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**ANTI-COLONIAL DISCOURSE
IN MODERN UKRAINIAN LITERATURE**

**АНТИ-КОЛОНІАЛЬНИЙ ДИСКУРС
У СУЧАСНІЙ УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ ЛІТЕРАТУРІ**

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Anti-colonial discourse has recently been taken into consideration as an interpretative representation applied to Ukraine, its colonial past under Moscow oppression. These days Ukrainian literature, without been banned or thoroughly checked by Moscow censorship, is gaining its popularity rapidly all over the world. Luckily it got rid of a harmful honour for the uniqueness of the “velikiy Moscow genius” with which the Ukrainian generations of the 20th century were fed.

The role of writers and poets is more important among other authorities as the formation in the cultural and intellectual phase of a modern nation, literature always plays one of the urgent roles in the society that struggles for its freedom. Writers are able to unite a community influencing their perception by sharp and truthful messages. Literature in modern conditions of Ukraine is represented as an autonomous phenomenon under the significant influence of wartime consequences. S. Zhadan (his works are full of rotten ideas from Soviet Union in the minds of crippled people), Y. Andrukhovych (the bright example of Postmodernism in Ukrainian literature), L. Kostenko (“the voice of Ukrainian people”), L. Dashvar (truly speaks about Ukrainians), I. Rozdobudko (is not afraid of experiments and invented her own style), O. Zabuzhko (she gained the international acknowledgement), V. Shkliar (the father of Ukrainian bestsellers) are

among those who form the new voice of the Ukrainian culture. The list of modern Ukrainian writers is actually endless. The reason is that today they have a chance to create, invent, experiment without any “red flags”.

It should be remembered that "... unlike colonialism at the West, where national problems often belonged to the category of racial issues and overseas conquests, Russian colonialism largely dependent on national identity and the expansionist policies of neighbouring countries – says researcher of colonialism Eva M Thompson. – The Russian military has participated in this process, introducing the conquered territories of the Russian narrative presence and displacing these territories to their own history and literature, had important for them. Russian writers ... support the central government for action on how to keep the periphery able to speak their own voice and to notify about your own experience as a single object of the story, not only as a supplement to the centre" [3, p. 19–20].

Drozdovskyi D. says contemporary Ukrainian fiction demonstrates the transformation of its literary landscape due to wartime. New motives and new concepts have been reinforced after the full-scale invasion. Contemporary novels, novellas and short stories portray the situation of the war and its influence on the social life of Ukrainian people. The Russian-Ukrainian war has generated texts in which the authors reflect on the tragedy that Ukraine experienced in 2022 and reveals the antihuman aggressive nature of Russian invaders who destroy people's homes and ruin human lives" [2].

Russian invaders who destroy people's homes

Vira Ageyeva highlights the fact, that the equation of peasantry/people/nation at the end of the 19th century was already becoming an archaic notion, modern principles were being established, and a transition from Ukrainophilism to Ukrainian identity was taking place. Reading Ukrainian dramas in the context of anti-imperial struggles reveals historiosophic depths unattainable without the tools of postcolonial criticism [1, p. 169].

Oksana Zabuzhko interprets Lesia Ukrainka's statement “we are simply called Ukrainians, because we are that” (zvemosh prosto ukraintsi, bo my takymy yesmo) in the following way: “Cossack descendants modernized the “Cossack nation” [6].

Luko Dashvar is one of the prominent Ukrainian writers managed to describe Ukrainian village in some novels like the unique symphony of ordinary people with their routine together with its healing power for tired souls that can't be explained scientifically, but with a great power of intuition and love to everything Ukrainian. Her books are about love and life, the phenomena of the Ukrainian belles-lettres with its identity and beauty.

Vasyl Shkliar is a very bright representative of anti-colonial thinking and writing against Moscow narratives about Ukrainian nonexistence.

His novels are about patriotism and devotion to Ukraine, its freedom. In the late 1980s, Vasyl Shkliar was fascinated by the ideas of national revival, independence, and the "Ukrainian revolution", he started including them into his novels full of tragedy and sufferings for people who care about their country and its prosperous future. He insists on the fact that his books are quite readable, besides Vasyl wants us to read Ukrainian masterpieces and be influenced by their literary values.

The substantial number of young authors are at the military service nowadays. They describe the reality of the soldiers' lives and the problems of the society in the time of warfare. Among them are Oleksandr Mykhed, Pavlo Vyshebababa, Valerii Markus, Artem Chech, Yurii Hudymenko, Volodymyr Tymchuk and others. In short, many Ukrainian writers are worth mentioning with their anti-colonial statements because it is the proper time for their showing off.

Ukraine is not the only the country in western Eurasia whose past might be regarded as "colonial" and arguably it could be studied from a post-colonial perspective. Logically, we could compare Ukraine with any country anywhere that had ever been dependent – practically every country in the world except Sweden, Thailand, and Japan. However, this would mean disregarding not only the differences between foreign rule in different parts of the world, but all the other differences that exist between lands and peoples, and lumping them together into one category of countries with little or nothing in common except their one-time dependency [4].

Modern domestic researcher V. Borysenko analyzes the current state of awareness of some social groups in Ukraine are nostalgic for the Soviet colonial past: "Sometimes you can hear nostalgic words, especially the older generation, the collective farm "happy" life. Of course, these people now live hard and are lonely. They can not understand that the kind of life they have now is not predetermined by the independence of Ukraine but by the previous history of the Soviet destruction of the human spirit. Destroying Ukrainian traditions entity, theft, decline of industry, this inevitably led to further collapse. The current standard of living in Ukraine is not the fault of independence, but the result of Soviet colonial policy" [5, p. 180].

Despite the war Ukrainian literature experiences a kind of Renaissance, being able to present the Ukrainian discourse as the independent nation and being heart all over the world. Our culture is unique and powerful, so it can enrich any reader all over the world. In spite of new possibilities, Ukrainian authors have to prove they are not Russians and withstand the attempts of the European as well as world organizers to combine them with Russian participants.

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