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**EXISTENTIAL PROBLEMS OF HUMAN EXISTENCE  
IN CONTEMPORARY GERMAN-LANGUAGE DRAMATURGY**

**ЕКЗИСТЕНЦІЙНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ ЛЮДСЬКОГО БУТТЯ  
У СУЧАСНІЙ НІМЕЦЬКОМОВНІЙ ДРАМАТУРГІЇ**

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The current social context, marked by general instability, armed conflicts, and global climate change, has prompted an increase in existential and philosophical questions about human existence. The search for the meaning of human life, an awareness of the finitude of existence, and the desire for a sense of fulfillment and freedom are among the most fundamental existential problems. In existential terms, freedom entails the absence of external structure, leaving the individual fully responsible for their world (I. Yalom).

In contemporary literary studies, there is a growing interest in the scientific reception of the concept of 'artistic psychologism' within the context of social and ethical-aesthetic transformations. It is essential to comprehend the value basis of an individual's existence not only through all spheres and aspects of social life but also through artistic representation. The latest methods in contemporary dramaturgy for realizing psychologism reveal philosophical and psychological problems, highlighting literature's ability not only to react to vital aspects but also to partially predict them.

Unfortunately, there has been insufficient research into the interpretation of existential problems in contemporary German-language playwrights' works. Our study has concentrated on investigating violence in the youth environment as a socio-psychological phenomenon, particularly focusing on German-language drama from the 2010s. Additionally, we have delved into the psychology of plays depicting extreme life situations in German-language experimental theatre, as well as the psychological aspects of terrorism and school shootings [2; 4; 5]. Our analysis has centered on modern German plays addressing topical issues related to the psychology of literary creativity, as well as the existential and taboo problem of death from a child's perspective [3; 6].

Contemporary dramaturgy aims to comprehend the human world. This world is perceived as a structure of meaningful connections in which individuals exist, and it consists of patterns they employ. In existential philosophy and psychology, the world is precisely understood as the world of humans [1, p. 14]. According to L. Binswanger, it is not something static or given to which individuals adapt; rather, it is a dynamic model through which individuals are in the process of formation and planning, as they possess self-awareness [1, p. 39].

The existential challenges of human formation and development are central themes in contemporary German-language drama, including:

1) Childhood, adolescence and adulthood, the search for oneself and one's place in the world: M. Baisch "The Princess and Peter" ("Die Prinzessin und der Pjör"), J. Raschke "Are the fish asleep?" ("Schlafen Fische?"), J. Friedrich "My name is Peter" ("Mein Name ist Peter"), J. Isermeier "Nothing happens without moss" ("Ohne Moos nix los"), W. Herrndorf, R. Koall "Chick" ("Tschick") (Germany), V. Schmidt, G. Staudacher "komA" (Austria);

2) Age crises and overcoming them: F. Kater "Time to Live, Time to Die" ("Zeit zu lieben, Zeit zu sterben"), N. Haratischwili „Live Stein“, R. Schimmelpfennig "The Golden Dragon" ("Der goldene Drache") (Germany), L. Bärfuss "Alice's Journey to Switzerland" ("Alices Reise in die Schweiz"), "Test", D. Stocker "Cupid's Blindness" ("Nachtblind") (Switzerland), P. Turrini "Love in Madagascar" ("Liebe in Madagaskar") (Austria);

3) Realization of gender roles and sexualit: R. Schimmelpfennig „The Golden Dragon“ („Der goldene Drache“) (Germany), L. Bärfuss "Our parents' sexual neuroses" ("Die sexuellen Neurosen unserer Eltern"), C. Rinderknecht „Livia, 13“ (Switzerland);

4) Aging and the acknowledgment of life's finiteness: C. Dennig "Extasy Rave" (Austria), L. Bärfuss "Alice's Journey to Switzerland" ("Alices Reise in die Schweiz") (Switzerland).

According to R. May's existential psychology, humans are always perceived in a state of transformation, potentially experiencing crisis, anxiety, despair, alienation from oneself, and various inherent conflicts (H. Krausser "Thursday – The Princes" ("Donnerstag – Die Fürsten"), U. Syha "Driving a car in Germany" ("Autofahren in Deutschland"), R. Schimmelpfennig "Before/After" ("Vorher/Nachher", P. Brodowsky "Rain in Neukölln" ("Regen in Neukölln"), D. Loher "Thieves" ("Diebe"), F. Richter "In a state of emergency" ("Im Ausnahmezustand"), P. Wüllenweber "Not available at the moment" ("Zur Zeit nicht erreichbar") (Germany), V. Schmidt "The mountain bikers" ("Die Mountainbiker") (Austria).

The entire collection of German dramaturgical texts depicts interpersonal, intra-family, and social conflicts: I. Lausund "Slipped disc. An evening for people with postural problems" ("Bandscheibenvorfall. Ein Abend für Leute mit Haltungsschäden"), P. Löhle „Named Gospodin“ („Genannt Gospodin“), J. Menke-Peitzmeyer „First lesson“ („Erste Stunde“), R. Schimmelpfennig „Push up 1–3“.

Contemporary dramas frequently explore the existential challenge of confronting mortality, often featuring suicide. Renowned existential psychologist R. May identifies the suppression of the ontological sense of being as a critical contemporary issue, which drives young people to seek ways to numb their awareness of life, including through suicide: T. Bauersima "Norway. Today", A. Hilling "Stars" ("Sterne"), J. Raschke "Are the fish asleep?" („Schlafen Fische?“), P. Wüllenweber „Not available at the moment“ („Zur Zeit nicht erreichbar“), J. Menke-Peitzmeyer „You see ghosts“ („Du siehst Gespenster»), T. Buchsteiner „Nordost“ (Germany), E. Jelinek „Death and the Maiden I – V: Princess Dramas“ („Der Tod und das Mädchen I – V: Prinzessinnendramen“) (Austria), L. Bärfuss "Alice's Journey to Switzerland" ("Alices Reise in die Schweiz"), C. Rinderknecht „Livia, 13“ (Switzerland).

Anxiety and the sense of guilt in humans are regarded in existential philosophy and psychology as ontological characteristics, rooted in their existence, posing threats to the very core of human beingness, experiencing the realization of the inevitability of impending death (R. May, K. Goldstein). As believed by Z. Freud, L. Binswanger, K. Goldstein, S. Kierkegaard, this anxiety strikes directly at a person's sense of dignity and value as an individual, thus suppressing potential possibilities of personal existence, erasing the sense of time, blunting memories, and eradicating the future (the problem of denial, refusal, and/or inability to realize one's potential abilities and desires). An important theme in contemporary German-language dramaturgical texts is the theme of self-improvement, psychology of creativity, and creative self-development (for example, the play by N.-M. Stockmann "The ship is not coming" ("Das Schiff wird nicht kommen")). In this case, in German-language plays, the ideas, conflicts, motives of characters' actions, and their characters touch upon concepts and conceptions not only of existential psychology but also of humanistic philosophy, as well as psychoanalytic concepts and the theory of archetypes.

Interdisciplinary research approaches within the "literature-psychology" paradigm have become an effective method for analyzing contemporary foreign dramaturgy. The theories of existential philosophy and psychology allow for a deeper understanding of the motives, actions, peculiarities of the characters' behaviour and the style of their relationships with others in contemporary German-language plays.

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