm 13). The final result was freedom but at the expense of very many lives which strove to obtain it as the approval of their individuality. Then he

explained how the “principles of economic liberalism, political democracy, religious autonomy, and individualism in personal life, gave expression to the longing for freedom” (Fromm 13). However, after the lapse of a few years, Fromm explained people in such countries as Italy and Germany came to the fact that this freedom and individualism had counter effect and brought about capitalism, isolation and powerlessness of the individuals. As a result, instead of democracy, it ended in such an authoritarian system as Fascism and such a despot as Hitler whose rule led to so much terror and fear for the whole world. Upon this realisation, “millions in Germany were as eager to surrender their freedom as their fathers were to fight for it... instead of wanting freedom, they fought for ways of escape from it” (Fromm 14). In effect, Fromm tried to depict how the utopian implication of individualism and freedom in the past underwent a metamorphosis, ending in Nazism, and brought about loneliness, powerlessness, disillusionment and despair of modern man, i.e. a kind of dystopia especially after two global catastrophic World Wars (as portrayed in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*).

Escape from Freedom was also partly Fromm's critique of the events during the Second World War in conjunction with the “exploration of the social psychology of fascism” (Shaffer 67) which was inspired by Freud's late works. In the forward of 1941 edition of his book, Fromm argued that his book was “part of a broad study concerning the character structure of modern man and the problems of the interaction between psychological and sociological factors” (Fromm 5). He maintained that the cultural and social crisis of the modern world is “the meaning of freedom for modern man” (5) because the meaning of freedom to great extent is dependent on character structure of modern man, i.e. the individual as the basic entity of social process. It is the individual, according to Fromm, whose desire, fears, passions and reason constitute the social process and it is also the dynamics of such an individual's psychological process that leads to the dynamics of the social process. As a result, the understanding of the dynamics of the individual is foremost for the understanding of the dynamics of the social process. However, as the thesis of his book, Fromm asserted that modern man's freedom is not genuinely the freedom of self, but rather a negative one (a burden) which instead brought about his isolation, anxiety and powerlessness and eventually culminated to totalitarianism (Fromm 5-6). In a similar vein, in the foreword of 1965 edition of *Escape from Freedom*, Fromm explained that during the medieval era, despite the presence of different sorts of dangers and fears, man felt safe and secure, but with the advent of the modern world that sense of safety and security disappeared and became things of the past. Instead, modern man's sense of anxiety, insecurity and fear mounted

so much so that he was “tempted to surrender his freedom to dictators of all kinds or to lose it” (Fromm 8). In nutshell, surprisingly man’s major source of fear in the modern world is ironically the “freedom” (individualism) itself and its repercussions such as the birth of authoritarianism (*monologism*), totalitarianism, despotism and total annihilation as the result of atomic bomb and such global disasters as the First and Second World Wars (recalling the plane crash at the beginning of Golding’s novel *Lord of the Flies* when evacuating a group of English school boys from a war-torn area).

Discussion

William Golding’s debut (post) War novel *Lord of the Flies* (1954) was a novelistic tour de force. Despite the ebb and flow of its early popularity, it achieved a significant breakthrough and once became one of the most widely-read and widely admired novels in English which fascinated wide array of readers ranging from the teenagers to adults. It was also thanks to having all the making of a modern classic that less than a decade of its publication was hailed as “Lord of the Campus,” developing a rivalry with its contemporary American counterpart J. D. Salinger’s *Catcher in the Rye* (1951) on most college campuses.

In broaching the subject of Golding’s novel popularity and significance, it seems in order to consider it from two general perspectives both of which will be highly significant and enlightening when examined in the light of Bakhtinian ethical philosophy and Eric Fromm’s ideas and theory as delineated in his book *Escape from Freedom* (1941). Whereas part of this popularity and significance has originated in its “intertextual quality (intertextuality), that is to say, responding to such extrinsic forces as the contemporary socio-political context (significant in terms of both Bakhtin’s theory of “The Novel” and novelistic discourse and Erich Fromm’s socio-psychoanalytical study of “Freedom” and “Individualism”), another part of its popularity and significance has originated in its “textual” quality, that is to say, its intrinsic structure, narrative style, thematic organization and fictional world (again significant in terms of both Bakhtin’s moral-philosophical concepts as “Dialogism,” “Responsibility,” “answerability” and “I-Thou” relationship and Fromm’s socio-psychoanalytic study of “authoritarian,” “despotic” and “totalitarian” individuals) . In other words, whereas the former one is focused on its literal sense and Macrocosmic level (part of the task of “The Novel” as Bakhtin’s champion genre) which is part of Golding’s protest and critique of contemporary socio-political condition of the world and society (much akin to Fromm) which resulted in the present global catastrophe, the latter one refers to its allegorical sense and

Microcosmic level (the analysis of such fictional elements as characters, theme, and events in the light of both Bakhtin's moral-philosophical concepts and Fromm's theory of absolute "Freedom" and "Individualism") which so far has aroused a wide array of different competing literary interpretations, critical responses and explications which strove to analyse them from different hermeneutical horizons and critical approaches.

Golding: A Novelist in Bakhtinian Tradition

Part of the popularity and significance of Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* (as it was stated above) originates in its genre as a novel ("a social phenomenon"), its "intertextual" aspect and being concerned with "extrinsic" (Social) forces as it is properly discussed in the final essay of Mikhail Bakhtin's *Dialogic Imagination: Four essays* (1981), entitled as "Discourse in the Novel" which presents Bakhtin's comprehensive theory of novel. In this essay, Bakhtin's primary concern is the literary forms or genres and tries to give a critique of the dichotomy between abstract formal approach (poetry) and abstract ideological approach (the novel) to the study of "verbal art." In fact, Bakhtin tries to demonstrate the inadequacy of the traditional stylistics for being unable to find a place for the novel. Because according to Bakhtin the appropriate stylistics which can do justice to the novel and is germane to the internal social dialogism of the novel is a *sociological stylistics* which can divulge the concrete social context of it. As such, Bakhtin turns his attention to his champion the novel and attempts to theorise it, as a genre which is heteroglossic and dialogic in nature, appropriating and incorporating the diversity of voices and multiplicity of languages. For Bakhtin's view of the novel is rooted in his radical view of language for being value-laden, dialogic and ideological material which makes it the concrete medium and locus of conflict, differences and social voices rather than a mere abstract neutral linguistic (formal) expression. Indeed, Bakhtin here comes very close to what his admirer Julia Kristeva dubbed as "intertextuality" and ascribed it to Bakhtinian scholarship, that is to say, the socio-political context from which the novel is born and is integrated with. In the similar vein, Golding's novel possesses such a kind of novelistic qualities and social engagement and accordingly an inherent dialogic (Intertextual) aspect as demanded by Bakhtin for the novel. In fact, in this context Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is a paragon of novelistic discourse par excellence which akin to other contemporary European novels is quintessentially social oriented and socially and historically committed. It deals with such contemporary socio-political issues as "the crisis of civilisation" and "the barbarity of mid-twentieth-century historical events" (Shaffer

10- 11). That is why Kevin McCarron in his essay “William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and Other Early Novels” addressed that “Golding was always very much a novelist of his times” (Shaffer 289), especially in portraying the global catastrophe of Second World War as indicated at the outset of the novel when the plane which was evacuating the group of English school boys from a war-torn area due to the outbreak of atomic war was hit and fell into the sea: “Not them. Didn’t you hear what the pilot said? About the atom bomb? They’re all dead” (Golding 14). Despite the ostensible unfashionableness and provocative ahistoricity of his novels compared to the neo-realism of other contemporary British novelists of 1950s and despite use of geographically and historically isolated settings of his novels, Golding’s “lack of engagement with his own society is only apparent” (Shaffer 289). In other words, instead of a direct involvement with the contemporary society, a realistic representation of it and a referential setting, Golding utilised “the fabular or allegorical mode of representation” (289) to avoid the naïve realism of the contemporary authors and enriched the polyphonic (dialogic) aspect of his novels. On the other hand, living in 1950s Britain and being the contemporary of Kingsley Amis, Golding was indeed one of those Angry Young Men in post war period who protested against the existing tradition and society which not only consolidates Golding’s engagement with social context as a background required by Bakhtin for the novel (Kristeva’s “Intertextuality”) but also makes him an author and intellectual in Bakhtinian line who favoured diversity and multiplicity of voices and challenged the contemporary monologic and homogenising culture. Although Golding was not young as the other Angry Young Men, he was angry with those contemporary authors who “misrepresented the actuality of human existence” (290). For this reason, he is believed to be a cultural revisionist who intended to “rewrite” the earlier texts in his early novels which not only causes him to make a *dialogue* with other texts but also is dialogically significant. That is why, his novels, due to being “associated with war and the military” are known to be one “of the most direct” to the context (290). By the same token, his 1950s novels, due to a historical actuality and also central subject of war that responded to the “historical horrors,” are known to be “conventional war” novels (290). As a result, due to their common theme of the global events, most of the contemporary British and Anglophone novels were more obsessed with the sociopolitical trauma, darkness and barbarity of those mid-twentieth century events than depicting the battle fields of Second World (Shaffer 10-11).

Erich Fromm in his book *Escape from Freedom*(1941), in a similar vein to Golding in his novel *lord of the Flies* (when Golding with the outbreak of Second

World War was in his naval career in the British Royal Navy--the experience which provided Golding the materials for his war novels) is also socio-psychologically concerned with the socio-political context of the modern world (as it was discussed above) and those forces and circumstances that resulted in emerging such radical, authoritarian and totalitarian individuals (fascists) who are responsible for such a global disaster. In fact, Fromm gets very close to what Golding uttered as the theme of *Lord of the flies*: "The theme is an attempt to trace the defects of society back to defects of human nature. The moral is that the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system however apparently logical or respectable" (Golding 204). In other words, Fromm, much like Golding, blames the socio-political context of the modern world (Europe) which granted unlimited (negative) freedom to such authoritarian and monologic individuals as Hitler in Germany (as Jack in *Lord of the Flies*) that led to their degeneration, barbarity and despotism which afflicted the entire world. Therefore, it implies that both of Golding's and Fromm's books are the encapsulation of the critique of the status quo, the socio-political context, the modern world in which despotic, authoritarian and monologic individuals came out and their devilish nature as well as lack of commitment to such ethical code and principle as "responsibility," "answerability" and "the other" led to a disastrous and catastrophic consequences. Both of Golding and Fromm however from different stand points were concerned with the socio-political circumstances (Macrocosmic level) in the world that brought about the present chaos and catastrophe. Whereas Golding is concerned with devilish human nature (free from any ethical code and moral conduct) and circumstances in human society that brings about such a crisis as the Second World War, genocide and eventually the dystopia, Fromm in the like manner is (psychologically) concerned with "the character structure of modern man," "the cultural and social crisis" and the social psychology of fascism. In short, both of them as their critique were concerned with the present literal dystopia which was produced by the modern man "free from all ties binding him to spiritual authorities" (Fromm 71) and from all such ethical principles as "responsibility," "answerability" and "self-other" relationship.

Power Struggle & the Formation of Two Communities: Dialogic and Monologic

"They walked along, two continents of experience and feeling, unable to communicate." (Golding 55)

Lord of the Flies is the account of a party of English school boys who after a plane crash landed on a deserted uninhabited “roughly boat-shaped” (Golding 29) tropical island (allegorically the Garden of Eden) whose two sides with different natural features turned out to be very significant as the novel developed, symbolising the two sides of human (boys) nature and also two parties of boys under the leaderships of Ralph and Jack. Piggy and Ralph were the first two boys who found each other by chance in that island. In this new dwelling, they (like Adam and Eve after the “Fall”) started their “post-lapsarian” period and took off their clothes (signs of civilisation), gaining a new identity. They struck up conversation and in this way formed their early friendship. Having developed their friendship by talking about different topics from home and themselves and also introducing each other, Ralph and Piggy due to their humanitarian (Dialogic) nature, decided to search for the other boys who were stranded on the island. In so doing, they found a conch shell “In colour the shell was deep cream, touched here and there with fading pink” (Golding 16) and decided to use it to call the other boys to join them. Upon hearing the sound of the conch, the other boys one by one showed up, among whom were the choirboys marching in military style led by Jack Merridew. Jack, Ralph and Simon made an exploration team and embarked on their search of the island which made them sure that the island is uninhabited and was also Jack’s first attempt of hunting a pig and the first test of his hunting nature. Having learnt that the island was free from any adult figures or grown-ups, “Perhaps there aren’t any grown-ups anywhere” or “Aren’t there any grown-ups at all?” “I don’t think so” “No grown-ups” (Golding 8), they had the entire island to themselves: “This belongs to us” (Golding 29). They decided to establish their own model of small community based on rules, order and democracy symbolically indicated in the pink-colour “conch/shell.” Then they attempted to arrange an assembly, deciding to elect “A chief.” Acting based on democracy, they voted for the chief (“Let’s have a vote”... “Vote for chief”) (Golding 22) which was also kind of tug of war (power struggle) between Ralph and Jack, sowing the seeds of discord, enmity and dichotomy. Finally, although Jack wanted to be chosen, Ralph was elected as a chief: “there was his size, and attractive appearance, and most obscurely, yet most powerfully, there was the conch” (Golding 22). Jack remained as the *authoritarian* and *totalitarian* leader (*ringleader*) of the choir boys who said that he wanted them to be his *hunters* (foreshadowing the *hunting* of animal pigs and “Piggy”).

The democratic election (ironically) instead of bringing peace, unity and solidarity led to a separation and split in that vulnerable fledgling community and potentially paved the way for the later conflict, confrontation and clash between

the two communities whose points of differences and form of living and type of values were ethically and ideologically significant, especially when examined in the light of Bakhtinian ethical philosophy and Erick Fromm's model of individual as discussed in his book *Escape from Freedom* (1941). In other words, the election was a kind of "power struggle" between two individual leaders which led to the formation of two small but hostile communities (tribes) based on two different sets of values, principles and ethics: one based on (Bakhtinian ethical principle) and such dialogic and ethical values as "responsibility," "answerability" and the other/ "super self" whereas the other based on such monologic principles as authoritarianism and totalitarianism (Fromm's model of individual). In other words, in addition to the devil human nature ("dark side") and also the absence of the grown-ups' supervision and control, the power struggle between Ralph and Jack brought about a split and antagonism between the boys which consequently shattered the order and harmony of the island that was as fragile as the conch shell.

Afterwards such issues as exploring the island, possibility of being rescued, making a team for making fire, sending signal for the passing ships to be rescued, finding food and especially the fear of "littluns" raised which led to further divergence between the two parties of boys and fueled the fire of power struggle (rivalry) between Ralph and Jack to the point that put them in direct confrontation to each other and also prompted the formation of two opposing tribes whose antagonism, hostility and adversary culminated in corruption, disintegration, degeneration, chaos and especially the devastation of the benevolent nature (island). The immediate ramification was that once civilised school kids divided into two different communities under the control and leadership of two different individuals — Ralph and Jack — symbolically the representatives of two sides of human nature and two sides of the island. Soon they turned into barbaric vindictive tribesmen, revealing the real capacity of human nature which not only, "now divided into tribes," started "literally hunting each other down" (Shaffer 13), but also brought about the disruption of the rhythm of life and eventually devastation of the island.

In the dialogic world, there was Ralph's group consisting of Ralph himself as a leader, Simon (Christ figure), Piggy and Samneric who all together "seem to signify the code of nature" (Thapliyal & Kunwar 85). In terms of their human nature, they were dialogic, responsible, ethical, well-meaning and compared to Jack and his men they remained human, humane and less degenerated. Like the other creatures, they had a very strong sense of community (symbiosis), dialogue, peace and were very friendly and caring both for themselves and "other." They were "the carriers of order and harmony which are best seen in nature" (85) and symbolically

stood for different aspects of the island: “Ralph and his conch — nature and order [responsibility], Piggy — wisdom, Simon — the spiritual side, Samneric — sense of togetherness” (85).

Ralph was the good natured and dialogic leader and legislator of his small dialogic community and the island as well. His name, “originally from the Anglo-Saxon language, [which] means, ‘counsel’” (Salami 287) was very significant in this regard. E. M. Forster described him as “sunny, and descent, sensible and considerate” (Telgen 180) recalling Bakhtinian moral and ethical philosophy. While Jack was preoccupied with his rivalry with Ralph, hunting and killing (based on his own authoritarian and monologic nature), Ralph (based on his own ethics, dialogic nature, sense of “answerability” (responsibility) and “dialogue” was concerned about such issues as making fire to rescue all, making shelter for protection of all and friendship with Piggy, Simon and other boys. Ralph was “an embodiment of democracy” and whenever a decision was going to be made, he “knows that it is important for each of the boys to be able to speak his mind” and “lets the boys vote on it” (Salami 288). Thanks to his dialogic, caring and compassionate nature toward his fellow friends especially Piggy, he was “genuinely interested in the welfare of the entire group and can get along with all kinds of people” (288). By the same token, it was he who immediately after his arrival developed his friendship (with boys) with the island and its natural elements and “drops his clothing about the jungle as if it were his bedroom” (Salami 287-88). Therefore, both in the sense of being dialogic (responsible and answerable) and in the sense of being leader and legislator for establishing law, order and balance, “Ralph... seems to symbolise nature” (Thapliyal & Kunwar 86). Quite akin to the natural order and inherent balance of the island, Ralph succeeded to develop a dialogic personality and ethical attitude. It was he who laid down the “constitutions” and was preoccupied with organising things, holding meetings, maintaining fire, restoring order and distributing duties which were efficiently practiced in nature and natural elements (86). However, his lack of leadership and strategic skills kept him “far from the ideal leader” (Telgen 180), indicating that “he is not perfect” (Salami 288). In fact, it was due to such qualities as well as the “shutter” that clouded his mind and made him unable to find “the right way” which was the natural ordinary aspect of everyone. “Ralph [becomes] everyman with whom we can each identify” (180). Ethically, he had a very strong sense of responsibility and answerability and was the one who “recognises the need for responsibility” and “becomes more considerate of others” (Salami 288) in the island as well as in his small dialogic community.

Piggy was another ethical-oriented member of the dialogic world led by Ralph

whose presence was ethically significant. His name symbolised his animal-like (pig) nature. He was hunted like a pig at the end by the authoritarian Jack and his barbaric tribesman. His death symbolically stood for a person (martyr) who was sacrificed for dialogue, democracy and innocence. Thanks to his intelligence and rationality, he was the intellectual power and voice of reason in the island (in this context, recalling Freudian ego and Nietzsche's apollonian principle) both for Ralph and the entire island. He was very scientific and knew the rational solutions of different problems. Also, thanks to his sense of responsibility and answerability, akin to an adult, very soon he recognised the need of fire, shelter, and so on and quite willingly gave his spectacles for making fire. He thought more than Ralph and so understood more than him and became his mentor and assistant in maintaining order, balance and harmony. Although his friendship and association with Ralph (out of his dialogic nature) was very rewarding and vital for Ralph without whom Ralph would have lost leadership much earlier, it was very beneficial and essential for him as well without which his intellectual power and scientific approach was quite in vein and inefficient. However, in spite of his wisdom, intellectual power and scientific thinking, such disabilities (his Achilles Heels) as obesity, asthma and short-sightedness made Piggy as vulnerable and unprotected as the conch, the pig and democracy (balance, law and order) which were destroyed by violence, authoritarianism, despotism of an individual and individuals' self-indulgence in absolute freedom and power (Salami 291; Thapliyal and Kunwar 87; Telgen 179-180).

In the monologic world on the other hand, there were belligerent and totalitarian Jack and his ring/*hunters* who (much like their contemporary Europeans despots) were truly the typical examples of Eric Fromm's model of "individual" as delineated in his book *Escape from Freedom* (1941). Jack was a paragon example and embodiment of Erich Fromm's model of individual (fascist) par excellence. Jack and his tribesmen were also the embodiment of human evil nature and "essential illness" which led the island to catastrophe. Jack and his men not only represented the ill-force "which at the onset is referred as 'something dark' (Thapliyal and Kunwar 86) but also stood for those (modern) individuals, as argued by Eric Fromm, for whom "The *abolition of external domination* seemed to be not a necessary but also a sufficient condition to attain the cherished goal: freedom of the individual" (18). In fact, they "emerged from the original oneness with man and nature" to gain freedom "as a separate entity" and participated in "a process we may call "individuation" (39-40). Afterwards, when those "primary ties" were cut off and the evolution concluded in an individual with total freedom, the next step was finding a refuge and security in other possible ways in the world which in case of Jack and his tribesmen could be hunting and killing

pigs, “All the same you need an army — for hunting. Hunting pigs —” (Golding 32). When one of the “littluns,” a small boy with a mulberry-coloured birthmark on his face, confided to them about his fear of darkness (symbolically the darkness of human heart and evil nature) and “beastie” (a snake-like beast) in the woods, Jack asserted his authority, declaring that he would kill it. It was in this context that Jack and his tribesmen (savage hunters) took the idea of hunting more seriously than ever before, painted their face and disguised their identity, revealed their true barbaric and vindictive nature and started their degeneration. One of the most important factors worth mentioning for this rapid degeneration and corruption of Jack and his hunters was what Erich Fromm called “process of individuation” (39-40) and indulgence in unlimited “Freedom” that they had due to the absence of any grown-ups: “The more the child grows and to the extent to which primary ties are cut off, the more it develops a quest for freedom and independence” (44). Thus, the more freedom they acquired, the more pigs they killed, the more they degenerated and corrupted (“absolute power corrupts absolutely”). It was in such a context in *Lord of the Flies* that “The roguish Jack emerged as a ruthless dictator” (Ousby 236) and in his quest for total freedom and complete “individuation” cut off his ties with Ralph and his (dialogic and answerable) friends who stood for order and balance in nature and formed his community of a band of barbaric, savage and irresponsible boys. They were in fact like those (totalitarian) individuals, as depicted by Fromm, who kindled the fire of global wars and brought about genocide and catastrophe in the whole world. Like the other real monologic, authoritarian and totalitarian societies which were under the control of a despot (tyrannical dictator), they had their own code of living, values and principles of behaviour. Indeed, unlike Ralph and his partners such as Piggy and Simon who had a strong sense of responsibility and answerability, Jack and his (army) hunters (accomplices) didn’t have any sense of responsibility and answerability and were quite negligent to it. They were so engulfed with their own diversions, interest and desire that if they hunted and killed the pigs and Piggy, it was out of their evil nature, inherent savagery and barbarism, but not a sense of altruism. In other words, they were the personification of Freudian “id,” “Pleasure Principle,” uncontrollable unlimited energy; the destructive energy without being suppressed.

Conclusion

The present study has endeavoured to focus on Bakhtin’s ethical philosophy and Fromm’s socialist-psychological theory as delineated in his book *Escape from Freedom* and apply them to William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*. It has also demonstrated that Golding’s work as a novel on the macrocosmic level,

thanks to its novelistic and intertextual qualities as Bakhtin attributed to novel as a “social phenomenon,” like Fromm’s book was a response to and critique of the contemporary socio-political context. For both of them the present world condition (dystopia) and such a global disaster as the Second World War were the immediate ramifications of such monologic and authoritarian individuals as Hitler and Jack whose indulgence in individualism and total freedom brought about such a catastrophe to the world. Moreover, on the microcosmic level, that is to say the fictional world, the stranded school boys after the plane crash in order to establish their own model of society due to lack of grown-ups’ supervision and total freedom separated and consequently made two hostile communities one of which was “dialogic” based on Bakhtinian ethical concepts of “responsibility,” “answerability,” “self-other” relation under Ralph’s leadership and the other “monologic” based on those authoritarian, totalitarian principles which were characterised by Erich Fromm in his book for a despotic “individual” leader like Jack Merridew.

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Cultural Assimilation and the Cross-National Marriage Ethics in Korea under Japanese Rule: The Transformation of the Fable “The Wedding of the Mouse” in East Asia

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Abstract Japanese translations of Korean literature during the Japanese occupation established the foundations for the translation of Korean literature into other languages, and reflected the political dynamics and colonial agenda in Korea at the time, thereby illustrating the political aspects or dimensions of this body of literature. The objective of this study is to show how traditional Korean ethical imperatives, which are on display in Korean literature, were transformed in the process of the translation of this literature into Japanese. This goal will be approached through a focus on the fable “The Wedding of the Mouse” which originated in India and spread to East Asia and Europe. The original Indian version of “The Wedding of the Mouse” concerns a mouse who seeks a spouse, and it conveys the message that one’s nature does not change. In China, this theme was transformed into the teaching that one should know one’s place, and in Korea, into a moral criticism of the vanity of parents in their seeking of higher status through their children’s marriage.

In the 1920s, Korean literary works were translated into Japanese within the framework of the cultural policies of the ruling Japanese, and Korean-Japanese marriage was promoted in light of the cultural assimilation policy of the era. In such a context, marriage in the Japanese translations of “The Wedding of the Mouse” is

positively portrayed as a process of self-discovery, in light of which these versions also critique in-group marriage and concubinage. This theme resonated with the self-perceived essence of colonialism, through which one nationality sought to expand beyond its own boundaries and to explore new territories with a sense of conviction and adventure, and an eye on the future. This suggests that translations of “The Wedding of the Mouse” during the period of Japanese colonialism served as a tool to accomplish political rule through cultural assimilation.

Key words Korea under Japanese rule; cultural assimilation; Japanese translation; “The Wedding of the Mouse”

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Introduction

In Korea under Japanese rule, various strands of Japanese literature were produced and distributed, including Japanese translations of Korean literary works. These were of great significance in that they reflected changes in the colonial policies and in the Korea-Japan relations of the era, illustrated the political aspects of this body of literature and translation, established the foundations of translations of traditional Korean literature into other languages and influenced the development of modern Korean literature. Through a focus on the fable of “The Wedding of the Mouse,” this paper examines the attempted transformation of Korean social mores in the process of translating Korean literary works into Japanese in the colonial period.

The story “The Wedding of the Mouse” is a piece of folklore that is widespread throughout the world. It originates in the *Panchatantra*, an ancient Indian collection of animal fables dating from the 2nd century BC. Travelers spread the story to Persia, the Arab world, Greece and Europe, and it was further disseminated to East Asian countries such as China, Korea and Japan, accompanied by the spread of Buddhism. As a consequence of its long process of transmission by different agents to different regions, various versions of the story took root in diverse times and places. Most preceding studies on this fable have adopted a cultural-

historical perspective in order to link it to the Chinese Zodiac,¹ or have focused on comparative analyses of the Korean and Chinese versions. Induk-Huang, for instance, analyzed the process of transmission and transformation of the tale in China and Korea, pointing out that in Korea the mouse was replaced by the mole to reflect the fauna of Korea,² and Park showed in his analysis of *Tai-ping-guang-ji* (太平廣記) and *The Collection of Chinese Folktales* (中國民間古事集成) that the fable of the mouse “contributed to heightening the artistic standards of Chinese literature by enriching and diversifying it,” embodying as it did a piece of “folk literature that contains the rich emotions of commoners in China, reflecting their daily lives and customs” (108).³ There is however a dearth of academic work on its Japanese adaptations. Gyun Tae Kim for example remarked that “The tale of the mouse wedding” “spread widely and is to be found not only in Korea but also in China and India,” continuing that he had found “no Japanese version yet, although it is likely to be found in Japan as well” (10). On the other hand, the tale is often misrepresented as a Japanese folktale, as exemplified by *The Wedding of the Mouse — A Japanese Folktale* translated by Jeong Im Park, from *The Wedding of the Mouse — A Japanese Folktale* (ねずみのよめいり 日本昔話) (くもん出版、2007年) by Toshio Ozawa (小澤俊夫) and Etsuko Kanaida (金井田英津子). In order to resolve this confusion, the topic should be approached by means of an investigation of its cultural transmission and adaptation in East Asia. With this impetus, this study will employ the integrative methodology of “Border Crossings” (跨境), which “attempts to reach beyond boundaries without disregarding the idiosyncratic circumstances” (5)⁴ of diverse regions, to investigate how “The Wedding of the Mouse” was transmitted to East Asia and how its ethical underpinnings were transformed in the process.

1 For example, EuiSuk Kim, *Folklore and Symbolism of the 12 Zodiac Signs — The Mouse*. Seoul: National Archives of Korea Studies, 1997; YeongSuk Song, “A Comparative Study of Japanese 12 Zodiac Stories” (I,II), *Japanese Education / Japanese Literature*. Vol. 46. and Vol.39 (2008):369-389; HoeSeok Yang, “The Zodiac and Mouse Tales,” *Chinese Literature* Vol. 65 (2010):49-66, etc.

2 In Deok Hwang, “A Cross-national Analysis of ‘Mole Marriage’ Stories in India, China, and Korea” *The Research of Language And Literature*.

3 KyongRyong Park, *A Study of Chinese Mouse Tales — A Comparison between Written and Oral Forms*, Master’s thesis PhM dissertation, Jeonbuk University, 2015.1-137; also falls into this category is SanYeom Mang, *A Comparative Study of “Mouse Marriage” Tales in Korea and China*, PhD dissertation, Hannam University, 2013.

4 See *Border Crossings: The Journal of Japanese-Language Literature Studies*. Vol. 1 (June 2015):1-295.

To this end, we will first examine the process by which the story was transformed as it was disseminated to China, Korea and Japan, and how the ethical implications of the search for a spouse were altered in this process. To this end, this essay employs Imamura Tomo's translation of the tale to examine how the Korean value system was transformed in the process of the translation of the Korean versions of the tale into Japanese.

The Origin of "The Wedding of the Mouse" and Its Transmission to East Asia

"The Wedding of the Mouse" originated in the Panchatantra fable, "The Mouse Maid." The authorship of the collection of fables *Panchatantra* is attributed to Vishnu Sharma, a Brahman pandit. In the prelude to the Panchatanta, King Sudarshan despairs of his three sons' inability to learn and he invites Vishnu Sharma to the court to teach them. Sharma accepts the task of making the princes wise within six months and tells them a succession of animal fables, which became the *Panchatantra*.¹

"The Mouse Maid" is in the volume *Of Crows and Owls*, the third of five books that form the *Panchatantra*. In the frame story, the owl king kills most of the crows, and one crow, alarmed at the loss of his murder, defects to the owl kingdom. The owls debate whether to trust the crow and one owl minister tells the story of "The Mouse Maid" to illustrate that his nature as a crow will remain unchanged. The following is a summary of the story.

1. Once there was a beautiful Hindu hermitage on the bank of river Ganga.
2. As a sage from the hermitage was bathing and praying in the river, a mouse dropped onto his palm from the claws of a kite in the sky.
3. He transformed the mouse into a little girl and brought her to the hermitage to raise her with his wife.
4. When the daughter turned 12, the couple started to discuss finding her a good husband.
5. The sage summoned the Sun to match him with his daughter, but the daughter said that the Sun was too hot for her.
6. When asked who would be a better suitor, the Sun recommended the God of Clouds.
7. They invited the God of Clouds to meet the daughter but she rejected him for being too cold and dark.
8. The God of Clouds suggested the God of Wind as a better candidate.

1 Translated by SooIn Seo. *Pachatantra* (Seoul: Taeil Press, 1996): 1-438.

9.The God of Wind arrived at their home and the daughter turned him down for being too whimsical.

10.The God of Wind recommended the God of Mountains as her husband.

11.They invited the God of Mountains, but the daughter did not like him because he was too hard and heavy.

12.When the God of Mountains recommended a mouse as the most suitable candidate, they invited the King of Mice. The daughter liked him very much and asked the sage to turn her into a mouse so that she could marry him.

13. Using his spiritual power, the sage turned her into a mouse and gave her hand in marriage to the King of Mice.

As seen above, the original fable “The Mouse Maid” has a Hindu religious background and features the element of transformation. In the search for a spouse the daughter is an active agent who attends to her own instincts throughout the selection process of a groom. The ultimate moral of the story is that one’s nature does not change.

There are two distinct forms of Chinese adaptation of “The Wedding of the Mouse.” The first is the group of adaptations that maintains the characteristics of the Indian fable, and the other is comprised of the versions that became indigenous to China and displays little trace of the original story. An example of the former is presented below.

1.A hermit rescues a young mouse from the talons of a hawk.

2.Using his mystical power, he transforms the mouse into a girl.

3.The mouse enters adulthood and the hermit tries to find her a promising husband.

4.The hermit invites the Sun, the Dark Clouds, the Strong Winds, the Himalayas and the Mouse one after another, and the mouse eventually turns out to be the most suitable candidate.

5. The hermit turns the girl back into a mouse and sends her to the mouse burrow.¹

The element of transformation in the original story is preserved in this version. However, differences can be found in that the Hindu monk in the original is

1 Liu YuanQing (劉元卿). “The Marriage of the Mouse Daughter (老鼠嫁女).” Edited by Liu ShouHua (劉守華), *Research on the Types of Chinese Folk Tale* (Wuhan: Central China Normal University Press, 2002): 66-75.

replaced by the Taoist hermit and the mountain range is specified as the Himalayas. In contrast, a multitude of versions are completely divorced from the Indian version and incorporate elements indigenous to China. Examples of the more indigenous variants can be found in *The Collection of Chinese Folktales* (中國民間故事集成) (1984-1990). This volume documents 1,840,000 regional folktales that have been passed down from ancient to modern times, 86 of which are mouse tales. Among those, 12 stories have the theme of a wedding, as follows: “The Wedding of the Mouse Daughter (鼠女出嫁),” “The Marriage of the Mouse Daughter (老鼠子嫁姑娘),” “The Mouse Wants to Get Married (老鼠攀親),” “The Wedding of the Mouse Son (老鼠娶親),” “The Marriage of the Mouse Girl (老鼠嫁女: 河北),” “The Marriage of the Mouse Girl (老鼠嫁女: 湖南),” “The Mouse and His Daughter’s Marriage (子耗嫁姑娘: 貴州),” “The Marriage of the Mouse Daughter (耗子嫁女: 遙寧),” “The Marriage of the Mouse Daughter (老鼠嫁女: 安徽),” “The Marriage of the Mouse Daughter (老鼠嫁女: 黑龍江),” “The Mouse and His Daughter’s Marriage (老鼠嫁女: 浙江),” “The Marriage of the Mouse Daughter (耗子嫁女: 四川).”

These versions further diverge into two categories. One is comprised of a group of stories such as “The Marriage of the Mouse Daughter (鼠女出嫁: 山東),” in which the mouse becomes overly grasping, marries a cat and eventually causes everyone to be eaten by the cat, which is summarized below.

1. The mouse, the mother of four sons and a daughter, looks for a spouse for her daughter.
2. A blowfly introduces them to a potential groom, who it transpires is a cat.
3. All the mother’s five children are eaten by the cat.

The other type of stories maintain the original plot of the mouse assessing potential grooms and marrying a mouse in the end. The following is an example of such stories.

1. An old man saved a mouse in trouble.
2. The mouse wanted to become a daughter of the old man and he turned the mouse into a girl with magical power.
3. The old man realized how beautiful she was and started looking for a son-in-law with power and status.
4. The old man visited the Sun, the Clouds, the Wind and the Wall to see if

they would suit her, but chose a mouse in the end.

As seen above, this version shares a plot with the Indian version, where the mouse is transformed into a human but marries her own kind in the end, but here the theme becomes the importance of knowing one's place. The parents make decisions for the daughter's marriage in Chinese versions such as this of the story. This element reflects the conventions of Chinese feudal society which dictated a strict hierarchy of social classes and the primacy of parents in the arrangement of marriages. The characteristic moral of the stories is that one should know one's place and refrain from being greedy.

In Korea, versions of "The Wedding of the Mouse" can be found with different titles in various books such as "The Wedding of the Mole" in *The Essays of Hyobin* (效嘸雜記), "The Wedding of the Mole" in *The Historical Story of Eou* (於于野談), "The Wedding of the Mole (鼯鼠婚)" in *Soono-Ji* (旬五志) by Hong-Manjong, "The Marriage of the Mouse and the Mole" in The Korea Institute of Mental Culture's *The Korea Folklore Encyclopedia*, "Finding the Mole's Husband" in *The Korea Folklore Encyclopedia*, "The Wedding of the Mole", and in "The Wedding of the Mouse" in Seong-Giyeol's *The World of the Korean Folk Tale*. The two following versions are representative Korean adaptations of the story.

The first is contained in *The Essays of Hyobin*, the 4th and the 5th volumes of *The Collection of TaeChon* (泰村集) by San An GO (高尚顔, 1553-1623), and which contains the unofficial histories, anecdotes and fables of China and Korea. "The Wedding of the Mole" in this collection can be summarized as follows:

1. A mole has a beautiful daughter and thinks that nobody on earth seems to be an appropriate husband for her.

2. The mole asks the Sun to marry her, but the Sun thinks that the Moon will be a better match, for his light is brighter in the night.

3. The Moon declines and gives the opportunity to the Clouds, who can cover his light.

4. The Clouds yield to the Winds, who can blow them adrift.

5. The Winds yield to the stone statue of Buddha, who they can never blow away.

6. The statue yields to the mole, who can dig underneath him and fell him.

7. In the end, the daughter marries the mole.

8. The idiomatic phrase "the mole's marriage" is used to describe a situation in which one has high expectations but eventually chooses the most

natural option.

This version lacks the element of transformation whereby a mouse turns into a human, and features a stone statue of Buddha in place of the mountains or the wall in the Indian and the Chinese versions, in this way incorporating a Buddhist dimension. The daughter does not play an active role in choosing her husband. Instead, her parents look for plausible candidates and the Sun, the Moon, the Clouds and the Wind themselves make judgements about who will be the best suitor for her. The story shows how the daughter finds her place, and it teaches the concrete and practical lesson that one should marry someone of the same status, unlike the original moral of the fable which ordains that one's true character does not change.

Another notable version is "The Wedding of the Mole" in *The Historical Story of Eou*. It is the first published collection of Korean folktales, written by the scholar MongIn Yu (柳夢寅, 1559-1623) in the mid-Joseon Period. It contains stories with a wide range of themes including the meaning of life, the role of literature, the status of dreams, the reality of ghosts, the centrality of folk customs, and the prevalence of sex. It also features various social classes from the royal family to the commoners and the merchants, evincing the author's criticism of society, which is conveyed through his satirical sense of humor. "The Wedding of the Mole," described below, is no exception in its display of a critical attitude.

1. The mole parents decide their son should marry the noblest entity in the universe.
2. They think that the Sky is ideal, but the Sky finds the Clouds better, for the Clouds can cover the Sky.
3. The Clouds believe the Winds to be better suited, for the Winds can blow the Clouds away.
4. The Winds find the Buddha statue in Gwacheon better, because the statue can never be blown away.
5. The statue finds the mole better, for the mole can fell the statue by digging beneath it.
6. They conclude that moles themselves are the noblest of all and the son marries another mole.

This version displays the influence of Buddhism in that it replaces the mountains or the wall with a stone statue of Buddha. One of its remarkable characteristics is that

the subject of the desired marriage is the son of the moles, not their daughter. This feature distinguishes the story from other versions deriving from India, China, Japan and Korea, in which the daughter looks for a husband. Here however, the parents make the decision to look for a bride for their son and they discuss the issue with the candidates in order to judge who would be the most suitable for him. The story's moral is not very different from that of the Chinese versions, which convey the idea that parents should know their place and refrain from being overly ambitious. In the Joseon dynasty, when Confucianism formed the basis of the ethical system that prevailed, parents made decisions about their children's marriages, and this version of the story is a criticism of grasping parents who try to attain higher social status through marriage between families. It begins by stating that "Since a long time ago, there have been numerous records of conflicts caused by marriages between royal families (國婚) and commoners. Even a mole marrying its own kind is better than those who pursue such nonsense"(Yu 96); and it ends by saying that "a mole is better than a person who does not know his place and dares to marry into a royal family for fame and wealth, only to cause a catastrophe for himself and others." (Yu 97) The ending of the story strongly expresses the author's critical attitude towards the nobles of Joseon, who favored the marriage of their offspring with members of the royal family in their pursuit of power or status.

This is clearly a practical and specific criticism of parents who are full of vanity and who do not know their place, and who compel their sons or daughters to marry a member of the royal family in an attempt to sate their greed for social status.

Thus far, no study has compared Japanese versions of the fable "The Wedding of the Mouse" and Korean, Chinese and Indian versions, perhaps because Japanese versions have been much more difficult to locate, as KyunTae Kim recently pointed out. However, tales of "The Wedding of the Mouse" were in fact widely disseminated in Japan from the late Muromachi period (室町時代) to the Edo period (江戸時代), appearing frequently in children's stories. A version also appeared in *Ukiyokoto* (浮世床) by Shikitei Samba (式亭三馬) in a varied form, "The Naming of a Cat." In *Rakugo* (落語), the story is often employed as the opening tale as well. And *Shasekishyu* (沙石集) (1283), a collection of tales dating from the Kamakura period (鎌倉時代), features the following story "The Wedding of the Mouse."

The mouse wants to find the greatest husband of all time for his daughter. Thinking that the Sun that lights the whole world would be the one, the mouse tells the morning sun that he wants to give his beautiful daughter to him. However, the Sun says he should ask the Clouds instead, for the Sun can never win through

when faced with the Clouds. He asks the dark Clouds to marry the daughter, but the Winds turn out to be better, for the Winds can blow away the Clouds. The Winds decline the offer as well, for they can never pass through the earthen wall. The wall also gives in, for the mouse can make a hole in the wall at his leisure. In the end, the mouse realizes that mice are the greatest beings in the universe and gives his daughter to a mouse.

As shown above, this Japanese version of “The Wedding of the Mouse” does not differ much from the indigenous Chinese versions, albeit with a simplified narrative structure. The story also emphasizes the importance of knowing one’s place just as its counterparts in China or Korea do, but it does not exhibit a strong critical bent.

Marriage Ethics Implied in the Japanese Translation of the Korean “The Wedding of the Mouse”

The Japanese colonial government employed the policy of cultural assimilation to ensure the efficient rule of Korea, propagating the slogans “Japan and Korea as one body (內鮮一體)” and “Same ancestry, same roots (同祖同根論).” One of the core components of the cultural assimilation policy was the encouragement of Korean-Japanese marriage. Following the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty of 1910, the empire began to establish a system of Korean-Japanese marriage as an efficient method of integrating Koreans into the Japanese cultural sphere. On March 18th, 1912, the government issued the “Decree on Civil Matters in Korea,” which was aimed at reforming the family structure of Korea into a new one that would facilitate the enactment of the new Japanese policies. Its impetus was the recognition that the Korean family system had to follow Korean conventions, and in 1915, the laws on civil marriage registration were reformed to enable Korean-Japanese marriages to be registered. However, the census registration systems of Korea and Japan were not entirely compatible, and this led to marriages between Japanese women and Korean men being deemed null or illegitimate. In 1918, a set of shared rules was applied to both systems in order to promote Korean-Japanese marriages. In 1919, as a result of the March 1st Movement, the Japanese had to change their system of colonial rule, which led to an evolution away from force and compulsion and towards cultural homogenization. In this context, Korean-Japanese marriage was officially approved within the framework of the Japanese census registration system. In the second amendment of the Decree on Civil Matters in Korea, the Korean common-law marriage system was replaced by a formal law-based system and the Japanese census registry laws were enacted in Korea.

Subsequently, the Sino-Japanese war broke out in 1937 and General Minami Jiro enacted powerful assimilation policies, implemented in the form of the name-changing program and the promotion of Korean-Japanese marriage. He encouraged Korean-Japanese marriage by awarding mixed couples prizes in his name. And on November the 3rd, 1939, he revised the *Decree on Civil Matters in Chosen* (朝鮮民事令) to achieve the thorough adaptation of the Japanese census registry system, which is known as “Je (家)” in Korea. Such active measures and administrative adjustments established the legal basis of Korean-Japanese marriage.

In support of the transition from rule by decree to cultural assimilation after the advent of the March 1st Movement, the Japanese Government-General of Korea was actively engaged in researching and documenting Korean literary works in order to achieve a better understanding of Korean culture. Thus, with the support of the government, many Korean literary works were translated into Japanese in the 1920s. For example, the Japanese Government-General of Korea supported a project to translate and publish ancient Korean texts. Government officials and researchers in Gyeongseong Imperial University unearthed, documented and translated those literary works in a systematic and organized way. The preface of *Popular Korean Novels* (通俗朝鮮文庫) by Hosoi Hijime (細井肇, 1886.2-1934.10.19) explicitly discusses the purpose of this project. He attributes the advent of the March 1st Movement to “the ruling policy which disregarded the peculiarities of Korean culture and the Korean mentality that had been passed down for thousands of years,” and recognizes that “It is of great importance to study Korean culture to achieve successful cultural integration” (Park 109,110). He also clarifies that he undertook the translations contained in *Popular Korean Novels* in order to “understand the people of Korea, [and] to fulfill the responsibility of the leading country to guide and enlighten them with the spirit of “Japan and Korea as one body” in the crisis arising from the March 1st movement” (Park 110). In other words, the Japanese translation of Korean literature in this period was a way to understand Korean culture, ultimately in order to support the period’s assimilation policies, in light of the heightened nationalist spirit which prevailed after the March 1st movement.

Taking such context into account, we will examine the link between the era’s colonial policies and the Japanese translation of “The Wedding of the Mouse” by Tomo Imamura (今村鞆, 1870-1943.). Imamura was a government official in the Japanese Government-General in Korea, who is known for his research into Korean culture and literature, which can be seen in publications such as *A Collection of Korean Folklore* (朝鮮風俗集, 1914), *Cultural-Historical Korean*

Tales (歴史民俗朝鮮漫談 , 1928), *Korea on the Ship* (船の朝鮮 , 1930), *The History of Ginseng* (人蔘史 , 1934-1940), the essay collection *Rubbing the Nose* (鼻を撫りて , 1940), and *A Review of Folklore Documentation before Koryeo* (高麗以前の風俗關係資料撮要 , 1941). It is thus likely that his version of “The Wedding of the Mouse” in *THE CHOSEN AND MANSU* reflects the colonial ideology of the author, who served as a police officer and a bureaucrat in the colonial government. We will analyze the ethical dimensions and exigencies of marriage in Imamura’s translation of “The Wedding of the Mouse” with regard to such considerations.

It is the story of a mouse that lives under the statue of Buddha in Chungcheong-Do Nonsan. The mouse wants to find a strong wife, unlike others of his own kind. He tries to take the Sun as his wife, but clouds are covering the Sun. The mouse then wants to take the clouds as his wife, because the clouds seem to be stronger. However, the wind scatters the clouds and the mouse then wants to marry the wind. Then he sees the stone statue of Buddha, which stands firm against the gale. When he decides to marry the statue, it starts to tilt to the side, because of a hole that he has dug underneath it. In the end, he realizes that he is the strongest of all.

The essential features of the story are that the subject of the marriage is a male and that it incorporates the Buddhist element of the stone statue of Buddha. In this sense, the story is comparable to “The Wedding of the Mole” in *The Historical Story of Eou* (於于野談). However, instead of his parents making decisions about his marriage, the mouse himself independently makes such decisions. The story also lacks the element of transformation or birth which is seen in the Indian and Chinese versions. It begins with the sentence, “Once there was a mouse living under a huge stone statue of Buddha in Chungcheongnamdo Nonsan,” without mentioning the parents at all. The mouse simply decides to get married by his own will, realizing that “I have become a fully-grown man and want to look for a wife.” Thus, the moral of the story is evidently different from that of other stories which criticize the over-ambition of parents. Conversely, his decision to seek a spouse is implicitly represented in a positive light. The following passage describes his motivation in this quest.

The mouse formed some thoughts about finding a wife. Then he had to think about his friends. They had all married other mice, their own kind. Those were marriages without wedding ceremonies and unlike in the case of human marriage, it was not always clear who was marrying whom. One male mouse had two or three wives. Another one chose only one wife among four or five

female mice who came to him. To make matters even worse, they always fought over their wives, sometimes taking the wives of others and sometimes losing theirs to others.¹

The excerpt above constitutes a criticism against ingroup marriage and concubinage. It can be assumed that this reflects the realization that the distrust between Koreans and Japanese was an obstacle to the policy of promoting Korean-Japanese marriage. Another story element that displays the implicit support for colonialism is the attitude of the mouse and the reaction of the other mice. When the mouse shouts out to the Sun that he wants to take her as his wife, the other mice around him refer to his behavior as “total nonsense,” and we are told that “everyone laughed, rolling on the floor and clapping their hands.” However, the mouse strives to find a spouse and coolly and analytically weighs the advantages and disadvantages of each candidate. The story ends with his realization that he himself is the strongest of them all. In sum, his search for a wife is depicted as full of intent, adventurous and forward-looking.

As discussed above, the mouse’s search for a wife in “The Wedding of the Mouse” by Tomo Imamura is seen as a positive process of discovering one’s identity, motivated by the shortcomings of ingroup marriage and concubinage. Such a positive portrayal of intergroup marriage evidently shows that the author, who was a police officer and a bureaucrat in the colonial government, had the objective of indirectly propagating the colonial policies of the Japanese government, which encouraged Korean-Japanese marriage as part of the assimilation process during the colonial era.

Conclusion

The original Indian fable “The Mouse Maid,” based on Hindu tenets, emphasizes that one’s true character does not change and will eventually be revealed after many trials. In the strictly feudal society of China, where marriages were arranged by parents, the parable was retooled in order to teach the lesson that commoners should know their place and refrain from being hungry for status. In Korea, various versions of the story feature a statue of the Buddha, thereby incorporating a Buddhist dimension and inculcating the specific and practical lesson that vanity-induced marriage between members of the royal family and commoners was

1 Tomo Imamura (今村 勲). “The Wedding of the Mouse,” *The Chosen and Manshu* 194 (1924):68-71. Edited and translated by HyoSun Kim. HyeKyung Song. *Koreans from the View Point of the Japanese in Chosun 2* (Seoul: YoukRack, 2016) 153,154.

self-defeating. The Japanese versions of the story are similar to the Chinese, and generally teach that one should know one's place.

However, the moral of Imamura's translation of "The Wedding of the Mouse" is very distinct from that of any other versions. In the context of the cultural assimilation policy of the 1920s and the promotion of Korean-Japanese cross-national marriage, Imamura implicitly criticizes ingroup marriage and concubinage and depicts the mouse's search for his spouse as a positive process in which he discovers his true identity, a theme which is compatible with the ideology of colonialism. In this way his translation serves as an example of the political dimension of the translation of Korean literary works into Japanese in the colonial period.

Acknowledgements: This work was Supported by a Korea University Grant (K1803401).

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ISSN 1949-8519



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