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**THE PROBLEMATICS AND AUTHORIAL POSITION IN
THE WRITINGS ABOUT VLAD III (ȚEPEȘ) IN RUSSIAN
AND EUROPIAN LITERATURE**

**622.02 World Literature and Comparative Studies (the
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CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINES OF RESEARCH

The relevance of our study is determined by the necessity to examine the works on Dracula in order to identify the peculiarities in the interpretation of the hero's character, the problematic nature of the works about him, the determination of the author's position, the peculiarities of poetics, pragmatics, and reader reception in the context and intertextuality of the works about Dracula, as well as to identify differences in the perception of the image of Dracula in national literatures in the interests of expanding the "dialogue of cultures" (M.M. Bakhtin). Previously, such a comparison of works about Dracula from the perspective of comparative studies, analysis, and imagology in synchronous and diachronic aspects has not been conducted.

The object of our study is the works about Vlad III Basarab, in which there is an attempt to create an authentic image of the historical Dracula, even if his personality is interpreted by the author in a peculiar way and for pragmatic purposes. Mass culture works where "Dracula" is merely the name of a fictional character are not the subject of the study.

The subject of the study became the problematic nature, author's position, and character portrayal in works of Russian, Romanian and Western European literature about Dracula.

The aim of the study is to identify the authorial intent, the author's position, and problematic nature in artistic works about Dracula in world literature of different epochs. Also, to summarize the research results.

Research objectives:

- to comprehensively study the works about the historical personality of Vlad III Basarab;
- to identify the problematic nature and authorial position in the most significant works;
- to examine the peculiarities of Dracula's character interpretation, narratology, and reader reception;

- to identify textual, historical, and chronological connections between works about Vlad Dracula;
- to study works about the medieval ruler from the perspective of the peculiarities of human worldview in the Middle Ages culture;
- to compare the problematic nature, poetics, and authorial position in the works about Dracula by representatives of different national literatures and historical periods from the perspective of comparative studies and imagology

The scientific novelty of the work lies in:

- systematic analysis of the problematic nature and authorial position in the works about Dracula;
- inclusion of studies on medieval culture in the analysis of the works about Dracula;
- inclusion of new materials on the history of the era, such as the "Moldavian-German Chronicle" in the analysis of "The Tales of Voivode Dracula";
- identification of textual and chronological connections between works about Dracula;
- comparison of the poetics and reception of works by different authors, literatures, and historical periods from the perspective of imagology.

Theoretical and methodological framework of the work comprises the writings of M.M. Bakhtin, related to the problem of author and hero, "self" and "other," comparative studies by V.M. Zhirmunsky, reception theory by H.R. Jauss, hermeneutic approach advocated by H.G. Gadamer (understanding the work as an objectification of cultural tradition, as well as the thesis on the inevitability of reader's "pre-understanding" of the work in accordance with the mentality of the era), intertextual approach to text analysis by M.M. Bakhtin, works on mentalities history by J. Huizinga, C.G. Jung, A.Y. Gurevich, and works on imagology.

Various aspects of Russian medieval culture were addressed by Russian philologists D.S. Likhachev, Y.S. Lurie, B.A. Uspensky, A.N. Uzhankov, A.V. Karavashkin, cultural scientists

A.Y. Gurevich, B.A. Romanov, historians N.V. Sinitsyna, A.L. Yurganov, philosophers A.F. Zamaleev, D.N. Tananushko, lawyers V.V. Momotov, A.A. Rozhnov, whose works also formed part of the research methodology.

Several research methods are employed in the work: historical-theoretical; comparative; hermeneutic method of text analysis aimed at revealing the author's subjectivity and fundamental orientations of medieval scribes; descriptive method based on analysis and synthesis of various facts; axiological approach in assessing worldview phenomena; theory of artistic reception, elements of structural analysis. The theoretical basis of the dissertation adheres to the principle of historicism as a crucial prerequisite for literary interpretation of medieval texts.

The dissertation structure is determined by the main task and research objectives and consists of **Introduction, four Chapters, General Conclusions and Recommendations, Bibliography, and Appendix.**

CONTENTS OF THE DISSERTATION RESEARCH

In the **Introduction**, besides brief information on the research topic, the relevance, objectives, and tasks of the dissertation research are formulated, the object, subject, novelty, hypothesis, theoretical foundations, and research methods are determined.

The first chapter of the dissertation contains a review and evaluation of the scientific literature dedicated to the category of authorship and the problematic nature of the work, as well as a review of the peculiarities of interpretation and assessment of Vlad III Basarab's character in artistic, literary, historical, and cultural studies, a review of sources on the topic in related disciplines, and the identification of possibilities for interdisciplinary research.

After reviewing various theories about the category of author, we have come to the decision to adhere to the definitions of *author* and *authorial position* formulated by the prominent contemporary literary scholar, Professor of St. Petersburg University I.N. Sukhikh. The concept of "author," according to I.N. Sukhikh, "is debatable, difficult to define, and ambiguous," researchers use the expression "author image" in various homonymous meanings, therefore the scientist suggests [Sukhikh, p. 292] distinguishing these concepts using additional definitions: *biographical author* - *author image* - *author-narrator* (or simply *narrator*) - *pure author*, *authorial position*.

L. Gasparov gives most generalized interpretation of the "author image": "The ultimate concepts that can be derived in the analysis of all means of expression are "world image" (with its basic characteristics, artistic time, and artistic space) and "author image," the interaction of which provides a "point of view" determining all the main features in the structure of work [Gasparov, p. 786]". It is worth noting that with such a formulation, the world image and the author's image may merge until indistinguishable.

There are no particular discrepancies in defining the problematic nature of the work among different researchers;

everyone understands the problematic nature as a set of issues of the work, as something highlighted (προβλήμα - "thrown forward"), as the intensification in the selected material of aspects that seem most significant to the writer from an ideological, moral, and psychological point of view.

We will adhere to the typology of problematic nature by A.B. Yesin, however, it is worth noting the conditionality of any typology of this kind and its incompleteness. A.B. Yesin distinguishes between the novelistic (ideological-moral and adventurous subtype), problematic nature, mythological, national-historical, socio-cultural, and philosophical [Yesin, p. 34]. Of course, the problematic nature of specific works never appears in its typologically pure form, and it can only be determined by the dominant theme.

Works about the Wallachian ruler Vlad III Basarab (Dracula) can be divided into medieval and modern, and this division would not be artificial since no new works about Dracula were created during the XVII-XVIII centuries, and during this period, the worldview of authors, the pragmatics, and the problematic nature of works changed sharply. In turn, medieval works can be divided into contemporaneous (created during the ruler's lifetime), which had a clear political direction, and posthumous ones, which had a different ideological direction and pragmatics.

Modern works about Dracula are divided into two periods with the appearance in 1897 of the "Gothic" novel by Bram Stoker "Dracula," which sparked a peculiar interest in the personality of the Wallachian lord. In different literatures, this divide falls at different times, depending on the date of translation; for example, Stoker's novel was translated into Romanian almost a century after its publication, so the divide shifts accordingly.

The beginning of compositions about Dracula was marked by the missive of voivode Dan III Basarab, Vlad's relative and claimant to the Wallachian throne, to Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus dated April 2, 1459 (in Latin and in Slavic). This composition can be considered the point at which the history of

Dracula transitioned into the realm of literary fiction. Dan's letter predates by three years the anonymous manuscripts of the Benedictines from Lambach Monastery in Austria, which Y.S. Lurie considered the earliest known written sources about Dracula's "misdeeds." The letter in Russian was not published, and a significant number of authoritative Russian researchers (Y.S. Lurie, A.P. Kashperskaya, M.P. Odessky) are unaware of its existence.

To describe Vlad's transgressions, the author used a loose adaptation of the biblical story from the Book of Daniel about the three Jewish youths who, for refusing to worship the golden idol at Nebuchadnezzar's command, were thrown into the fire. It is easy to see that from Dan's letter, the biblical plot migrated to the Benedictine manuscripts and later found its place in the poem by the Meistersinger M. Behaim, the "Chronicle of Constance," and the earliest printed "popular books." Besides, in German texts, there are episodes representing wandering plots unrelated to the real Vlad.

German printed pamphlets were reissued dozens of times in various German dialects with minor alterations until the end of the 16th century.

Presumably, around 1484, in Akkerman, the "Tale of Dracula the Voivode" was written, the author of which is considered to be the learned deacon Fedor Vasilievich Kuritsyn, who was in charge of diplomatic affairs during the Reign of Grand Prince Ivan III Vasilievich. Unlike German publicists, the author avoids direct moralizing and is in no hurry to condemn Dracula. In this, he is close to the Italian A. Bonfini in the "Hungarian Chronicle," who also considered the unity of cruelty and justice an essential trait of a ruler.

In 1963, Romanian professor of Slavic history Petre Panaitescu published an article claiming that "The Tale of Dracula the Voivode" was written by an unknown Romanian author from the city of Oradea in Old Bulgarian, representing a work of Slavo-Romanian literature whose idea is the struggle against Turkish

invaders [Panaitescu, p. 279]. Later, Romanian philologist Anton Balotă asserted that the "Tale" was written in Buda in the "South Slavic" language; there are other proponents of this view. However, if the "Tale" was written in Akkerman in medieval Russian (which we adhere to), it can still be considered a work of Slavo-Romanian literature to some extent.

Among the scribes of the 1538 Chronograph was a monk nicknamed Dracula – "the greatly sinful monk Vasian, called Dracula," which serves as evidence that the "Tale" was read and copied during this period.

In the 17th-18th centuries and in modern times, interest in Vlad Dracula was insufficient, with no new works about Dracula appearing. Interest in Vlad revived only in the 19th century.

In Western Europe, a surge of interest in Dracula occurred in May 1897 with the publication of the "gothic" novel about the vampire Dracula by the Irishman Abraham "Bram" Stoker. Naturally, the novel had no direct relation to the historical Vlad III Basarab. French literary critic Jean Marigny explains [Marigny, p. 13] the surge of interest in vampire fiction in late 19th-century England by Victorian hypocrisy – this allowed catering to the perverted tastes of readers, providing them with eroticism, mysticism, horror, while adhering to moral standards.

One way or another, Stoker's novel spawned an avalanche of mass culture works that can be conditionally divided into several streams. Firstly, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of "vampiric" literature works, predominantly in English and Russian, featuring the vampire Dracula. Such literature exists in a small quantity in German as well, but the nature of these works is entirely identical to the "vampiric" novels of Russian and English authors, lacking any national or cultural characteristics.

A separate stream of "vampire" prose consists of the epigones of B. Stoker, both in English and Russian. There are also other types of mass culture works mentioning Dracula, mostly detective stories, pseudo-historical fantasy, and mixed-genre works.

Only a small portion of works about Dracula can be called true artistic literature, as a rule these are historical novels.

In addition to prose, there are studies about Dracula written both in a scholarly style and in a belletristic manner, which cannot be classified as artistic literature but where the image of Dracula is present and the author's attitude towards his personality is clearly expressed.

Today, there is extensive scholarly literature about the Middle Ages, with numerous works by historians and cultural scholars dedicated to the peculiarities of worldview of medieval people. However, modern researchers do not always consider such features in medieval man's consciousness as tension in eschatological experiences, a more relaxed attitude towards cruelty and violence, belief in magical rituals, tendency towards mysticism and superstitions, attention to omens and portents, heightened emotionality, coarse manners, and other.

In any study about Dracula, we often encounter the word "cruelty." However, there is no commonly accepted definition of cruelty in scholarly literature, nor are there studies on the connection between the concept of cruelty and the culture of the era.

We will assume that in the Middle Ages, cruelty was considered unmotivated, senseless violence, as it is today. However, the mere sight of death, blood, and torture did not disturb the medieval person; torture was a common element of judicial proceedings. It is evident that, in the modern sense, extreme cruelty was quite compatible with the idea of righteousness for medieval people, as were other actions and manifestations that seem unacceptable today.

There is a misconception that executions in Eastern Europe were particularly brutal compared to the enlightened West. In reality, it was quite the opposite—executions in Eastern Europe were not known for their sophistication. Legal historians assert that "qualified executions" (various complex executions for different crimes) originated in Western Europe, where they were applied

more frequently, for a greater number of offenses, and with more variety.

The second chapter presents an analysis of the author's position, issues, peculiarities of poetics, and reader reception in medieval works about Vlad III Basarab, such as anonymous manuscripts from the Benedictine monastery in Lambach, the poem by M. Beheim, German "folk books" about Dracula, and "The Tale of Dracula the Voivode." Special attention is given to the cultural features of the Middle Ages, the self-awareness of the medieval author, the consciousness of people in the past, and the phenomenon of cruelty.

All medieval German-language writings about Vlad were undoubtedly political pamphlets, in which facts were distorted or misinterpreted to create a negative image of the Wallachian ruler. M. Beheim's poem is more complex but secondary to the Benedictine manuscripts. Folk books about Dracula appeared after his death and adopted a different linguo-pragmatic strategy: thanks to the wisdom and patience of the Hungarian king, the hardened criminal embraced the path of truth—publicly converted to Christianity, repented greatly, and began doing good deeds.

Some genre differences between the Benedictine manuscripts and folk books are determined not only by pragmatics but also by the difference in the intended audience: the former aimed at clergy and nobility, the latter at the general reader. The entertainment value of the text (including descriptions of cruelty) was preserved and, in some aspects, even enhanced. According to A.B. Yesin's typology, the issues in German texts are partly mythological, partly novelistic (adventurous and ideological-moral), even considering the political undertones.

"The Tale of Dracula the Voivode" can be seen as either a utopia or a dystopia, depending on one's perspective, and is a monument of original Russian belletristic literature. The issues in F.V. Kuritsyn's work are primarily religious, that is, philosophical according to A.B. Yesin's typology; it addresses the image and role of the ruler in the eschatological perspective of *collective salvation*

in a pious state. Nevertheless, the story was considered "spiritually unbeneficial" and did not belong to the genre of ecclesiastical-moralistic literature. One can speak of mythological, novelistic, and even national-historical issues, but to a very small extent. The reader of F.V. Kuritsyn was a close to the author himself a contemporary Orthodox reader, for whom the soteriological aspects of the work are evident, though they may not always be accessible to today's readers. The author consciously separates his hero from both the historical Vlad III Basarab and the mythological Dracula from various pamphlets, rumors, and anecdotes. Kuritsyn's attitude towards his hero is ambiguous, allowing the reader to make their own choice and come to their own conclusions.

The judgments of the monks in the well-known parable of the two monks from the "Tale" anticipate the discussions about the role of the ideal ruler that unfolded in the second half of the 16th century in the works of Russian publicists and the dispute between Ivan the Terrible and Andrei Kurbsky.

It can be assumed that the image of the "wicked-wise" Dracula, the "cruel but just" ruler, first appeared in F.V. Kuritsyn's story.

There are sharp differences between the themes and the image of Dracula in the Benedictine manuscripts and in the "Tale of Dracula the Voivode," which confirms the originality of the Russian story.

The third chapter of the study is dedicated to examining the author's position and the range of issues in contemporary literature about Vlad III Basarab, such as "Dracula. The Last Confession" by Chris Humphreys, "Dracula's Diary" by Marin Mincu, "The Third Stake" by Marin Sorescu, "The Draculești" by Georgina Viorica Rogoz, "Dracula's Confession" by Elena Artamonova, the tetralogy by Svetlana Lyzhina, "The Tale of Lord Vlad and the Order of the Dragon" by Vuk Zadunaisky, and others. Some attention is also given to non-fiction literature about Dracula.

Summing up we can give brief characterization to each of the works mentioned above.

Chris Humphreys' *Dracula* is primarily a person shaped by circumstances. His Vlad wants to be a good Christian, a wise ruler, a good father, and a defender of Christians, but despite his will and reason, in the given circumstances, he is forced to exceed the bounds of humanity. The issues in the work are mainly novelistic – adventurous and moral-ideological.

Marin Mincu's *Dracula* is depicted by the author as a man of the Italian Renaissance – a Catholic, philosopher, and knight, but in reality, he is a mask of a 20th-century person: an intellectual indifferent to religion, an individualist, a nationalist, and a mystifier. The novel's issues are primarily national-historical, and to a lesser extent philosophical and novelistic (adventurous).

Marin Sorescu's *Dracula* is a man forced into cruelty by circumstances. At the same time, he is ironic, cynical, and even mocking. From murder to murder, "Țepeș" moves towards personal disintegration and self-destruction. Sacrificing himself, Vlad asks for mercy, but the author, well understanding and even declaring the necessity of *Dracula's* cruelty, does not forgive his hero and does not allow the audience to sympathize with him. Some critics see the play as a polemic with the Ceaușescu regime, but even outside the political context, the work has a certain aesthetic meaning. In formal terms, the play represents a folk drama but has a postmodern dimension that destroys the declared genre. The issues in the work are primarily novelistic (moral-ideological) and philosophical, while the national-historical issues (unlike Mincu's novel) are rather a subtext.

Georgina Viorica Rogoz's *Dracula* is a person for whom the fate of Wallachia is the highest value. The fates of his loved ones and God's commandments are certainly significant to him, but if saving the country requires sacrificing his soul's immortality, Vlad will stop at nothing. The issues in the work are primarily novelistic (moral-ideological and adventurous) and national-historical. In terms of genre, the novel is historical, but it also has elements of a women's novel, which brings Rogoz's novel closer to the works of Artamonova and Lyzhina.

Elena Artamonova's Vlad Dracula is the dream of a woman of Balzac's age: a handsome man with moist dark eyes, sensitive, kind, open to beauty, attentive to the upbringing of children and adolescents, but for unclear reasons, forced to impale Turks. Dracula is an ordinary modern person, and there are no other images or depictions of medieval customs in the novel. The novel shows a sharp dissonance between historical events, which the author knows quite well, and the disregard for the spirit of the Middle Ages. In formal terms, it is a historical novel, but in essence, it is a women's novel in a historical shell. The issues in the work are predominantly novelistic (primarily adventurous), with national-historical themes being only weakly indicated.

Svetlana Lyzhina's Dracula is an ideal hero. The author occasionally includes disparaging fragments about Vlad from the Benedictine manuscripts, but invariably either justifies Vlad or denies the event's occurrence. S. Lyzhina is well-versed in history but ignores the facts and realities of the era. The author is a non-superstitious and non-religious person, far from the mystical thinking of people of the past. S. Lyzhina's tetralogy, like E. Artamonova's novel, is a women's novel that touches issues such as the coming of age of a young man, adolescent eroticism, the upbringing of children, the psychology of a girl's maturation, building relationships with alien relatives in a dynastic marriage situation, relationships with servants, and so on. In other words, it is also a women's novel in a historical shell. The national-historical issues are more pronounced than in E. Artamonova's work, but the primary focus remains on the novelistic themes.

Vuk Zadunaisky's Dracula is divided into three aspects. The work is clearly experimental, making its genre difficult to determine. The author shows how the same historical material can be interpreted differently. The primary focus in this case is philosophical, with national-historical issues present only as a pretext for the narrative.

When discussing popular science literature about Dracula, essays, and research, it is necessary to highlight the names of

scholars such as Ya.S. Lurie, M.P. Odessky, and R. Florescu, with R. Florescu undoubtedly having the greatest influence on prose writers and philologists.

Ya.S. Lurie, well aware of the gruesome executions in Western Europe, the characteristic of the Renaissance that combined cruelty and humor, and familiar with the works of J. Huizinga, for some reason compares Dracula not with Cesare Borgia or Torquemada, but with Ivan the Terrible, doing so repeatedly in various works. The reason for this phenomenon is understandable – Ya.S. Lurie's political views and secular mindset, which prevent him from seeing the civilizational differences between Western and Eastern Christianity. It is unacceptable that Ya.S. Lurie attempts to impose his perception on medieval Russian scribes. Considering the above, Ya.S. Lurie's Dracula is a tyrant and despot, an inherently negative character, otherwise, he would not fit the researcher's worldview.

M.P. Odessky, a professional philologist, is presumably familiar with the works of J. Huizinga, V.E. Waldenberg, and A.Ya. Gurevich, but this is not evident in his works – the researcher reproduces a full set of misconceptions and stereotypes associated with Dracula: Europeans perceived Dracula's cruelty as Eastern exoticism, contemporaries considered Dracula a sorcerer and vampire, Dracula converted to Catholicism, and so on. M.P. Odessky's articles contain hidden quotes from R. Florescu. M.P. Odessky's tendency to see in Dracula's image cruel sadism and "vampirism," in our opinion, is partly due to commercial reasons – the desire to increase sales, conform to the stream of mass literature, and partly uncritical imitation of R. Florescu.

R. Florescu is perhaps the most authoritative source for Russian researchers and writers, and not only for Russian. This is evident from the direct references to him by philologists M.P. Odessky, T.A. Mikhaylova, V.L. Gopman, F. Morozova, V.V. Erlichman, and other researchers and essayists. Prose writers are less influenced by R. Florescu's authority, but his impact on them is also noticeable.

R. Florescu undoubtedly seeks to defame Vlad Dracula, using fragments from German political pamphlets and presenting them as Romanian folklore and reliable historical information without any justification or references to folklore collections. The Romanian author fabricated much of the gruesome executions to align with his authorial purpose. Additionally, R. Florescu attempts to present "The Tale of Voivode Dracula" as a "report" by a Russian ambassador. The Romanian author's knowledge of Russian history is so poor that R. Florescu mistakenly calls Elena Voloshanka's son Dmitry her husband and considers this marriage the result of Vlad's conversion to Catholicism.

R. Florescu's book [Florescu, McNally] is neither a historical study nor a biography of Vlad Dracula but a work of fiction aimed at success with an undemanding and unprepared reader. Nevertheless, R. Florescu's fantasies and misconceptions easily find their way into the works of modern Russian and English-speaking scholars and writers.

The fourth chapter conducts a comparative analysis of selected works about Dracula, analyzing imagological patterns, examining the similarities and differences of works in Romanian, Russian, and English languages.

From the perspective of imagology, works about Dracula are more or less clearly divided into three streams regarding the image of "the other": works in Romanian, Russian, and English languages.

In English-language literature, the image of "the other" in relation to Romania is quite clear, this can be best illustrated by a quote from an article by American literary critic R. Robbins, "The geography of the novel 'The Lady in the Shroud' will remind readers of 'Dracula' because the action takes place in Eastern Europe, somewhere between Greece, Albania, and Turkey – a place that does not exist on the real map of Europe, seemingly in a European paradise, but in reality in an exotic, strange land alien to laws [Robbins, p. 60]."

The use of the image of "the other" explains the absence of a "bright" (positive) portrayal of Dracula in contemporary English-language writers. The exception is C. Humphreys, who created a positive image of Dracula and used an interesting technique: the author does not try to deny the deeds attributed to Vlad but creates situations where these deeds become justified and even the only possible ones.

In Russian literature, the image of the Wallachian ruler should seemingly be perceived as the image of "the other," but in reality, this happened neither in the past nor in the present. Some "alienness" of Russian prose writers sometimes manifests in their detached perception of Dracula: unlike Romanian prose writers, they do not consider it necessary to justify Dracula at all costs or to justify themselves for him, but rather build a positive image of the hero without looking back at the crimes attributed to him, whether imaginary or real.

One of the signs of cultural differences between Romanian, Russian, and English literatures is the small number of mutual translations of historical novels about Dracula. At the same time, the closeness of contemporary European cultures is evident in the coincidences of stereotypes and plot elements, which is partly due to secularism in perception and a weak understanding of medieval culture.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the conducted dissertation research, we have reached the following conclusions:

The letter from Voivode Dan to the Hungarian king on April 2, 1459, is the first known deliberately fictional work about Vladislav III Basarab, which formed the basis of the anonymous Benedictine manuscripts from the Lambach monastery, thus marking the transition of the Dracula story into the realm of literary fiction.

Medieval writings about Vlad III Basarab in German were political pamphlets where facts were distorted or misinterpreted to create a negative, "dark" image of the hero. According to A.B. Yesin's typology, the issues in the German texts are partly romantic and partly mythological.

In medieval Russian literature, Wallachia and Moldova are utopian lands where everything is not serious, "make-believe," and the narrative is conditional and playful. F.V. Kuritsyn's "Mutations" represent an anti-world, a fairy-tale kingdom where the impossible in the familiar world becomes possible, providing the author with a certain creative freedom. However, the anti-world is not "foreign" but an inverted familiar world, a logical negation of one's own world.

F.V. Kuritsyn is primarily a religious writer, and his work should be attributed to philosophical themes, with romantic and mythological themes also present.

The dominant theme in contemporary works about Dracula is usually novelistic (C. Humphreys, M. Sorescu, G.V. Rogoz, E. Artamonova, S. Lyzhina, and others), with Romanian authors more strongly expressing the ideological and moral subtype, while others emphasize the adventurous subtype. National-historical themes are also present but the dominant (or central according to A.B. Yesin) are observed only in M. Mincu's works. Philosophical themes are observed in some authors (M. Sorescu, M. Mincu, C. Humphreys), but appear dominant only in V. Zadunaysky's works. G.V. Rogoz

emphasizes socio-cultural themes, aligning with E. Artamonova and S. Lyzhina. Therefore, it can be concluded that all types and subtypes of themes according to A.B. Yesin are represented to some extent in the analyzed literature.

From an imagological perspective, contemporary works about Dracula are divided into three streams regarding the image of "the other": works in English, Russian, and Romanian languages. In English-language literature, the image of "the other" is quite clear, which is why B. Stoker chose Dracula for mythologization. The use of the image of "the other" explains the absence of a "bright" (positive) image of Dracula among most English-speaking prose writers.

In contemporary Russian literature, the image of the Wallachian ruler should seemingly be perceived as the image of "the other," but this does not happen. For most contemporary Russian prose writers, Vlad Dracula is a familiar and understandable person, even more "one of their own" than a hero of the past in a foreign environment should be. Reflections on childhood, growing up, marriage, and child-rearing easily fit into the historical-biographical canvas. Some Russian prose writers (Z. Frumoasa, S. Lyzhina) express ideas of Romanian patriotism.

Russian prose writers generally create a "light" (positive) image of Dracula (E. Artamonova, S. Lyzhina, A. Yurchenko, the Andreev brothers, K. Benediktov, V. Zadunaisky, Z. Frumoasa), similar to Romanian authors, while English-speaking writers (with the exception of K. Humphries) almost always depict a negative image. However, Russian philologists and essayists (M.P. Odessky, T.P. Mikhailova, V.L. Gopman, F. Morozova, V.V. Erlikhman) are influenced by historian R. Florescu (who created a "dark" image of Dracula under the pressure of the American market and political agenda) and uncritically reproduce the image of the "other." Even contemporary Romanian researchers (M. Cazacu) are not always free from the image of the "other," being influenced externally.

The popularity of the mass culture character of the vampire Dracula indirectly influences the work of professional researchers and prose writers.

Thus, prose writers and essayists create the "dark" image of Dracula (a perverse monster, perceived from the standpoint of contemporary morality) by:

- relying on historians' interpretations that are incorrect from the perspective of understanding medieval culture;
- being influenced by the image of the "other";
- wishing to create a commercially successful image with elements of mysticism, erotica, and horror;
- fulfilling a political agenda.

On the other hand, the "light," positive image is created by:

- wishing to recreate the historical image of Vlad III Basarab;
- wanting to offer their interpretation of Dracula's image, which is not always historically accurate.

The closeness of contemporary European cultures is manifested in Dracula novels through similarities in plot elements, anachronisms, and attempts to endow the heroes with modern ideas about proper social structure and morality, primarily due to secular perceptions and weak knowledge of medieval culture.

Author's contributions:

– it was established that the letter from Voivode Dan to the Hungarian king dated April 2, 1459 (the first known deliberately fictional work about Vlad III Basarab) formed the basis of anonymous Benedictine manuscripts from the monastery in Lambach, thus marking the point where the story of Dracula transitioned into the realm of literary fiction.

– for the first time, the parable of the two monks from "The Tale of Dracula the Voivode" was interpreted with historical, ideological, and cultural perspectives, showing the difference from the parable of the two monks in the manuscripts of the Lambach Benedictine monastery;

– parallels were first drawn between the parable of the two monks and the polemics of Ivan the Terrible and Andrey Kurbsky;
– from new perspectives, the artistic features and uniqueness of "The Tale of Dracula the Voivode" were revealed in the context of 15th-century Russian literature;

– new results were obtained in the study of "The Tale of Dracula the Voivode" by introducing documents such as the letter of Dan III Basarab, the "Moldavian-German Chronicle," the "Story of Bruncvik," and others;

– new materials were presented confirming that the nickname of Vlad Dracula originated from the Order of the Dragon, in particular the use of the phrase "drak zmei" in the "Story of Bruncvik.";

-attention has been drawn to the necessity of a deeper understanding of the worldview peculiarities of people from the past for the analysis of Medieval literature;

-textual and chronological connections between works of Romanian, English, and Russian authors, essayists, and researchers have been demonstrated;

- imagological features, differences, and similarities in works about historical Vlad Dracula belonging to Romanian, Russian, and English (English-speaking) literary traditions have been shown.

Work approval: the theses and conclusions of the research are reflected in 12 articles published in journals and collections, of which 4 articles are in category B Moldovan journals, 5 articles in category C journals, and 3 articles in Russian publications. Also, in 3 presentations at international conferences in the Republic of Moldova. The materials of the work were used by researchers from Russia and Belarus.

The results of the research can be taken into account in the preparation of subsequent studies on Dracula, as well as lectures, seminars, and special courses on the history of Russian and foreign literature, world history, cultural history, and comparative literature, moreover, considering the further development of the

Dracula plot in modern literature, - in the general course of European literature history.

The study draws attention to the importance of studying the peculiarities of the consciousness of people from the past. It is precisely this circumstance that makes the present work relevant in practical and didactic terms, as well as from the perspective of the development of cultural dialogue.

Possible directions for future research:

- a separate and more in-depth study of the works about Dracula by Romanian prose writers and playwrights of the 1970s: Georgina Viorica Rogoz, Marina Sorescu, Mircea Larian, Corneliu Leu, Dana Tarkile;

- separate imagological question: can a modern author create a historically realistic image of a medieval person for a contemporary reader.

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ADNOTARE

Talmazan Oleg, Problematika și poziția auctorială în scrierile despre Vlad al III-lea (Țepeș) în literatura rusă și în unele literaturi europene.

Teză pentru gradul de doctor în filologie 622.02 – Literatură universală și studii comparate, Bălți, 2024.

Structura disertației: introducere, 4 capitole, concluzii și recomandări, bibliografie – 180 surse, 147 pagini text principal, 1 anexă, declarație pe proprie răspundere, CV-ul autorului.

Rezultatele cercetării sunt reflectate în 12 lucrări științifice.

Cuvinte cheie: poziția auctorială, problematică, studii comparative, imagologie, imaginea „străinului”, utopie, anti-comportament, cruzime, Evul Mediu, Vlad III Basarab, Dracula, Fiodor Kurițin, ”Legenda lui Dracula Voievodul”, ”Pilda celor doi călugări”, Roma a Treia, mesianismul rusesc, Johan Huizinga, Jacov Lurie, Radu Florescu, Chris Humphreys, Marin Sorescu, Gheorghina Viorica Rogoz, Marin Mincu, Svetlana Lijina, Mihail Odesski.

Domeniul de studiu: Literatura universală și studii comparative.

Scopul studiului: identificarea poziției și a problematicii autorului în opere artistice despre Dracula în literatura lumii din diferite epoci; generalizarea rezultatele studiului.

Obiectivele cercetării: studiul lucrărilor dedicate personalității lui Vlad al III-lea Basarab; Identificarea problemelor și a poziției auctoriale în cele mai semnificative lucrări; identificarea conexiunilor textuale și cronologice între lucrările despre Vlad Dracula; studierea lucrărilor despre domnitorul medieval, luând în considerare particularitățile conștiinței umane din trecut și cultura Evului Mediu; compararea problematicii, poeziei și poziției auctoriale în lucrările despre Dracula de către

reprezentanți ai diferitelor literaturi naționale și perioade istorice din punct de vedere al studiilor comparate și al imagologiei.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică: lucrarea constă într-o analiză sistematică a problemelor și a poziției auctoriale în lucrările despre Dracula; implicarea în analizarea lucrărilor de cercetare asupra culturii evului mediu; implicarea în analiza noilor materiale privind istoria epocii; identificarea legăturilor textuale și cronologice dintre lucrări; compararea poeziei și receptarea operelor unor varii autori, literaturi, perioade istorice din punct de vedere imagologic.

Semnificația teoretică și valoarea aplicativă a disertației: rezultatele cercetării pot fi luate în considerare la pregătirea prelegerilor, seminariilor și cursurilor speciale despre istoria literaturii ruse și străine, istoria culturii și studiile comparate, precum și, ținând cont de dezvoltarea ulterioară a subiectului lui Dracula în literatura modernă - într-un curs de istorie generală a literaturii europene. Studiul atrage atenția asupra importanței studierii caracteristicilor conștiinței umane în trecut. Această împrejurare face ca prezenta lucrare să fie relevantă din punct de vedere practic și didactic, precum și pentru dezvoltarea unui dialog al culturilor.

Implementarea rezultatelor științifice: Principalele idei ale cercetării au fost prezentate la conferințe științifice din țară și străinătate, rezultatele cercetării sunt reflectate în 12 articole publicate în reviste științifice naționale și de peste hotare.

ANNOTATION

Talmazan Oleg, The Problematic and Authorial Position in the Writings about Vlad III (Țepeș) in Russian and European Literature.

Doctoral dissertation in Philology 622.02 - World Literature and Comparative Studies, Belts, 2024.

Dissertation structure: introduction, 4 chapters, conclusions and recommendations, bibliography - 180 sources, 147 pages of main text, 1 appendix, author's declaration of responsibility, author's CV.

The results of the research are reflected in 12 scientific works.

Keywords: author's position, problems, comparative literature, imagology, image of the "other", utopia, anti-behavior, cruelty, Middle Ages, Vlad III Basarab, Dracula, Fedor Kuritsyn, The Tale of Dracula the Voivode, The Parable of Two Monks, Third Rome, Russian messianism, Johan Huizinga, Yakov Lurie, Radu Florescu, Chris Humphreys, Marin Sorescu, Georgina Viorica Rogoz, Marin Minku, Svetlana Lyzhina, Mikhail Odessky.

Research Field: World Literature and Comparative Studies.

Research Objective: To identify the author's position, issues in artistic works about Dracula in world literature from different epochs. To summarize the research results.

Research Tasks: Studying works about historical Vlad III Basarab. Identifying issues and author's positions in the most significant works; identifying textual and chronological connections between works about Vlad Dracula; studying works about the medieval ruler considering the peculiarities of the consciousness of people from the past and Medieval culture; comparing the issues, poetics, and author's positions in works about

Dracula from representatives of various national literatures and historical periods from the perspective of comparative literature and imagology.

Scientific Novelty and Originality of the work lies in the systematic analysis of issues and author's positions in works about Dracula; involving studies on Medieval culture in the analysis of works; involving new materials on the history of the era in the analysis; identifying textual and chronological connections between works; comparing the poetics and reception of works by different authors, literatures, and historical periods from the perspective of imagology.

Theoretical Significance and Applied Value of the Dissertation: the research results can be considered in the preparing for of lectures, seminars, and special courses on the history of Russian and foreign literature, cultural history, and comparative literature, also, considering the further development of the Dracula plot in modern literature, in the general course of European literature history.

The study draws attention to the importance of studying the peculiarities of the consciousness of people from the past. It is precisely this circumstance that makes the present work relevant in practical and didactic terms, as well as from the perspective of the development of cultural dialogue.

Implementation of Research Results: The main ideas of the research were presented at scientific conferences in the country and abroad, and the research results are reflected in 12 articles published in scientific journals, both national and international.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Талмазан Олег, Проблематика и авторская позиция в произведениях русской и европейской литературы о Владе III Цепеше.

Диссертация на соискание степени доктора филологических наук 622.02 – Всемирная литература и сравнительное литературоведение, Бэлць, 2024.

Структура диссертации: введение, 4 главы, выводы и рекомендации, библиография – 180 источников, 147 страниц основного текста, 1 приложение, декларация об ответственности, CV автора.

Результаты исследования отражены в 12 научных работах.

Ключевые слова: авторская позиция, проблематика, компаративистика, имагология, образ «чужого», утопия, антиповедение, жестокость, Средневековье, Влад III Басараб, Дракула, Федор Курицын, Сказание о Дракуле воеводе, Притча о двух монахах, Третий Рим, русское мессианство, Йохан Хёйзинга, Яков Лурье, Раду Флореску, Крис Хамфрис, Марин Сореску, Георгина Виорика Рогоз, Марин Минку, Светлана Лыжина, Михаил Одесский.

Область исследования: Всемирная литература и компаративистика.

Цель исследования: выявить авторскую позицию, проблематику в художественных произведениях о Дракуле в мировой литературе разных эпох. Обобщить результаты исследования.

Задачи исследования: изучение произведений об историческом Владе III Басарабе. Выявление проблематики и авторской позиции в наиболее значительных произведениях; выявление текстологических и хронологических связей между произведениями о Владе Дракуле; изучение

произведений о средневековом правителе с учётом особенностей сознания человека прошлого и культуры Средневековья; сопоставление проблематики, поэтики и позиции автора в произведениях о Дракуле представителей различных национальных литератур и исторических периодов с точки зрения компаративистики и имагологии.

Научная новизна и оригинальность: работы заключается в системном анализе проблематики и авторской позиции в произведениях о Дракуле; привлечении к анализу произведений исследований по культуре Средневековья; привлечении к анализу новых материалов по истории эпохи; выявлении текстологических и хронологических связей между произведениями; сопоставлении поэтики и рецепции произведений разных авторов, литератур, исторических периодов с точки зрения имагологии.

Теоретическая значимость и прикладная ценность диссертации: результаты исследований могут быть учтены при подготовке лекций, семинаров и спецкурсов по истории русской и зарубежной литературы, по истории культуры и по компаративистике, а также, учитывая дальнейшее развитие сюжета о Дракуле в новейшей литературе – в общем курсе истории европейских литератур.

Исследование привлекает внимание к важности изучения особенностей сознания человека прошлого. Именно это обстоятельство делает настоящую работу актуальной в практическом и дидактическом плане, а также с позиции развития диалога культур.

Внедрение научных результатов: Основные идеи исследования были представлены на научных конференциях в стране и за рубежом, результаты исследования отражены в 12 статьях, опубликованных в научных журналах, национальных и зарубежных.

TALMAZAN OLEG

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