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**EVALUATION AND INTERPRETATION
OF TOBIAS SMOLLETT'S NOVEL
'THE EXPEDITION OF HUMPHRY CLINKER'**

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A famous journalist, editor, historian, critic, and pamphleteer involved in publishing and politics, turning to novel writing as a respite, Smollett will rejoin the reader in the successful role of the author of «Humphry Clinker» (1771), a work that sums up his accomplishments as a novelist. Wide professional and personal dramatic experience will lead the writer to a very

unexpected and unusual decision, which is evaluated as a sensational book created by the talented and tirelessly inventive Smollett, a novel of «redemption» of a «repentant satirist», «demonstration of courage» by a person who had suffered a lot; a misanthrope's acknowledgement in love for Scotland, and finally, as a book version of the author's parting with literature, who managed to worthily say farewell to the connoisseurs of his literary works [2, p. 28–29; 3, p. 251; 7, p. 323].

«One of the best English novels», «the last and the most immortal», loved by many, «Humphry Clinker» became the logical culmination of the mature Smollett, his personality and skills and hardly «a rare and inexplicable miracle» [6, p. 47; 11, p. 22; 7, p. 321]. Writers who had found it as «the most amusing story» (W. Thackeray), a beautiful composition of «fading melody sounds» (W. Scott) wrote a lot about «this amazing» work completed in Italy in 1770 [7, p. 321, 323; 11, p. 24]. The most demanding critics, who admired Smollett's «voice and strong writing hand» (Cleland), marked that Smollett was not inferior in ingenuity to Shakespeare (W. Madford) [11, p. 22–23]. Extensive reviews appeared in periodicals instead of the traditional short notes. Detailed and profound articles were written supplemented by the entire passages reprinted from the novel, thus refuting the hostile opinion expressed in the «Monthly Review» (No. 88) that «nothing on the pages of «Humphry Clinker» can make the reader want to buy a book» [11, p. 23; 2, p. 31]. Only enthusiastic remarks were addressed, and by the end of the XIX century the «masterpiece recognized by both readers and critics» had overtaken in popularity the highly respected «Roderick Random» [7, p. 321; 10, p. 127]. On the one hand, the public called «Humphry Clinker» «a leisure book that does not make you think», and on the other hand, the novel was viewed as «a collection of works on various topics» («Gentleman's Magazine», 1771) by Smollett who had demonstrated «greater powers of the intellect than in any of his previous works» (W. Madford) [5, p. 140; 2, p. 30; 11, p. 23].

It is curious to say that, having created a literary family traveling across England and Scotland, Smollett invites his contemporaries to observe the «changes of the greatest historical importance», acts as a chronicler of the formation of the British nation, «the gradual creation of the United Kingdom» [8, p. 4]. As the author of «The Complete History of England», who was working on a revised edition of «The Universal History» in summer 1771, Smollett was not indifferent to «historical writing» [2, p. 295; 8, p. 8]. «History, past and present are included in all his novels» [4, p. 487]. If in «Ferdinand Fathom» the author is interested in European history and the history of Evil, in «Launcelot Greaves» he draws attention to the history of the literary tradition of quixotism, then in «Humphry Clinker», which is

considered to be «the adaptation of the novel form to the thematic and historical interests of Smollett's various historiographic attempts» the emphasis is on the history of Britain [8, p. 1]. No wonder that the characters in «Humphry Clinker», which «raised questions and disturbed the imagination a century before the final creation of the British Empire», became the Welsh, the Scots, the British, people of the emerging transnational identity [4, p. 484].

Researchers believe that Smollett wrote «Humphry Clinker» as a parallel to «Travels through France and Italy» (1766), both works raise common topics («tirades against luxury and artificiality, extreme sensitivity to smells, praise for the simplicity of rural life, glorification of friendship»), as well as the problem of Britishness, which had previously received a more positive interpretation [9, p. 187]. If in «Travels» Smollett judges Europeaness on the basis of the liberal freedoms of England, then in «Humphry Clinker», «probably the first absolutely British novel» (R. Crawford), he rather reflects on the positive and the dubious sides of the country's colonial expansion [4, p. 497].

Both texts are written in epistolary form, which Smollett refers to «due to the respect for the didactic norms of the time», taking into account the latest fashion [3, p. 191]. Previously in «Peregrine Pickle» his characters used to address each other more than 23 letters and notes, not always receiving answers to them. The lack of responses in «Humphry Clinker» to the letters of five correspondents – Matthew Bramble, his nephew Jerry and niece Lydia Melford, sister Tabitha and maid Win Jenkins – as stated by P.-G. Bouce, helps to «reduce tension». The author, like the one in Sterne's «Tristram Shandy», trusts the imagination of the reader, «recreating... the possible reaction of the recipients» [3, p. 192]. Using the reversed situation (in «Travels» one correspondent writes to different people), Smollett introduces numerous authors in «Humphry Clinker»; each of them addresses letters to one permanent recipient. The writer replaces the «solitary» point of view of his previous novels with a «prismatic vision» of characters, describing the events based on «personal external and internal world» [3, p. 199]. «Artful multi-focus», reminiscent of either «successful synthesis», or «dubious balance», or «masterful containment of hardly reconciled forces», can be the key to «discordia concors» (Folkenflick), which Smollett had been seeking so persistently [9, p. 188; 8, p. 4]. Taking advantage of the style («variety, plurality of points of view, free composition»), the novelist unfolds «epistolary subtleties into an ever-changing game of exposures, flashbacks and repetitions that draw patterns in letters moving to literary kaleidoscope» [5, p. 141; 3, p. 193].

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**ВІЗІ ЧЕРВОНОЇ ПЛАНЕТИ В АМЕРИКАНСЬКІЙ
НАУКОВО-ФАНТАСТИЧНІЙ ЛІТЕРАТУРІ ХХ СТОЛІТТЯ**

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Американська література першої половини ХХ століття зазнала істотних змін у жанрово-стильовому вимірі. Раніше популярні пригоди, вестерни та любовні романи вже не приваблювали публіку та авторів. Бурхливі історичні події, урбанізація, інтенсивний розвиток індустрії й