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THE WORD AGAINST WAR: THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN OVERCOMING GLOBAL DIVIDES

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In a world shaped by global crises, military conflicts, and cultural confrontations, literature stands as a powerful force for bridging divides. It fosters intercultural dialogue, helps process collective trauma, and creates new avenues for communication and understanding. Yet, not all nations are willing or able to engage in such dialogue. Russian culture and literature, in particular, have long been instruments of imperial ideology – one that not only justifies aggression but also contradicts the core principles of a humanistic world order [10].

The interplay between external and internal conflicts, shaped by the relationship between artists and their environments, plays a crucial role in 21st-century literature. The existential themes of loneliness, fear, and death have taken on deeper significance in response to the trauma inflicted by Russia's war against Ukraine. At the same time, Ukrainians are increasingly determined to reinforce their national identity and foster an international cultural dialogue – one that deliberately excludes the aggressor state.

Conflicts have always left a profound imprint on literature, serving both as a means of artistic reflection on catastrophe and as an act of resistance. War and violence shatter cultural bridges, yet literature possesses the power to rebuild them, forging new pathways for dialogue between nations. One of the greatest dangers in such times is hatred, which, as Ivo Andrić (1892–1975) observed, can become a self-perpetuating force that corrodes society from within: “I know that hatred, like anger, has its function in the

development of society, because hatred gives strength, and anger provokes action... But what I have seen in Bosnia – that is something different. It is hatred, but not limited just to a moment in the course of social change, or an inevitable part of the historical process; rather, it is hatred acting as an independent force, as an end in itself. Hatred which sets man against man and casts both alike into misery and misfortune, or drives both opponents to the grave; hatred like a cancer in an organism, consuming and eating up everything around it, only to die itself at the last...” [8, p. 114]. This idea, explored by the Nobel laureate and witness to the devastation of World War I in his short story *Letter from 1920 (Pismo iz 1920. godine, 1946)*, holds particular relevance for Ukraine today. Russia’s ongoing war is not merely an act of territorial aggression but also an attempt to annihilate Ukrainian culture and national identity. This invasion, fueled by hatred, has had and continues to have far-reaching consequences across multiple spheres of society, including religion – a fundamental pillar of a nation’s spiritual identity. As Mykola Palinchak and Viktoriya Bokoch aptly note, “Under the conditions of the Russian military invasion of the territory of Ukraine, the religious and ecclesiastical sphere has been significantly affected. Russia’s aggression has caused dramatic changes in the religious environment and has provoked significant opposition of believers, clergy and religious organizations of various denominations” [9, p. 170]. This transformation has also found expression in contemporary Ukrainian literature, where writers explore new forms of resistance to aggression, including a profound reassessment of spiritual values.

21st-century Ukrainian literature has become a powerful chronicle of the struggle for freedom, documenting the horrors of war and shaping new meanings in the search for national identity. Yaroslav Polishchuk observes: “Tensions heighten in times of instability, when traditional ideological models prove powerless and inadequate in explaining new realities. It is under such conditions that society’s creative energy surges” [5, p. 436]. Contemporary Ukrainian authors not only reflect on the realities of war but also grapple with deeper historical, cultural, and existential questions. In *The Orphanage*, Serhiy Zhadan portrays the chaos of war in Donbas through the eyes of an ordinary person [1], while in his poetry collection *A List of Ships*, he captures the pain and resilience of modern Ukrainian society [3]. Following Russia’s full-scale invasion in 2022, Zhadan continued his literary resistance, particularly in *Aviation Psalm*, where his poetry emerges as the voice of an era of defiance [2]. Similarly, Artem Chekh shares his personal experience of serving in the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) in *Absolute Zero* [7]. At the same time, Ukrainian writers are not only engaging in artistic reflection but are also actively forging international cultural connections, helping the world gain a deeper understanding of the Ukrainian experience.

For instance, in her essay *The Longest Journey*, Oksana Zabuzhko examines Ukraine's place within European culture [4], while Volodymyr Rafeienko's novel *Mondegreen: Songs About Death and Love* explores themes of linguistic and cultural identity [6]. Meanwhile, Ukrainian literature is deliberately distancing itself from the Russian cultural tradition, which for centuries has served as an instrument of imperial policy. Even those Russian authors who formally oppose the war continue to perpetuate imperial narratives or maintain a so-called "neutral stance," which in reality enables aggression. The Western world has yet to fully grasp that a fair and meaningful cultural dialogue with a nation that justifies or supports war is impossible. For this reason, contemporary Ukrainian literature is more than an artistic response to current events – it is a vital voice that conveys the truth about the war to the international community.

Despite the devastating effects of war, international literary dialogue remains a vital means of fostering humanistic values and rethinking the global challenges of our time. Ukrainian culture is becoming increasingly embedded in the European and global cultural landscape, as reflected in the growing number of translations of contemporary Ukrainian authors and their participation in prestigious literary festivals, discussions, and forums. Ukrainian literature resonates at major book fairs in Frankfurt, London, and Bologna, while the works of writers such as Serhiy Zhadan, Oksana Zabuzhko, and Tetyana Malyarchuk continue to find an engaged readership beyond Ukraine's borders.

Thus, literature is not merely a form of artistic self-expression but a powerful declaration of values – rooted in truth, freedom, and humanity. Ukrainian writers not only bear witness to the national experience of war but also engage with the world through texts that transcend borders and shape a new ethical paradigm.

As an art form, literature possesses immense power to bridge global divides. However, this becomes impossible when culture is weaponized as a tool of propaganda to justify war, violence, and aggression. Contemporary Ukrainian literature does more than document historical events and reflect on the tragedies of wartime – it actively shapes an international discourse in which the Russian imperial narrative has no place.

Ultimately, the future of literary dialogue must be defined not by political manipulation but by artistic merit, moral responsibility, and an unwavering commitment to fundamental values – freedom, justice, and human dignity.

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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AS A CONDITION FOR EFFECTIVE BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

МІЖКУЛЬТУРНА КОМПЕТЕНЦІЯ ЯК УМОВА ЕФЕКТИВНОГО ДІЛОВОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ

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Незважаючи на глобальні потрясіння та складнощі, міжкультурне співробітництво ділових людей у сучасному світі продовжує розвиватися. Тому аналіз умов продуктивного спілкування є одним із