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INSTITUTE OF COMPARATIVE STUDIES

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## LANDSCAPE AND CULTURE



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## FOREWORD

Interdisciplinary investigations for approaching complex phenomena of reality in contemporary research are increasingly applied in many subject areas. The fact of diversity enhances not only successful dissemination of ideas and statements in academic coterie, but also addresses general public providing historical and cultural data of the researched object.

The notion 'landscape' is treated in various contexts in scholarly investigations – it is a witness of the historical and cultural development of the society, an element of geographical space, and a part of ecological systems; due to human's ability to use his / her imagination landscape has become a significant composition in design, culture, and art where perceived through any of the senses, especially sight or hearing, it is included in the aesthetic context.

The collection of research articles *Landscape and Culture* has united cultural geographers and the representatives of the humanities to present diverse methodological approaches to landscape studies in culture. The volume is a representation of different cultural models that strive for revealing their impact on human's thought, activity, and performance results, as well as on the aesthetic and symbolic perception of the world.

In Part 1 *Landscape as the Phenomenon of Cultural Geography*, landscape is observed as a constituent of historical and cultural processes and embodiments of an individual's performance. City landscapes present the magnificence of the urban space linking culture to the physical environment. In the essayistic opening article *Landscapes of Berlin*, basing on beliefs and statements of remarkable 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries German authors and philosophers, as well as on his personal experience, Fjodors Fjodorovs ascribes to city landscape values for intangible reasons. As a unique cultural and social construct a city can be perceived through the prism of spirituality.

Parks, gardens, and squares as the most striking urban landscapes with historical significance, which the same as landscape in general possess the richest historical records, shape the cultural environment of any city and country. The history of development, as well as dynamics and tendencies of forming a Latvian city landscape, especially parks and squares in poly-cultural and multi-religious environment, have been researched on the basis of the two Latvian cities located in the very poles of the country – the western city Liepāja on the coast of the Baltic sea and the south-eastern Daugavpils, the geographical position of which is characterized by the proximity of borders. Mutual interaction among the nations and general influences of other cultures allow scientists applying comparative methodology when the local is being seen in a wider, i.e., supra-national and global context.

In Part 2 *Baltic Literary Landscapes* of the collection, landscape is viewed as a phenomenon of human's physical and spiritual freedom. Thematically papers can be grouped into three overlapping segments – emotional landscape and its connection with human's memory in childhood narratives; exotic and symbolic (Australian, American) landscape as the operator of the human's sense of the self, sense of one's own, i.e., personal identity, as well as national identity and collective memory; and psychologized

landscape as the means of modelling human's external and internal space. In the majority of the analyzed works, the autobiographical aspect and the category of memory are of great importance, thus landscape can be seen as the mindscape of the human's thought.

Part 3 *Landscape Poetics* entails articles that analyze landscape in certain foreign (British, Austrian, French, Swedish) authors' writing in the framework of the binary oppositions 'the rural – the urban', 'the natural – the artificial', 'the native – the foreign', 'the sensual / sonorous – the bare / silent', 'the hospitable – the hostile and desolate' emphasizing the mutual interaction between the human and nature where man is seen either as a part of nature or, vice versa, a complete stranger or alien.

On the whole landscape investigation in the articles of the collection reveals landscape as a complex phenomenon with manifold possibilities of actualization and representation in culture and literature that is rarely perceived neutrally as landscape itself is not neutral in its essence. Accepting the human's life as a journey the landscape cannot be simply seen as a pretty scene or static text but as an expression of a never ending process of development, changes, and movement.

The compilers hope that the collection will address the needs of intended readership and provide the stimulus for further research and discussions on the landscape studies.

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**Ilze Kačāne**

LANDSCAPE AS THE PHENOMENON  
OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY



Fjodors Fjodorovs

## LANDSCAPES OF BERLIN

### *Summary*

*The present article represents the unity of actual landscapes of Berlin, both its flora and fauna that are striking in their variety and in the magnificence of the urban space. On the other hand, the real world as such is simultaneously perceived through the prism of artistic reception that in turn transforms its primordial state into the sphere of the real.*

*The blue sky – the distant distance – exit to the unfathomable – and the tree in its fierce play – the play of the Spirit awakened to the real.*

*Hoffmann, like other authors cited in the paper, perceive Berlin through the prism of spirituality or, more particularly, through that of the spirit. Mahler in Berlin epitomizes the unity of people, birds, trees, grass; Mahler is the spiritual symbiosis of reality, unity of the world. Stefan George and Martin Heidegger belong to the same range or totality. This is the point of Heidegger's statement, 'Sorrow and joy pour into each other. This mutual game of theirs, tuning them up to each other, letting the distance to become close and closeness – distant, is pain.'*

*This is also the essence of Lübeck in Thomas Mann's interpretation. This is the idea of Mann's syntax, its never-ending varying stream of thought consisting of a countless concourse of sensations and reflections, insights and profound subtexts; the endlessness of Mann's sentence is not linear but vertical, built on subtext. Both his artistic and analytical texts make up his language of the universal.*

*This gives rise to the historical universalism ascertaining the bond between Teutoburg spirit and the deeds of Friedrich the Great.*

*The final sense is conveyed by Hermann Hesse's article on bread where he writes about people's gratitude and veneration of bread, up to mystical invocations in 'Passion of St. Matthew' by Johann Sebastian Bach, 'Take, eat, this is My body'.*

*Key words: Berlin, city, landscape, park, vertical, horizontal*

\*

### I.

The high fifth floor; I am looking through the window; it is windy today and the crown of the giant sycamore is now trembling as if shivering with cold, now beating fiercely, glazed with plays of light and colour. These plays of light and colour are impossible to turn away from, like it is impossible to draw away from a miracle, not a visible one but that which is hidden deep inside. The tall trees hide a neighbouring house glazing like an impressionist etude, similar to those by Monet. Yet it is no landscape but a rapturous symphony.

I read in Heidegger's *Conversation on a Country Path* that Heraclitic *coming close to something* is nothing else but the *proximity of distance*, its sensation, premonition, entering it.<sup>1</sup>

The light and colour range of the wind was in fact coming close to the real, the reality of the real.

The blue sky – the distant distance – exit to the limitless – and the tree in its enraptured play – the play of the Spirit that is awakened to the real.

Bright light is shining through the window and a passage from Ernst Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* emerges that confounded me some time ago.

So, we live on the fifth floor, in Berlin, one of the most colourful and biggest European cities. Yet the focus will be not on the city but one of the most important segments of Berlin – cultural landscape. But before we pass over to landscape it must be noted that Berlin is a city of big parks, first of all Tiergarten and Volkspark. Tiergarten is adjacent to the city centre, it stretches out for about forty hectares, in the eighteenth century it was the royal park with royal deer hunting grounds.

In 1812 Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann wrote his story *Cavalier Gluck. Memories of the Year 1809*. It was there that the *strange man* appeared to the author, and the author having glanced just once could not avert his eyes from him. And according to his imperative order, the orchestra struck up the overture to *Iphigenia in Aulis*. But he *suddenly jerked from his place and in a single moment vanished from sight, and I kept searching for him many a day in Tiergarten*. And only after several months on a chilly rainy night the author [Hoffmann] lingered in a distant area of the city and was hurrying to Friedrichstrasse where he was lodging, noticed a weird stranger who invited him to his place where he would be able to listen to *Armide*. *The stranger came up the closet [...] and I saw a whole range of books in rich bindings, with gold inscriptions: 'Orpheus', 'Armide', 'Alceste', 'Iphigenia' and so on – in a word, I faced a complete collection of the ingenious works by Gluck.*<sup>2</sup>

The man turned out to be Cavalier Gluck who had died in 1787, twenty-five years before.

*Cavalier Gluck* initiated the fame of the great Hoffmann.

After visiting Swedish forests, a hundred kilometres from Stockholm, we flew to Berlin on 25 June and on the following day, in late afternoon, together with my son and daughter-in-law Olya we went to Friedrichstrasse.

Suddenly I noticed a large portrait of Hoffmann in a restaurant window. Unfortunately, the restaurant was full. When we came back on the following day, the portrait was gone. It had evidently been exhibited for some days, on the occasion of 25 June, 1822 when Hoffmann died, and after 28 June, that was his burial date, the portrait was taken away. But it looked mysterious in the twilight that evening. The people sitting in the restaurant seemed mysterious as well, resembling Hoffmann's heroes.

In a big city there are striking things going on. In Berlin great people are honoured like nowhere else; they are honoured in monuments, names of streets and squares. All around Berlin one can meet people who have determined the culture of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, none of the streets or squares bears the name of Hoffmann; neither is there a monument of his. There is only a small side street – Hoffmann Weg – connecting Friedrichstrasse with the parallel big street. And there is not a single building in Hoffmann

Weg. Hoffmann – the great German writer – is not honoured by anything. There are paradoxes in big cities.

But let us return to the fifth floor of one of the houses not far from metro station Jakob-Kaiser-Platz, some meters away from the highway leading to Tegel Airport. Close to it lies a wonderful park, Volkspark-Jungfernheide, connecting two lakes joined by wide canals with ducks nesting there and ducklings buzzing about like small kids, the only difference being the total freedom granted to the former. In the water the fish are splashing playfully and seagulls shrieking fiercely. A big turtle was walking to and fro, as if teasing us. Above the lake birds are making circles, a crane is standing on the verge of the water and the ground, seemingly meditating. It is easy to breathe here and one may stand for hours like the crane. This is a **quiet** place, disregarding the bathers, the water station and other noises of civilization.

Among the five-storeyed buildings there are lots of deciduous trees including sycamores as stated before. Besides sycamores, there are also silver maples (Silber-Ahorn), as tall as sycamores but unusually wide and straight, fairy heroes dressed in small bright colours, glazing like flame; it was impossible to draw away from them like from a miracle. One of them was standing at the crossroads slightly out of the way, and another a bit to the right – in our street.

At the beginning of August, at night a cold and fierce wind flashed suddenly and the leaves fell to the ground like snow, and the street was covered with a glazing carpet. This lasted for a couple of weeks, and people were walking on this fabulous carpet, and the cars were driving there. But the carpet remained.

But there was another miracle: the maples preserved their majesty.

There was a great variety of shrubs – both tall and short; the grass as a rule always thick and vital.

From the tall trees to the short shrubs there stretches a many-storeyed world of vegetation.

Suddenly rabbits appear on the grass, grazing; they are few in number; sometimes they pass over from one ‘house’ to another. They are ‘wild’ but they do not fear people, just run aside for a few steps and look up with expectation. It is an amazing feeling of communicating with a wild creature that is not really such; they preserve their dignity, their self. They have no fear but curiosity and vigilance. They approach a man closely, at an arm’s length, though it does not give them pleasure. Yet they are obviously willing for a contact, a ‘handshake’.

There are no streets among the houses, just a quite narrow pedestrian lane. The grass is given over to rabbits, while people keep to the concrete plates. Everybody has his own share.

Actually, trees, shrubs, grass, rabbits – they make up the happiness of life, happiness of a united world.

I have not experienced such a profound experience of happiness for a long time.

## II.

The space that will be regarded shortly is situated in an opposite area of Berlin, close to the Botanic Garden. This is an area of stone buildings or a stone city. Between Engler-str. and Haderslebener-str. there is a small pond covered up from the north-

western side by tall trees and thick shrubs; it is a family location of adult ducks, they hatch their ducklings there, from thence they attentively observe them and from time to time call them to order and vigilance. After five or six days ducklings are scattered across the pond and it is a miraculous sight of how fast they grow up. They are brave and simple-minded, they are playing, diving; and like human children they get scolded from time to time.

These are the observations of July.

This year of 2013 we arrived in early August. And faced a different picture.

The nestlings were still nestlings but more grown up – not less than two or maybe three weeks old and rather independent, not looking back to their mothers. Rather soon we got familiar with a young duck – to our mutual pleasure, and she did not let her friends approach us any more. And when I went to the bench some fifteen metres away, our friend bravely toddled up to me. And only with the help of breadcrumbs, with apparent disappointment she returned to the pond. Ducks feared the camera, jumping up with every flash as if it were a shot.

Not only being by this pond but even recalling it, one is overtaken by a fierce sense of joy, tenderness, a sharp feeling of life.

The pond is the centre, the nucleus of the space.

The pond is surrounded by grass, **living grass**. It is the brightest tool of Berliners' recreation; on sunny days they play a ball here, sunbathe, walk, sleep, lunch, read, etc.

A perfect model of Romans.

*Culture – the ideal border of things– is striving to form an autonomous world where we could transfer ourselves.*<sup>3</sup>

And finally, the most important thing.

The space consisting of the pond and the green grass has an official name – Gustav Mahler Square (Gustav Mahler Platz). Therefore Mahler (1860 – 1911) steps in as well.

Mahler was born in Czech land, in a deep province, in a poor Jewish family.

He came to realize his gift for music rather early, he studied in Prague and then in Vienna where his talent blossomed in full. In Vienna he acquired both a philosophical and artistic culture. At that time he created a range of instrumental works of high quality and unique insight.

In the first half of the 1880s Mahler appeared as a talented pianist but very soon he preferred being a conductor and this was shared both by his audience and experts. In 1884 he wrote his First Symphony and a number of other works defined by his contemporaries as *miraculous*.

In 1885 he left the province and worked in such great European culture metropolises as Prague, Budapest, Hamburg, that testifies to his high status, first and foremost that of a conductor. An investigator of his creative work writes:

*In the cruel battle for an opera and theatre reform, originating [...] in Wagner's aesthetical ideal of musical drama, the character of Mahler as a conductor, director, manager, teacher and just a man was formed." This was the elevated side of his, yet there was another: "The opposition of the conservators, narrow-minded craftsmen from art, Judophobic Austrian-German nationalists [...] in those years reached an apogee."*<sup>4</sup>

The peak of Mahler's creative career was reached at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (1897 – 1907).



First, Mahler was invited to Vienna Opera House as a Kapellmeister and theatre superintendent but Vienna Opera House since the times of Richard Wagner was considered to be the best opera house in the world.

Second, in the Vienna decade Mahler produced outstanding stagings with no equals after Wagner.

Third, in Vienna he created five classical symphonies (from the Fourth to the Eighth, and the latter was called by Bruno Walter *the eminent*).

And Vienna drove him out as a sign of gratitude.

One may put it differently, as Peter Weil did:

*The Viennese people were too great worshippers of music to stand for ten years a despotic legislator, though a genius.*<sup>5</sup>

In 1907 Mahler left for America, for Metropolitan Opera; this was hard work (according to the contract he had to give sixty-five concerts a season). Nevertheless he wrote two symphonies at that time – *the Ninth* and *the Tenth*.

In 1910 he returned to Europe. The performance of the Eighth Symphony in Munich proved to be an unprecedented triumph.

In May 1911 Gustav Mahler died in Vienna.

In Berlin a unique monument to Mahler is erected – that of the unity of people, birds, trees, and grass.

In the same year of 1911 Mann wrote his distinguished novella *Death in Venice*. After ten years Wolfgang Born published an album of coloured lithographies to the novella and Mann expressed his gratitude to the artist:

*It is always a flattering and touching event for a writer – to see how a creation of his spirit is accepted, recreated, respected, acclaimed by art that is more direct in the aspect of senses [...].*<sup>6</sup>

These are truly miraculous similarities.

Even more miraculous and novella-like are the events of our actual life.

We were invited to Hamburg, and less than in two hours of the thirty-degree heat of Berlin we found ourselves shifted to the thirty-degree heat of Hamburg.

Goodness, how tenacious and swift the European trains are!

How faultless the motorways are!

And every minute but maybe even more often endless tankers, dry cargo ships are sailing the Elbe, a whole range of synonyms, with a minute long intervals and maybe even smaller, getting scattered across the world ocean. The German flag flying above the world ocean.

In early morning we set out for a quaint trade moorage turned into a variegated marketplace. We were interested in the costly rare fish that is sold only in small hours. The old moorage was already crowded with people, they were streaming in concourses, walking and driving and it was a striking sight. Unfortunately, we never found the famous and banned fish and thus we did not try it, but on the other hand, we did not violate the law.

But what was even more striking, was the long old shed (a warehouse of the olden times) packed with young and not so young people who were still asleep but some of them already having a drink. The Gorky-like bottom adapted to Germans and the modern epoch.

At midnight we mounted on a tower hundred meters high from which Hamburg was lying like on a plate, and the city was lit from a horizon to a horizon.

There was another night, again traditional for Hamburg with opera stars singing, some of them world famous, some less known, and the audience of ten or twelve thousand burst into a frenzied applause, and the whole sky was glazing with the joy of life.

In 1957 in Vienna Heidegger made his speech *Poesy and Thought: on Stefan George's Poem 'Word'*.

The poem had been written in 1919 and published in 1928.

The semantic unity of the poem is always determined by its title that represents a mythologeme; the text is not read yet but owing to the title it is also read at the same time, it focuses the reader's consciousness on a **word**. And then there is in fact no semantic explosion; there is a flow of words and not just ordinary words but their semantic gripping. The semantic explosion happens in the last stanza, actually in its last line where **word** is used in a syntactical range but the explosion happens with the collocation **no word**. But as there is no word, there are no things according to the author. The whole text of the poem leads to the last couplet. The lyrical subject, I, faces a ban on the text; this is natural as there are neither things, i.e., the universal material totality, nor words, i.e., there is no thought either (just the defeat of thought and consciousness). The lyrical subject informs the reader from the very start, the reader-materialist instead of the reader-thinker.

The poem comprises two subjects, two creators.

First, the subject-demiurge (the author); second, the subject-interpreter. That is, Stefan George and Martin Heidegger.

The interpreting, analytical mechanism of Heidegger is exceptional: ten pages that are no doubt unique.

However, Heidegger completes these ten pages with a striking conclusion that is worthy of him.

If our friends had not invited us to Hamburg, I would not have got to Lübeck but this was not just a city in my mind's eye but the city of Mann.

Having arrived to Hamburg I did not think of Lübeck. Moreover, I did not think of Mann either: I was overwhelmed by other concerns.

In the morning I saw a postcard on the shelf that is rather well-known – *Anzeigefür die Buddenbrook*... The same kind of a card is also placed on my bookshelf. I found out that Lübeck lay a hundred kilometres from Hamburg. And after an hour it was decided that next day all of us were going to Lübeck.

I was excited for the rest of the day. I was recalling everything associate with Mann since my young days.

Earliest of all, still at school I read the novella *Tonio Kroeger*, magically bitter and tender, analytical and ironic, a symbiosis of sensations and a short prediction of what was to come.

Just a single fragment – from the times bygone.

It was hot already early in the morning. Agonizing traffic jams. The new Lübeck.

The castle. Oak gates. The museum: exhibits about distant past to modern times. Tools of torture – unusually elaborate.

The old town. The square. The cathedral.

Lübeck is the major city of the Hanseatic League – since the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The whole power belonged to the Senate.

The Mann family had been Senators since the very beginning.

The senior Senator is the one who manages taxes. The Senator Thomas Johann Heinrich Mann was in charge of taxes.

One of the Mann family houses was located next to the city hall and it still remains in that place.

Thomas Mann was destined to produce great works of literature, long and short but those about which he himself wrote and remembered with great pride and sincerity are worth of mention. I mean here two sketches, two analytical-autobiographical texts – *Lübeck as a Form of Spiritual Life* (1926) and *Sketch of My Life* (1930). Mann's syntax is a never-ending varying stream of thought consisting of a countless convergence of sensations and reflections, insights and profound subtexts. A sentence cannot be endless but Mann is making the reader (listener) think of its endlessness, not only the narrative, linear endlessness but the vertical, subtextual endlessness.

Here are a couple of characteristic segments from *Buddenbrooks*.

Two spacious sentences, totally contrasted according to the material joined by a short, though complex sentence.

On the other hand, this is a change of rhythm, not the syntactic but lexical one.

Mann not only ascertains plural ideologemes but also language structures.

The universal quality of Mann's work is similar to that of Renaissance artists and thinkers, and not only in his novels but in long and short articles having an exceptional analytical significance.

At the end of the day from Mann's Lübeck we went down southwest covering four hundred kilometres in two hours passing by the wonderful cities of Bremen and Münster (every German city is a joyful heartbeat and bitterness of farewell giving serenity only in memories). Osnabrück was our place of rest in the long journey across Germany. It is a beautiful city with a miraculous house in it. My favourite places in Berlin are two zoological gardens, one better than the other. Besides the theatres and museums. Unbelievable as it may be but we did not know that in Osnabrück there is a miracle – the city zoo. Animals in this zoo have vast spaces at their disposal and the sense of liberty and joy is passed over to its visitors as well. It is not just a zoological garden in Osnabrück but a **garden**, a garden of liberty and pleasure; a garden for animals, birds, children, and grown-ups. A garden of a profound spiritual experience.

There are always many birds near Osnabrück's lake, and not only ducks. Ducks are a living token of Germany.

Still, Osnabrück is a single, unique city. Ten – fifteen kilometres from it stretches the famous Teutoburg forest where in 9 AD Germanic people under the leadership of the chief of the tribe of Cherusci defeated the Roman troops. Heinrich Kleist, the great prose writer and playwright, in 1808 produced his famous drama *Hermann's Battle* (*Die Hermannschlacht*). In 2009 approximately in this place in commemoration of the two thousand year anniversary of the victory of Germans a 12-storeyed monument was unveiled. This is not a monument in the ordinary sense – it is a monument of the greatness of Germany. And it is a collection of everything that is any way related to Teutoburg, will all available materials, texts, all historico-cultural memory.

This is a monument to German's majesty.

But the big Teutoburg forest seems to be the same as it had been two thousand years ago.

Yet let us return to Berlin, the capital city not only by right but also by essence.

Berlin is a city of a striking variety joining civilization and nature. A city of the vertical and the horizontal, top and bottom, heavenly and earthly, superhuman and human. A city for all nations and for all interests. A city of grey stone and wood. A city of flowers.

Berlin is a city of big parks and green squares – for short spells of relaxation.

Tiergarten is in the city and the city is in Tiergarten.

We have rabbits. There are ducks.

Pond is a nucleus of space, pond and lush grass, pond and Mahler.

The pond is a monument of the unity of people, trees, grass, birds.

A civilization of speed. Countless tankers and dry cargo ships sailing the Elbe, taking course to the world ocean with the German flag above it.

Berlin. Germany.

### III.

#### Potsdam

Two years ago we made an attempt to see not the city of Potsdam but the renowned palace of Friedrich II. Yet the palace was still closed but the famous staircase struck us with its majesty and decadence. The great architecture monument ascertained Prussia as a majestic state. Friedrich II crowned on 20 May 1740 considered the deed of his lifetime to overshadow the fame of France, Versailles gardens, its sculpture, the sun of Versailles.

For recent two years Sanssouci Palace has got revitalized, though not to a full extent, not in its full majesty. First, it is possible to mount, ‘ascend’ the six-storeyed staircase; the sloping ‘floors’ of roses had not grown in force but they are **blooming** and this bloom is nothing but **resurrection**, as hard as it may be but also vital, it is in fact **becoming**. When looking down from the upper circle one sees a wide sandy road lined with trees. From the ground circle – ascending to the palace, the sky, reason, spirit. The palace is not open yet for public, its repairs are not completed yet, but it is already living, filled with life, still mysterious. Workers enter the palace through the front door. But from the opposite, back side there is entrance to a stall with wonderful editions about Berlin and the Palace.

Sanssouci Palace is not tall, it is rather squat, at first this feature seems discouraging, **but** – this is a **roof** of spirit, a roof of the sky.

The palace is surrounded by trees. The trees **breathe**, they fill the palace with their breath.

There is unity of nature and human spirit. Better to put it differently: there is a unity of human spirit and the spirit of nature.

Terraces of vineyards.

And the dome of the sky: ascension from the earthly world, earthly space to the sphere of the sky.

Architecture creation – and in the background there are trees, forest, nature.

Sanssouci is the unity of creation and spirit.

Ascension – and a look at the earthly space.

From bottom – up, and from top – down.

The unity of vertical.

This is actually the beginning.

Gardens of Sanssouci and everything related to their architecture ensemble occupy 290 hectares.

It is a never-ending unbelievable row in unexpected constructions and sculpture models.

It is a huge park saturated with big and small constructions.

On the marble benches, hidden and open, one may sit for hours, suffering and enjoying, resting and meditating.

In the forest thicket sculpture revelations shine through, big and small.

From the limitless forest living marble beings are watching.

Non-stop revelations and insights.

Pavilions, buildings, grottos.

Nature and culture in a solid union.

Living myths.

Rapture of revelations.

Numerous buildings necessary for practical and aesthetic existence.

Unexpectedly a palace in white stone is revealed, beautiful but rather standard.

And suddenly the fiercely brownish **New palace**, new in its architectural design, spiritual breakthrough, lengthy experience, built to honour the victory of the Seven Years War (1756 – 1763). And the pain this beauty brings does not recede.

And the Chinese tea pavilion!

And the orangery!

Conservatories, huts, castles.

Tremor and inspiration.

Friedrich the Great was stern and cruel, like a king of a big state ought to be.

Friedrich the Great was a poet, a man of joy, harmony, relaxation.

The descendants of Friedrich II were not great but they carried on his beautiful architectural business both in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

They carried on his architectural polyphony.

And finally, Potsdam, a city of exceptional beauty and unbelievable variety, a city of culture languages.

Brandenburg Gates erected in the honour of victory in the Seven Years War, the white marble harmony and beauty.

And the red brick Dutch area close to it, built by Dutch craftsmen, before Friedrich II.

The city, thank God, has survived the horrible years of the last war.

The city of happiness.

## Postscript

*Juncture of the natural and cultural origins, their 'macro-context' create the spiritual situations of 'high tension' (V. N. Toporov). This is actually the border zone of nature and culture dealt by its history. Here is a natural landscape dealt by its history. Here a natural landscape as a spatial environment and an object of*

*reflection performs the role of the creating subject, it serves as a nature and impulse for the appearance of new images and notions. On this border the human brings to the landscape the sacred, historical, aesthetical meanings, transforming it also practically giving rise to natural and cultural, though far from aestheticized landscapes.*<sup>7</sup>

On the right bank of the Spree there is a long row of restaurants where wonderful beer is served by great restaurateurs.

And a never-ending flow of walking, singing, shouting, rejoicing people.

On another side there is a building where not long ago there were meetings with relatives and others divided by the political water shed were held. What a joy to be living without borders!

But around the restaurant corner there is the theatre of Berthold Brecht going through difficult times, but in my memory I recreate the excited feelings for Brecht of the late 1950s – early 1960s under the influence of ‘Berlin ensemble’ in Moscow.

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<sup>1</sup> Hajdegger M. *Razgovor na proselochnoj doroge*. Moskva: Vysshaja shkola, 1991. – pp. 132–133.

<sup>2</sup> Gofman E. T. A. *Sobranie sochinenij v 6 tomah*. Moskva: Hudozhestvennaja literatura, 1991. – pp. 31–32.

<sup>3</sup> Ortega-i-Gasset H. *Razmyshlenija o ‘Don Kihote’*. Sankt-Peterburg. Iz-vo Sankt-Peterburgskovo un-ta, 1997. – p. 145.

<sup>4</sup> Rozenshil’d K. *Gustav Maler*. Moskva: Muzyka, 1975. – p. 58.

<sup>5</sup> Vail’ P. *Genii mesta*. Moskva: Nezavisimaja gazeta, 2001. – p. 440.

<sup>6</sup> Mann T. *Pis’ma*. Moskva: Nauka, 1975, pp. 29–30.

<sup>7</sup> Svirida I. *Landshaft v kul’ture kak prostranstvo, obraz i metafora*. Landshafty kul’tury: Slavjanskiy Mir. Moskva: Progress – Tradicija, 2007. – p. 37.

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Maija Burima, Anita Pleša

## DAUGAVPILS PARKS FROM ORIGIN TO 1918 – LANDMARKS OF THE TOWN HISTORY AND CULTURE

### *Summary*

*Daugavpils park history reaches 150 years. The first park in Daugavpils was shaped in 1862. Daugavpils park development was greatly affected by the complicated history of the town and the taste of its multinational population. The origin or disappearance of parks is related to the necessity of marking essential historical and ideological events, the town's economic growth or fall. With the increase or decrease of the number of the town population the number of parks changed accordingly; the improvement of the socio-economic situation caused positive changes in the park environment. An essential component of the town parks is objects placed in them: buildings, fountains as well as park decorations with elements of flora. Objects and monuments located in parks or their dismantling testify to the ruling political trend and ideology. The reputation of parks is constituted by the events happening there. The history of Daugavpils parks can be reconstructed by studying the evidence that has been preserved about parks in local press, searching for photographs of those times.*

*The time period considered reaches from the origin of the previously known parks in Daugavpils till the foundation of Latvia as an independent state in 1918; this choice is conditioned by a wish to get a deeper insight into the processes of the development of the specific town atmosphere that proceeded when the territory of Latvia was a part of the Russian Empire, when the town economy grew rapidly along with an inflow of a large number of population. A great number of the town environment features initiated at that time have been preserved until nowadays.*

*Key words: park, landscape, garden, culture environment, landscape architecture, Daugavpils, Dvinsk*

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### **Introduction**

In the course of the development of the humanity many inventions appeared that were meant not only for meeting the needs of survival but also aesthetization of the human existence. Town park improves the living conditions in the urban environment both practically and aesthetically. Modern park and square landscapes inherit the experience and accomplishments of older time culture landscapes.

*All cultures are situated in specific environments. No doubt, certain landscapes have shaped the way of thinking about Umwelt in philosophical terms, and in turn, [Umwelt] philosophy has an impact on how the landscapes are perceived. Questions such as what is beauty, what is the sublime, what is nature, what is wilderness, arise in connection with the particular environments that humans feel the need to conceptualize.<sup>1</sup>*



The first park in Daugavpils was shaped in 1862, thus the park culture in the town in 2012 reached its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In the course of 150 years parks have been created, developed, transformed and they also disappeared from the townscape. The development of urban horticulture has always been connected with the requirements of the physical and spiritual environment of the epoch, the changing social, political, and economic situation, sensibly reacting to oscillations and tendencies in the surrounding environment.

Parks, their location and names, park related landmark complex entailing monuments, buildings, fountains, etc. structure the urban environment demonstrating the power ambitions of those placing the order. Park, like a monument as a characteristic park component, achieves a certain reputation becoming an urban image with particular semantics:

*The idea conveyed by an image, the intention of those placing an order, and citizens' activities in the space structured by the work of sculpture determine the political significance of the aesthetic object. Since the 1960s monuments have been used in rituals of soviet socialization. [...] With the changes of the political regime, aims of socialization changed accordingly and the old regime symbols disappear from the stage.<sup>2</sup>*

Park investigation envisages regarding the culture events in parks, their significance in the trends of park environment development as well as adjusting of the park environment to the shifting demands of life. Originally designed as a place for residents' walks, a park gradually grows into the environment where culture events happen that have a particular role in bringing together and uniting town residents.

Nowadays great attention is paid to the historical legacy of park culture and its protection. This is also one of the aspects of human/environment relations that functions for the benefit of human to secure higher quality living conditions.<sup>3</sup> Well designed landscape and rebirth of deconstructed landscapes in a new form make the community better informed in environmental matters and facilitate a cultured attitude towards it. Improvement of the quality of a degraded environment requires considerable means, thus parks as a cultural environment must be given a constant attention treating them both from the functional ecological and visual standpoint. Nowadays there is more and more discussion about sustainable landscape with aesthetic and ecological aspects occupying an important place in it as well as opportunities of harmonizing both of them. Landscape architects create the external surroundings, the environment where human enjoys nature and human produced culture.<sup>13</sup>

Contemporary urban culture landscape is unimaginable without green areas – parks, gardens, squares. Each time and culture introduced in the urban horticulture not only some specific features but also preserved and adjusted earlier accomplishments in this sphere.

Landscape is formed by both nature and society. *The notion 'landscape' has two features – one expresses human perceptions and fantasy, another means specific material reality.<sup>5</sup>* Idea about landscape cannot be expressed otherwise than by relations of space and time facts. Cultural landscape changes along with the development of a culture or its replacement by other cultures, and each culture landscape is formed by a specific culture group from the natural landscape.<sup>6</sup>



*Culture is an agent, natural space is the raw material, cultural landscape is the result. Landscape develops and changes along with culture transformations. The main formant of landscape is always culture. It arises from human mind and not from nature influences.<sup>7</sup>*

The park environment in Daugavpils has been affected by garden architecture trends in Russia, Latvia, Europe, and the world, therefore it exists in constant change. In parks one finds plants that are both local and customary in other latitudes but alien in the town. Park design is affected both by life reality and people's ideas what an ideal space should be like. A fountain or some water body is an important element of park environment; therefore their presence in the park provides an opportunity to attract more visitors.

In the development of human culture, horticulture was formed and developed along with other arts, being related from the very beginning to people's lodgings and other buildings. Also in later development horticulture and architecture are closely related. With the introduction of landscape style in the 18<sup>th</sup> century horticulture became more independent. The development of the nineteenth-century industry and urbanization following it changed and extended park and green area functions, public green areas appeared in towns and cities. In the second half of the century the term 'garden culture' was replaced by 'landscape architecture'<sup>8</sup>.

*Landscape architecture is the art of designing outer space searching for balance between ecology and art, technology and creativity.<sup>9</sup>* The way the existing landscape is preserved or a new one is created depends on many circumstances:

*Landscape architecture reality is complex, it includes several different levels: humane, economic, political and cultural, it entails the conservation of a place in opposition to its potential development, sustainable development theory that fights against the place chaos theory.<sup>10</sup>*

Parks or gardens as a part of cultural environment are an ancient phenomenon. Evidence of the garden of ancient times is preserved by many historical monuments where one finds information about green area culture. Each territory had its own style of garden design that demonstrated either the human skill of using the natural landscape or the artistry of environment transformation. The period of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries when the eclectics of earlier horticulture appeared in green areas was considered the time of decay of horticulture. However, exactly at that time first town parks appeared that functioned as places of recreation of all townspeople. Public parks became the major constituent part of town green areas. With the development of sports and other forms of mass recreation, the functional zoning of park territory was worked out. The number of tree species in parks decreased, as mostly the local species suitable for the urban conditions were planted there. One of the first public parks designed by the famous English landscape architect Joseph Paxton was shaped in Birkenhead by Liverpool. After its pattern Frederick Law Olmsted worked out his own project for New York Central Park that was opened in 1858. Though externally the parks of those times reminded of landscape parks of aristocrat residences and estates, yet their tasks were wider, in parks play grounds and music platforms were erected. Park designers were aware and in all ways promoted the social mission of public green areas.

In 1898 the English public figure, the Member of Parliament and journalist Ebenezer Howards published his book *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* where he explained the causes

and reasons of city overpopulation that makes people from the countryside leave for cities. Joining the positive aspects of both places of living, the author elaborated his design of a garden city. This idea has affected also the present-day city designing conceptions – satellite city construction. Landscape architecture had stood by city construction and both were dealing with common social tasks. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture was marked by functionalism with the thesis, *Form follows function*. Landscape architecture also developed in the direction of functionalism – it had to provide people with various kinds of recreation possibilities, improve the sanitary hygienic conditions, sustain the spiritual contact with nature, and protect the ecological balance in landscape.

The origin of Latvian gardening culture goes back to the ancient rural homesteads. In small flower gardens without special design people grew roses, jasmines, southernwood, black-eyed Susans, hollyhocks, big trees were planted on the edges of gardens. Only in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when Livonian martial castles lost the status of fortresses, the architecture changed radically and parks got developed there. Latvian park and garden culture has been closely related in its development to foreign accomplishments in this field, yet our masters have always been faithful to the national taste and traditions. Park culture has been affected both by historical and political events and socio-economic changes, fashion trends of the epoch as well as the geographical environment. In designing bigger gardens Riga played the leading role as an economic and culture centre. In the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries there were small gardens in the city territory (one of the oldest of these is the Cloister yard by the Dome Church) but they were destroyed in floods and fires.

A new stage in designing gardens started with the rule of Peter I. Upon his initiative in 1721 the Tsar garden in Pētersala was shaped (later called Ķeizardārzs, Viesturdārzs, now Dziesmusvētku parks (Keiser garden, Viesturs garden, Song Festival park)), also the roof garden by Peter palace (in Palasta street 9), the garden in Aleksandrs bastion – the Alexanderschanze palace park ensemble. Ķeizardārzs and Alexanderschanze gardens were designed by the standard projects elaborated by Leblon that were collected in a handbook published specially for garden designers. In 1813 the Suburbs Greenery committee was founded; in 1857, using the funds raised by donations, in the place of the demolished city fortification wall canal greenery was laid; in 1879 the first garden administration was elected.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Latvia parks were shaped by the Baltic German baron estates. In park composition the features of Italian and French Baroque garden composition were observed. Rundāle Palace Park is the brightest sample designed in French Baroque style.

Landscape parks in Latvia started to be laid in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century using landscape, romantic park compositional techniques. Around 1910 in Latvia, professional gardeners started to be educated as Bulduri Gardening School was founded. In the development and sustaining of green zone culture certain traditions and trends emerged having been inspired by the world experience in this sphere as well as searching for the solutions characteristic of Latvian landscape.

Daugavpils parks and other green zones of the town are designed so that the town environment would become friendlier and healthier for the residents providing various recreation opportunities. In the warm season Daugavpils parks were the place of culture

events where matching conditions had been created for wholesome recreation. Recreation places were to a certain extent competing with one another. To attract visitors, each park tried to stand out with something special, e.g., a good buffet, live music, electric lighting, a fountain, dance platform, etc. In Daugavpils park environment modern trends appeared regarding greenery, buildings, and equipment: there were sculptures and monuments, fountains and pedestrian walks, lights and benches, open air platforms, pavilions, kiosks and other buildings.

Parks, like the town of Daugavpils, react to various socio-economic and historical situations. With the growth and diminishing of the population, the number of parks changed accordingly; the improvement of the socio-economic situation brought positive changes for the park environment; objects and monuments placed in parks or their dismantling testify to the ruling political trend and ideology. The historical processes happening in the country are manifested not only by various documents, sources of history, and witnesses' stories but also street and place names can reveal many interesting regularities. The history of Daugavpils parks and their names reflects the political events in a peculiar way. Parks and their names were shaped, transformed, and disappeared in the course of history.

Daugavpils parks are typical town parks. Their shaping and transformations in the course of time have been and still remain closely connected to the historical and political situation of the town and the country, trends of their socio-economic development and culture life. The history of Daugavpils parks was affected by the multinational environment of the town and various cultures represented in it. Daugavpils culture has been influenced by the mutual interaction and enrichment of people of many ethnicities and religious confessions. The national composition of the town is determined by its geographical position – the proximity of borders, the railway hub as well as wars and shifts of political regimes.

The emergence of parks has been determined also by the town development level: the development of new resident areas, changes of culture life needs caused the emergence or adjustment of the green areas in the town. The complex and peculiar history of Daugavpils matches the formation and functionality of the town parks.

The changes of the town of Daugavpils in the course of history have been marked by the transformations of the town names. Düneburg, Duneburc, Duneburch, Duneborch, Naujene castle, Nowenne, Dyneburg, Navgin, Nevgin, Borisoglebsk (Борисоглебовъ), Dinaburg, Dvinsk – these are the historical names of Daugavpils.<sup>11</sup>

The origin of the town is related to the castle erected on the right bank of the river of Daugava, in the territory of the present-day Naujene that was first mentioned in 1275. Though in 2015 Daugavpils will celebrate its 740<sup>th</sup> anniversary, its history in the present-day territory is not that long and in fact started with the building of Dinaburg fortress. According to old traditions, fortress was considered as a town but buildings outside it – the suburbs. Until 1918 Dinaburg was a part of the Russian Empire as the territory of Vitebsk province, therefore the construction of the fortress initiated in 1811 was necessary to protect the western border of Russia. The construction of the fortress lasted until 1871 when it lost its military significance and was used as a complex of administrative establishments and a warehouse. In 1833 the fortress was consecrated with the presence of Tsar Nikolai I. During the construction of the fortress new residents

settled in the town and considerable financial investments were made. In 1825 there were eighty-one shops, nine taverns, sixty public (bar) houses, seven baths, and two small industrial enterprises in Daugavpils.<sup>12</sup>

The town development was greatly facilitated by the service and lodging of the army. Yet after some time the town not only supplied the needs of the fortress but grew into an economically independent and significant territory. The historical construction of the town executed according to the project confirmed in St. Petersburg in 1826 is a manifestation and sample of Russian construction culture.

In the 1830s the new suburban area or the Vorstadt started to be built that is the centre of the present-day Daugavpils. According to the architect A. Stauber's (*Aleksandrs Štauberts*, 1781—1843) project, an empire style administrative building complex and Dinaburg high school were built. Between these buildings trading malls were arranged with a marketplace behind them. With the growth of the town the population grew accordingly. In 1825 the number of population in Dinaburg was 2885, while in 1840 already 11361 and in 1860 – 25764.<sup>13</sup>

Dinaburg underwent a rapid growth in the 1860s when after the abolishment of serfdom new labour force settled in the town and the newly constructed railway hub started active functioning.

In 1860 the railway line St. Petersburg – Warsaw reached Dinaburg providing connection with Petersburg but in 1862 – with Warsaw. On 12 September 1861 the railway line Riga – Dinaburg was opened. In 1866 railway repair shops started working, on the basis of which later Engine Repair Works developed.

In 1865 there were already thirty working enterprises, while in 1896 their number reached fifty-one. The former suburbs grew into the town of Dinaburg but the fortress – into its autonomous part. The old and the new suburbs expanded. Gayok was planned as an industrial territory – with lumber-mills, brick and limekilns, mills, stove tile factory, etc. In 1893 Dinaburg was renamed to Dvinsk. According to the census of 1897, the population of the town numbered 32064 Jews, 19149 Russians, 11420 Polish, 3126 Germans, 1525 Belarusians, 1274 Latvians, 193 Ukrainians, 190 Lithuanians, in total 69975 people. Dvinsk had grown into a multinational town.<sup>14</sup>

Daugavpils culture was affected by the mutual interaction and enrichment of people of many ethnicities and religious confessions. The national composition of the town was determined by its geographical location – the proximity of borders, railway hub as well as wars and shifting political regimes.<sup>15</sup>

Until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century railway had been the possession of foreign stock companies, then it was bought by the Russian tsarist government that built Riga – Orel railway line, and Dinaburg became a railway hub with busy trade and rapid economic growth.

At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries metal and woodworking, leather tanning, glass, match, button production as well as spirits, liquor, and beer production. Before World War I there were 2210 various branch enterprises in Dvinsk (Dinaburg), among them about one hundred various kinds of factories – cast iron foundries, lumber-mills, chocolate and sweet, soap, oil factories and bakeries. The number of the population grew rapidly (from 1887 till 1904 for 28%) reaching 113 thousand.<sup>16</sup>

With the beginning of World War I, the rapid development of the town was terminated. Until 1920 the town was in the combatant zone and was ruined by the warfare. The consequences of the military actions had especially affected Vorstadt and the industrial area in Gayok that suffered greatly in spring flood, too.

The political situation changed as well. Though since November 1918 Dvinsk had become a town of Latvia, this change was not yet apparent because the German troops were still ruling in the town, in 1919 a Bolshevik regime was established and finally, in January 1920 the town was liberated by the Polish troops and Daugavpils with the new name returned to Latvia again.<sup>17</sup>

In the course of the town growth and development, rise of the population number, there was a growing need for green recreation areas. The oldest park is the present Andrejs Pumpurs Park. It is rather small – only 10585 sq.m, yet its history is worthy of notice and rather peculiar.

### **Alexander Nevskiy Boulevard**

In the 1820s the construction of the New Vorstadt (at present the town centre) started and till the middle of the century the centre of Dinaburg had grown considerably. Almost a whole block was occupied by an imposing building where the only town high school was situated (later – science bias school, Secondary School No 1, at present – Vienības Elementary School). Next to it – in the present-day Ģimnāzijas, Vienības, Lāčplēša streets – the brick buildings housed the town administration bodies. Opposite these buildings there were the wooden huts of the town market but in the place of the present-day Vienības (Union) House there was a market-place. Though among other Vitebsk province towns at that time Dinaburg was the most developed one in trade and attractiveness of architecture, there were neither parks nor squares or boulevards in it. On 26 May 1862 the wooden huts of traders caught fire and all fire brigades of Dinaburg were engaged in the combat with the fire. Though it was extinguished, trader warehouses could not be renewed and the building of the high school was destroyed as well. The pedagogical council of the school summoned the town administration not to renew the burnt down trade huts. The idea was supported by the officials who decided to shift trader shops closer to the market-place (approximately in the territory of the current Parādes Street) but the former place of trader huts of about 1 hectare to give over for shaping the first park in Dinaburg.<sup>18</sup>

Initially the park (or boulevard, as it was called then) was named after Alexander Nevskiy, in short calling it Alexander Nevskiy Garden. This name was given also to the territory of the current Vienības Street, the near-by market-place, and the Orthodox cathedral.

The first town park was designed with great care and love. Hundreds of trees were planted, both of the local and exotic “foreign” species from North America, China, and Siberia, including Amur lilac, larch, douglas fir, etc. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the town council Garden commission was founded that supervised flower planting, pedestrian lane organization and the quality of benches. In 1885, three hundred roubles were spent on the maintenance of Alexander Boulevard and caretaker’s wages in summer season.<sup>19</sup>





Picture 1. Town boulevard. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk. End of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (undated).  
Daugavpils Local History Museum, inv. No. 9950



Picture 2. Town boulevard. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk. End of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (undated).  
Private collection of Yevgeniy Belikov

In 1882 a new boulevard was tended in Dinaburg (the present-day Dubrovin park), therefore Alexander park was renamed the Old Boulevard. Inspired by the world's best parks, the municipality decided to erect a fountain in Alexander Nevskiy Garden. In the town budget for 1901 an extraordinary expense position was opened for constructing a fountain in Alexander Nevskiy Garden.<sup>20</sup> Benevolent conditions for its construction were provided on 1 August 1901 by water supply for the boulevard as one of the first objects in the town centre from the newly built water supply station. The fountain was designed by the sculptor A. Veinbakh. It is formed by three connected plates, the water

falling from the upper, smaller plate to the medium and then to the lower and bigger one. People started to call the park 'Tarelochka' (Plate), the reason for this being the form of the fountain. The biggest plate of the old fountain has been preserved until nowadays: there is a sculpture of a girl with a lotus flower in it that has been reconstructed recently. From the lotus flower water flows in summer giving freshness and humid to the visitors of the park.

Another rare and unusual object – a sundial – was erected in the boulevard in 1910. Upon the initiative of the science bias school teacher of physics, Arkadiy Yas'kov and according to his drawings, the face of the sundial was made but the polished stand was produced in the monument workshop. The funding for the sundial construction was raised by the school learners of senior forms. Until 1934 the sundial was located in the right corner of the park (looking from the gymnasium).



Picture 3. Town boulevard. Postcard. Daugavpils, 1923.  
Daugavpils Local History Museum, inv. No. 37617

Unusual and special colouring was given to the park by Alexander Nevskiy cathedral. Its history is worthy of notice and tragic, it reflects the state and power attitude towards church, culture values, and religious faith in different historical periods. The cornerstone of the imposing stone cathedral (25m x 17m x 16m) was placed in 1856; the state financed construction of the cathedral was completed in 1864. The building of the church became a landmark of the town centre revealed to the view across the big market-place. 440 roubles for the church construction were donated by count M. Muravyov. On the whole the construction expenses were 37,816 roubles 18 kopecks. The five golden cupola crowned cathedral was surrounded by a brick wall with tin coating. The iconic wall of the cathedral was designed in baroque style according to the Academy of Art project. Six main icons were painted by the academician Vishnevskiy. On 30 August 1864 the cathedral named after Alexander Nevskiy was consecrated by the Polock and Vitebsk archbishop Vassiliy. The cathedral functioned actively; since 25 November 1875 services were held daily. A side altar was erected in the cathedral in the honour of the Entrance of Our Lady into the church.



Picture 4. Daugavpils Orthodox church. Postcard.  
<http://www.zudusilatvija.lv/objects/object/7293/>

The number of parish members changed: in 1873 it held 1228 people, in 1887–1864, in 1893 – 2462, in 1906 – already 4965 people. After World War I when Daugavils had been severely ruined, the number of parish members decreased for about 1000. The property of the cathedral was 4,274 ha of gardens in Cherepovo and a two-storeyed stone parish house (built in 1908–1910 owing to the effort of the high priest Pēteris Belavins).<sup>21</sup> Though the cathedral was situated in the park territory, in the town centre it owned just the small fenced territory, therefore all needs of the church and the parish had to be addressed to the town council.

*In the regular meeting of town Council of 19 June 1901 the following will be discussed inter alia: request of the Alexander Nevskiy parish council concerning allotting a plot of land of the town square for building the care-taker's lodge and candle kiosk [...]*

[В очередном заседании думы 19-го июня будут рассмотрены, между прочим: ходатайство приходского попечительства при Александро — Невском соборе об отводе из городского сквера части земли для постройки каменной сторожки и свечной лавки, [...].<sup>22</sup>]

Possibly the location of the church in the park was the reason why no culture events with dance or music took place in this conveniently situated central square. Alexander Nevskiy Park was only a green area, a place for walk and recreation of town residents.

The central park, though it did not become a place of culture events, was still a significant tribune of the political life. At the beginning of the 19th century it was called a 'stock exchange'.<sup>23</sup> As the boulevard was always full of people, the underground organization of the Communist Social Democratic Workers' Party used it as a handy place for its conspiratorial meetings, spreading of the illegal literature and 'running' rallies when a party orator in some minutes briefly and clearly announced the ideas of the group, his comrades handed out fly-sheets and everybody dispersed quickly among the passers by. The police was in the know about this action, therefore it often organized



catchings here. In 1905 – 1907 the Old Boulevard was a gathering place of workers, besides sometimes workers' rallies grew into severe collisions with the police and army. Constant rallies were organized here also during the February revolution in 1917. The soldiers who were killed in the battles of the town defence in 1919 were buried near the fountain, but these graves were destroyed in the time of the first Republic of Latvia.<sup>24</sup>

## Fortress Square

Though Andrejs Pumpurs Square, the former Alexander Nevskiy Boulevard is considered the oldest park in the town, there is another green area that was shaped even before. As the development of Dinaburg started with the construction of the fortress, the green area of this territory must be mentioned that carried a specific functional load. Each body of troops needed its own parade square. In 1827 in Dinaburg fortress, the building of the Noblemen meeting house was finished and the parade square was paved for army training and parades that later became the basis of a green square. It was called the green adornment of the fortress. Trees and shrubs were planted so that they would be green for most of the year. There was a certain system of planting: in the middle of the square there were plants that became green early in spring but further on plants that stayed green until late autumn. A garden-house was built where an orchestra played marches during parades.



Picture 5. Fortress. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk.  
End of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (undated).  
Daugavpils Local History Museum, inv. No. 34295

In the Fortress Square events related to military life took place, whereas in the Noblemen meeting house various concerts were held that were manifestation of culture life. The newspaper *Dvinskiy Listok* (*Dvinsk Newsletter*) in No 141–143, 1901 announced the concert of the singer, soprano tenor, Karl Gordon on Saturday, 8 September, the receipts whereof would be donated to the Dvinsk Fortress children's home.

[В субботу, 08.09.1901. в крепостном собрании концерт артиста – певца, тенора – сопрано Карла Гордона в пользу Двинского – Крепостного детского приюта имени Государя Императора Николая Александровича.<sup>25</sup>]

On 20 September of the same year the concert of the piano virtuoso Berta Hasenfuss and the violin virtuoso Eduard Zibert was held.<sup>26</sup>

A specific atmosphere was attributed to the parks by various water bodies with or without fountains. In 1912 in the Fortress Square a fountain – monument “The Fame of Russian Arms” was erected according to the military council decision, to honour the bravery of Russian soldiers in the Patriotic War of 1812. It consisted of three 12 feet long arms that used to be in the Fortress ordnance.<sup>27</sup>



Picture 6. Monument “Krievu ieroču slava”. Photograph. (undated).  
Private collection of Yevgeniy Belikov

On the copy of the Dinaburg town plan it is written: *This plan is considered in compliance with the technical construction committee journal No. 11 on 24 August 1865 and recognized as good*, but on the original there is a note handwritten by Tsar Alexander, *Let it be thus – Alexander. Tsarskoye Selo. 1 October 1865.*<sup>28</sup>

In this plan of Dinaburg there was a place envisaged for another park; it was a boggy field of 3 ha stretching from the present-day fire station to the embankment. On the right side of it, in the place of the present-day Daugavpils University new building at that time there was a small village called Maiki with 12 orchards and 11 vegetable gardens.<sup>29</sup>

In this stretch the town mayor and council member, major-general Nikolai Hoegelstrom suggested to shape a garden as in Dinaburg at that time there was just one small park (Alexander Boulevard) that could no longer meet the town residents’ needs for a place of recreation. In 1876 Pavel Dubrovin became the town mayor and started active work in designing the new park. He funded the purchase of a bog grown with cranberries with his own money.<sup>30</sup>

The work in shaping the garden began in August 1882. The park was called the New Boulevard. The land was first meliorated, then trees and shrubs of various local



species were planted there as well as exotic plants were ordered: Karelian and yellow birch-tree, silver willow, white acacia, Hungarian lilac, douglas fir, decorative walnut from North America, etc. It is noted in Peasant Union paper *Zeme (Land)* of 12 November 1891 that Dubrovin in his testament bequeathed naming the park after him only posthumously, yet the garden was called Dubrovin Garden already in his lifetime, thus recognizing the mayor's contribution to the town development. Hence, already in the estimate of the town budget in 1889 expenses were envisaged for building the caretaker's lodge and shed as well as the fence.<sup>31</sup>



Picture 7. Dubrovin Garden. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk. End of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (undated).  
Daugavpils Local History Museum, inv. No. 28702



Picture 8. Dubrovin Garden bandstand. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk. End of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (undated).  
Private collection of Yevgeniy Belikov

Town leadership paid special attention to park improvement and order maintenance there. In the fire brigade there was a paid position for caring for trees and supplying topsoil.<sup>32</sup> The issue 11 of the paper *Dvinskiy Listok* of 4 June 1900 printed an account for the town council decisions concerning the protection of the town green areas: the trespassers would be punished, even prosecuted.<sup>33</sup> At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Dubrovin Park the fence was fixed, lanes done up and new benches erected. New opportunities for culture events opened up when in 1899 a platform was built in the park that cost 400 roubles. A buffet was built as well as an impressive arch from the main entrance on the side of Teātra Street.<sup>34</sup>



Picture 9. Dubrovin Garden. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk. End of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (undated). Daugavpils Local History Museum, inv. No. 9957

After building the platform and arranging the park environment, Dubrovin Garden became the main place of walks and recreation for the town residents. Various pay entertainment events were organized there that was not always approved of by the municipal officials who would rather have the park as a place for walks and not mass entertainment. As there was no place specially designed for dance and public events, they took place in the small sandy plot opposite the platform and on the lawn that got trampled and ugly. On 30 June 1901 the paper *Dvinskiy Listok* in the column *Nasha zhizn'* (*Our life*) commented ironically on the situation in the park:

*[...] looking for a place to rest and entertain oneself – could not find it anywhere... Suddenly their searching glances stopped at Dubrovin Garden: there is a buffet for a jolly talk, magic maiki who at any time can provide fresh milk though they have no cows, pleasant greenery, sufficient for breathing freely, pleasant alleys that are not lighted even in illumination. And the people of Dvinsk suddenly wished to organize celebrations with music accessible for everyone, offering for this small entertainment to pay for each party 25 roubles in the municipal treasury. But... they were not let in there. And the reason was that the town elders cared for the grass: if you organize a party, they tell the bored residents, there will come many*

*people but if many people come, the grass will be stamped down, if the grass is damaged there will be no hay. [...] In turn, if after haymaking cold and rain starts, it won't be our fault – everything is in God's hands. By the way, in solitude you may walk in the garden even now but, of course, carefully and looking around, remember that the preserved plants we will return you. Though there are no expensive and valuable plants in the garden, at least there is green grass.*

[.. искали местечко, где бы можно было отдохнуть и поразвлечься – нет его нигде... Вдруг блуждающие взоры их радостно остановились на Дубровинском саду: в нем и буфет для веселой беседы, и волшебные «майки», доставляющие во всякое время дня и ночи парное молочко, хотя коров в них вовсе нет, и приятная зелень, достаточная даже для свободного дыхания, и уютные аллеи, не освещающиеся даже во время иллюминаций. И захотелось двинцам устраивать здесь доступные гулянья под музыку, предлагая за это невинное удовольствие платить в пользу города по 25 руб. с каждого вечера. Но ... их туда не пустили. А не пустили их потому, что отцы города питают сильную страсть к травушке – муравушке: если вы устроите гулянье, говорят они безутешно скупающим обывателям, то соберется много народу, а соберется много народу – растопчется травушка, испортится травушка – не будет сенца. [...] Если же, паче чаяния, после сенокоса наступят холода и дожди, вина не наша – все от Бога. Впрочем, в одиночку можете и теперь ходить по саду, но, разумеется, осторожно и с оглядкою, памятуя, что храненные насаждения мы вернем вам. Правда, в саду нет дорогих насаждений, но в нем – травушка – муравушка зелененькая.<sup>35]</sup>

Town administration had another argument against wide entertainment in the garden.

*They say that celebrations in Dubrovin Garden are undesirable because their organizers damage the garden by arranging decorations; especially great harm is done for trees by the inevitable illuminations for the sake of which nails and hooks are spiked into trees.*

[По слухам, гулянья в Дубровинском саду не желательны потому, что устроители их портят сад – устройством украшений; особенно сильный вред причиняется деревьям устройством неизбежных иллюминаций, для чего в деревья вбиваются гвозди и крючки.<sup>36]</sup>

Town management tried to find compromise by letting to organize rare events in the park.

The park territory is sometimes allotted not for entertainment but educating the people. In summer 1901 the history and anatomy museum brought from Russia was opened in Dubrovin Park.<sup>37</sup> Also in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the ticket prices were different. At the early stage of the work of the museum from July 25, 1901 to August 8, 1901 everybody was invited to visit the museum for 22 kopecks but the paper *Dvinskiy Listok* announced the reduction of the ticket price to 15 kopecks in the time period from 11.08.1901. to 29.08.1901., in the last days of its work – from 12.09.1901. to 15.09.1901. – the ticket price was only 10 kopecks. For the whole time of the museum work the cheapest tickets for 12 kopecks were sold to children under the age of ten and lower rank soldiers. The entrance to the anatomy department of the museum exhibition was allowed only to adults for extra pay of 12 kopecks. The museum advertisement mentions that on Fridays the anatomy department was opened only for women.<sup>38</sup> According to the museum advertisement, in winters there was a skating rink in the park providing an opportunity to town residents of active recreation in the cold season as well: *[..] in Dubrovin Garden where the skating rink was [..]*<sup>39</sup>.



The territory of the park was allotted for the events that had not only an entertaining function. At the end of the summer of 1901 in Dubrovin Park folk celebration (*народное гулянье*) was organized, the money raised in it was meant for the victims of Vitebsk fire. Due to the bad weather conditions this celebration was postponed to 19 August.<sup>40</sup> To provide evidence of the importance of the event, the issue of 25 August 1901 of *Dvinskiy Listok* published a report of the receipts and expenditure of the event. According to this report, the people in Dvinsk were responsive to other people's misfortune – the approximate number of the town population at that time was about 80–90 thousands and 2402 tickets were sold. The same issue of the paper held an article about the celebration:

*On Sunday, 19 August there was folk celebration in Dubrovin Garden to raise money for the support of the victims of Vitebsk fire. As is seen in the report, the celebration yielded unprecedented for such cases receipt for which we must thank our public that was so responsive to the needs of the poor sufferers. The income, however, could have been even bigger but for the weather conditions. The day was cold, the sky was cloudy, it was raining every quarter of an hour and the rain grew stronger just before the party, and did not stop throughout the whole evening. But the proverb that there are always good people in the world is true; many did not get scared by the rain or cold and gave their contribution. We must also thank the members of the Voluntary firemen society band who played the whole evening without pay. The victims of Vitebsk fire will say a lot of thanks to those Dvinsk residents who visited the celebration and made their donation.*

[В воскресенье, 19-го августа, в Дубровинском саду состоялось народное гулянье в пользу погорельцев г. Витебска. Как можно видеть из отчета, гулянье дало прямо небывалую в таких случаях цифру чистого сбора, за что, конечно, следует благодарить нашу публику, так отзывчиво отнесшуюся к нуждам бедных погорельцев. Надо сказать, однако, что сбор был бы намного большим, если бы этому не помешала погода. Весь день было холодно, небо заволочло тучами, дождь перемежался каждые четверть часа и как раз усилился перед началом гулянья, а потом почти беспрестанно шел и вечером. Но справедлива поговорка: «не без добрых душ на свете», многие не побоялись ни дождя, ни холода и принесли свою лепту. Нельзя не сказать доброе слово и по адресу членов оркестра пожарного добровольного общества, которые безвозмездно играли весь вечер. Большое спасибо скажут погорельцы двинцам, посетившим гулянье, так и сделавшим пожертвования.<sup>41</sup>]

Nowadays anyone may visit parks, irrespective of the age or social status but previously there were certain limitations. This is revealed in a publication in the paper *Dvinskiy Listok*:

*Recently Dubrovin Garden is filled with lower rank soldiers who feel there as rightful masters – they occupy all seats, flirt with female servants, drink spirit, fill the air with swearwords and rude jokes. By the way, we have heard that the garrison order forbids lower rank soldiers visit public gardens. Why isn't this order fulfilled?*

[В последнее время Дубровинский сад наполнен нижними чинами, которые чувствуют себя в нем положительными хозяевами — занимают бесцеремонно все места, любезничают с женской прислугой, распивают водку, наполняют воздух бранью и неприличными остротами. А между тем, как мы слышали, приказом по гарнизону нижним чинам воспрещен доступ в общественные сады. Почему этот приказ не исполняется?<sup>42</sup>]

Judging by this article, the issue of the visitors' conduct and culture has been urgent at all times.

The echoes of the revolution are present also in this town park – in 1905 social democrats organized their rallies here and there were collisions with the police.

Until the beginning of World War I the public life in the park was very active. The events were well organized, they offered various opportunities of entertainment, active involvement in celebrations, observing them by enjoying the buffet. When preparing for the celebrations, both men and women had to think about their image as various contests were organized. In 1914 the local paper announced an invitation to celebration:

*Dubrovin Garden. The Voluntary firemen society of Dvinsk is organizing grandiose celebration of 1 May and a lottery with the accompaniment of two music bands. Fireworks. A valuable prize for the most original woman's hat. A valuable prize for the biggest beard. A prize for handsome moustache. Dance. Lottery without a loss. Fishing rod. Buffet, ice cream and dairy farm.*

[Дубровинский сад. Двинское добровольное пожарное общество устраивает грандиозное первомайское гулянье и лотерею-аллегри при двух оркестрах музыки. Фейерверк. Ценный приз за самую оригинальную дамскую шляпку. Ценный приз за самую большую бороду. Приз за красивые усы. Танцы. Беспроигрышная лотерея. Удочка. Буфеты, мороженое и молочная ферма.<sup>43]</sup>

Another announcement runs as follows:

*Dubrovin Garden. The charity society of Dvinsk is organizing grandiose May celebration. The garden will be decorated and illuminated. Scenes on the open stage: 1. Spring awakening. 2. Spring march accompanied by fairies, gnomes, butterflies, frogs, etc.*

[Дубровинский сад. Двинское благотворительное общество устраивает грандиозное майское гулянье. Сад будет роскошно декорирован и иллюминирован. На открытой сцене картины: 1. Пробуждение весны. 2. Шествие весны, сопровождаемой феями, гномами, мотыльками, лягушками и пр.<sup>44]</sup>

The active public life in the park was interrupted by World War I, during which the garden was bogged up, grown with weeds, its constructions dilapidated.

## Railway Garden

The emergence of parks in the town was often conditioned by the appearance of new housing and industrial areas. One of such parks in Dinaburg was Railway Garden. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when railway started to be constructed in Russia, due to its geographical situation Dinaburg became a major hub. The town was crossed by Petersburg – Warsaw and Riga – Orel lines. A special sideline was constructed that joined these lines. On the outskirts of Gayok a separate cargo station was built that brought new life to the previously quiet and marginal part of the town. Between it and the town prison a small park was shaped with the area of 1532 sq.m. First it was called “Direction Garden” as Riga – Orel railway had been the property of German direction before it became the state property. An entrance arch was erected in the park, a fountain and a platform for musicians, a dance floor and buffet were constructed in its territory, and electric lighting was installed.<sup>45</sup>



Picture 10. Railway Garden. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk. End of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (undated). Daugavpils Local History Museum, inv. No. 38709

Various concerts and dance parties were organized in the park that were attended not only by the near-by residents but all townspeople. The paper *Dvinskiy Golos* announced in 1914:

*Railway Garden. Saturday, 14 June. A concert given by the symphony orchestra conducted by A. Goppe. Beginning at eight p.m., end at twelve.*

[Железнодорожный сад. Суббота 14-го июня; Гулянье-концерт симфонического оркестра под управлен. А.Г. Гоппе. Начало в 8 ч. веч., конец в 12 ч.<sup>46]</sup>

Next day another event was organized:

*Sunday, 15 June – grandiose mass celebration. Lucky barrel, dance and other entertainment. Magnificent fireworks. Entrance – 15 kopecks, dance – 20 kopecks.*

[В воскресенье, 15-го июня: Грандиозное гулянье. Бочка счастья, удочка, танцы и проч. Роскошн. фейерверк. Вход 15 коп. Танцы – 20 коп.<sup>47]</sup>

## Nikolai Park

With the expansion of the town territory new housing areas appeared and their residents also needed green areas for recreation. Another park that was shaped in the new Vorstadt area of the town at that time was Nikolai Park. According to the census, in 1897 the population of Vorstadt was 5117 (in the whole town in 1902 – 75136 people) and there was also a large army garrison located there.<sup>48</sup>

In this area of Dvinsk there were also large industrial enterprises but there were no parks or other places for culture events. At that time there were no trams or buses, therefore getting to the centre of the town and returning from there was possible only on

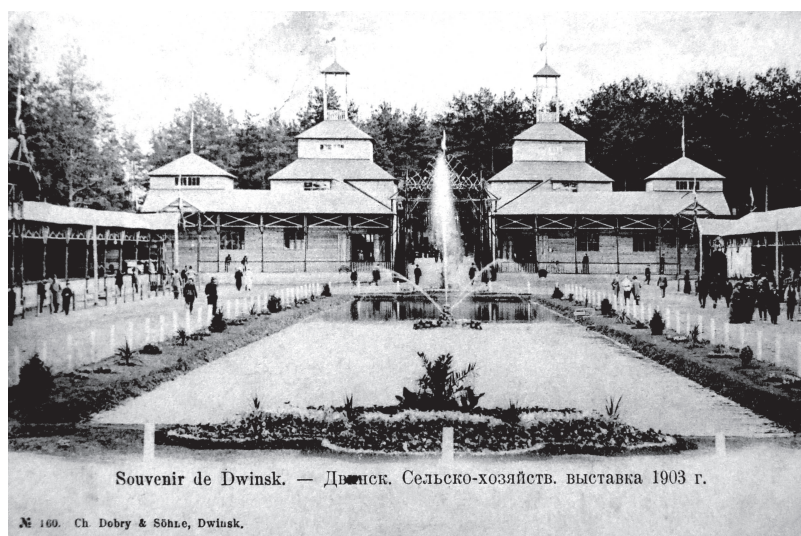


foot, that was not very safe late at night when the events were over. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a project was submitted to the town council about making a place of recreation and entertainment in Vorstadt. Rather long time passed until the location for it was decided upon and the necessary funding was raised. On 11 October 1901 the town council decided to shape a park and named it Nikolai Park to honour Tsar Nikolai. The main objective of making the park was creating a place of recreation for the residents of Vorstadt. The park was located in an area grown with wood, it was long-shaped and stretched between Riga – Orel railway line and Mogilev Street (at present Siguldas) from Kaunas Street to the local garrison soldier barracks (the present psycho-neurological hospital). On the other side of the railway line there was a summer garden area Cherepovo and its residents also were among the visitors of the park. A big role in the park layout and construction was played by the decision of Vitebsk agriculture society to organize an exhibition of agriculture and craft industry in this park. The choice of the town was not incidental – at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the town had become a significant centre of Vitebsk province industrial production and agriculture. The province town Dvinsk even outrivalled the province capital Vitebsk both in the amount of production and the number of trade, industry and other enterprises, and the number of population. One of the decisive factors in selecting the place of the exhibition was also Dvinsk being an important hub that was joined by railway lines with the neighbouring provinces.<sup>49</sup>

The constructions necessary for the exhibition were started to be built in 1902. Many pavilions, auxiliary premises, closed and covered areas were raised. There is no information who designed the constructions of Nikolai Park but there are versions that all drafts of the entertainment establishments were elaborated in Petersburg. This is proved by the old photographs of Russian places of entertainment where restaurants, concert halls, and movie theatres are strikingly similar to those in Dvinsk. The construction of the exhibition objects was executed by the local craftsmen: ground diggers, carpenters, stonemasons. The speed of work was unbelievably fast – in a year's time all necessary buildings were completed. The main construction material – wood – did not need to be brought a long way, it was always easily accessible. The local craftsmen were capable of creating veritable woodwork and fireplace masterpieces. Furniture for the concert hall, variety theatre, and restaurants was ordered in Warsaw and Petersburg. The owners did not save on the means for setting exhibitions and recovered their investments with usury that reveals the good paying capacity of the population at that time.<sup>50</sup>

The exhibition was opened on 29 August 1903. It was open for 11 days until 8 September. The participants of the exhibition were Vitebsk and neighbouring provinces – Pskov, Smolensk, Mogilev, Minsk, Vilnius, Kaunas, Kurzeme and others.<sup>51</sup>

The park had several entrances, the main was from the side of Kaunas Street. All visitors were raptured by the unusual fountain in the middle of an artificial pond. Its central spout reached the height of almost 8 m, with side spouts forming a fan. The pond with the wide alleys enclosing it was the centre of the exhibition, and side alleys from it led to pavilions and squares. There were 123 departments in the exhibition. The largest were those of cattle breeding, horse breeding, and horticulture. The park was well organized with lanes, flower beds, benches, trade kiosks. The order in the park was maintained by Dvinsk voluntary firemen society duty post, there were several culture educational objects.<sup>52</sup>



Picture 11. Agriculture exhibition. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk. 1903.  
Private collection of Yevgeniy Belikov



Picture 12. Nikolai Park. Postcard. The world post union. Russia. Dvinsk.  
End of the 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Private collection of Yevgeniy Belikov

The exhibition became a great event in the life of the town and all neighbourhood attracting numerous participants and visitors. After its closing the territory and the majority of its buildings were used as a town park; owing to the manifold opportunities of spending leisure time there it became popular with the residents not only in Vorstadt and Cherepovo but also Stropi and other areas of the town. There was a concert hall in the park with electric lighting and heating, it had some comfortable boxes and closed cabinets. There was also a winter hall where masked balls took place. In the movie theatre new movies were demonstrated. There was a variety theatre as well. Dvinsk did

not fall behind Europe in the use of technologies of those times – when the bicycle fashion reached the town, in Nikolai Park a tarmacked cycle track was installed as well as a skating rink for roller skaters.<sup>53</sup>

In 1913 – 1914 the paper *Dvinskaya mysl'* published information about the events in the park territory. In the concert hall there were daily concerts by the international ensemble that performed Hungarian, Italian, English, Russian comic songs and dances. In winter hall there were masked balls with the military music band playing, the movie theatre demonstrated new black-and-white films.<sup>54</sup>

The last news about the events organized in the park territory was published in 1914. In the issue of 20 May 1914 of *Dvinskaya mysl'* there was the following announcement:

*Theatre-variety show. Nikolai Park. Today and every day debuts of first-class artists... An excellent restaurant is open in the theatre. Soon the Indian dancer Indiana is to arrive.*

[Театр – Варьете. Николаевский парк. Сегодня и ежедневно дебюты первоклассных артистов и артисток... При театре первоклассный ресторан. На днях приезжает индийская танцовщица Индиана.<sup>55</sup>]

The issue of the paper *Dvinskaya mysl'* of 1 July 1914 informed:

In Nikolai park a tarmacked ground is laid for cyclists and roller skaters. Those interested in using the track are kindly invited to register with the administration of Nikolai Park.

[В Николаевском парке устраивается асфальтовая площадка для велосипедистов, приспособленная также и для «скетинг – ринга». Желающих пользоваться треком просят заранее записаться у дирекции Николаевского парка.<sup>56</sup>]

With the beginning of World War I the town was occupied by German troops, trees in Nikolai Park and around it were cut, the park was destroyed and ceased to exist.

### **Potorochnaya Garden**

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were other small green squares apart from the bigger parks in the town and information about them appeared in press. In summer Potorochnaya Garden was open that was located behind the market-place, at the end of Cietokshnya Street. Choirs, dancers, prestidigitators made their performance there. By the present 18 November Street No. 43 there was a “Runois concert garden” (so far unidentified) where musicians and acrobats performed and there was also an excellent offer of cuisine. There were places for entertainment and walks also in Stropi forest park and Mezhciems (Forest village), in the Count Alley. A military band, musical quartet performed there, there was a ground for roller skaters, a shooting-gallery, first-class buffet, also movie shows.<sup>57</sup>

### **Conclusions**

Town parks until the beginning of World War I provided an important place for residents' recreation and culture events. The accessibility of parks was well planned shaping them in all densely populated town areas. Park organization was not only a

town administration initiative but also various public organizations and employers were engaged in the process. Parks were not just a green zone and a place for walks but in fact they functioned as culture establishments in open air. They provided rich opportunities for entertainment for different tastes and social needs: from classical music concerts to simple lotteries. Judging by the press publications, the active functioning of parks had a seasonal character – some parks actively functioned only in the warm season of the year when it was possible to organize open-air events. However, in winter parks were also a popular place of walks and active recreation, e.g., in Dubrovin Park there was a skating-rink. The events organized in parks were actively advertised in press editions of that time trying to attract visitors both with the artists' names and good cuisine as well as comfortable premises. Events were organized by various organizations, e.g., Dvinsk voluntary firemen society, Dvinsk charity society. In designing and maintaining parks latest trends in the world park culture were observed trying to introduce various innovations in the town. Though the majority of parks were generally accessible to the public, there were also some limitations in using them: the Fortress Park was envisaged only for military persons, whereas lower rank soldiers were not admitted to the public parks. With the town expansion new green areas sprung up providing premises for recreation and entertainment.

Park origin and development were greatly affected by the economic situation in the town. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Dinaburg became one of the first Vitebsk province towns regarding the growth of industry, amount of trade and construction. At times of economic flourishing the number of the population grew that, in turn, facilitated the emergence of new housing areas and along with that the need to design new zones of recreation bringing them closer to residents' homes and providing better access to them and thus the rate of attendance. Park development was initiated both by the town administration and individual public organizations and employers. Public parks in the town were open to everyone, yet in certain time periods there have been some restrictions regarding particular social groups. Parks occupy a specific place in the town culture history, as they were a meeting and recreation place for people who were not familiar in their everyday life. Parks became to a certain extent the uniting element that brought people living in the town closer. Parks were often designed for those townspeople who did not have their own summerhouse or relatives in the countryside to have a possibility to rest and get entertained after their working day and on weekends. The using of parks until World War II mostly had a seasonal character: they were open in summer season thus performing a function of open-air culture establishment. The various kinds of entertainment offered in parks satisfied townspeople's social needs and matched their tastes: there were classical music concerts, dances under the accompaniment of military bands, lotteries and contests. The flourishing of culture life in parks was related to the economic growth and, with the decay of the economic life in the town, the park environment was degraded and became unattractive for visitors. After the flourishing of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, during World War I the townscape of Daugavpils was severely damaged by the warfare. In the first years of the independence of Latvia the economy developed slowly, and only in the late 1920s and the 1930s the number of industrial and trade enterprises approximated the pre-war level, thus facilitating the improvement of the town environment and reconstruction and improvement of the parks destroyed during the war.



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Silvija Ozola

## LANDSCAPE POETICS OF THE ROSE SQUARE IN LIEPĀJA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

### *Summary*

*Liepāja as an industrial, commercial and resort town flourished at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, thus promoting the development of architecture and garden art. A great attention was paid to improvement of the environment. The visual image of Liepāja center was formed through the interaction of two cultures – Russian and German, and it reflected the latest European architectural trends in city environment design of the corresponding period. The Rose Square, designed in 1912, became the symbol of Liepāja.*

*The center of Liepāja was reconstructed in 1970 and the original planning composition of the Rose Square was restored. However, there has been no research on the original intent and design of the Rose Square, the original selection of plantings, and the authors of the project.*

*The main aim of this research is to analyze the planning composition and landscape design of the Rose Square and to determine its impact on the visual image and architectural composition of Liepāja city center before the Second World War.*

*The main results: this research provides valuable information for future local territorial development plans, focusing attention on cultural values and identity.*

*Material and methods: this study is based on the research and analysis of cartographic, archives, and photo materials, as well as on a comparison of the use of rose plantations in German cities and Liepāja in the corresponding era.*

*Keywords: environment, identity, landscape, roses, the Rose Square*

\*

### **Introduction**

Liepāja (*Libau*) (Figure 1) got the city rights on 18 March, 1625. Around the New Market Square, where six streets came together, a multifunctional center was formed. The town's main road with commerce, finance and administrative buildings – Lielā Street (*Große Straße*) – was the shortest link from the bridge across the canal to the New Market Square, where Graudu Street (*Kornstraße*) with shops and a business center branches off. The City Council House was situated opposite the crossing of Šmāla Street (*Schmahlstraße*) and Lielā Street. The shortest way to the Virssardzes Square (*Hauptwache-Platz*, former City Hall Square) was provided by Tirgoņu Street (*Kaufstraße*), but to the Old Market – by Zivju Street (*Fischstraße*), which was a side road of Lielā Street. The New Market had a triangular shape due to these streets. In 1862, on the southeast corner of Zivju Street a butcher's pavilion (*Fleischscharren*) was



built. Premises of the nearby *Thoning's* houses were used for shops and the Craft's Guild. The layout of Liepāja's center, which was formed around 1867 (Figure 2), remained without significant changes until 1881, when unattractive, low buildings had been replaced by complexes of multi-storey buildings (Figure 3). The town architect of Liepāja, Max Paul Bertschy (1840 – 1911) made a re-development project for the house at 49 Graudu Street which belonged to Hermann Landau – the owner of the soap factory; it was accepted on 23 July, 1879. On 25 April, 1880 the architect received an order to remake this project. The owner wanted to change the façade of the three-storey building, and to re-build a nearby house at 12 New Market Square in a two-storey house. On 28 September, 1881 a project on building a passage on land which belonged to the police marshal von Ramedloff, between Zivju and Stendera (*Stenderstraße*) Streets, was approved. The commercial complex was bought by the contractor Wilhelm Johann Riege (1838 – 1894). On 28 January, 1891 a project on the reconstruction of a hotel was approved. The entrance to the passage from Zivju Street and Stendera Street was walled up in brick, creating a closed courtyard for a garden. At the end of the year, on 17 December the *Hôtel de Rome* was opened. On the eastern side of the New Market Square the building consisted of secretary Gorklo's house with a shop and office premises, Glaser's house with a wine shop, Friedmann's trading house, Green Pharmacy, and two houses which belonged to the merchant Wirckau. On the corner of Tirgoņu and Graudu Streets the Strupp's house was reconstructed. Attic was changed into a full second floor and on 22 November, 1891 the hotel *Hamburg* was opened.



Figure 1. Plan of Liepāja. 1848 (KB)



Figure 2. Layout of New Market Square. 1867 (Markus, 1867)



Figure 3. Layout of New Market Square. 1887 (LNB-1)



Figure 4. Layout of New Market Square. 1903 (LNB-2)

In 1896, fire destroyed Haim Selkin’s drapery in Landau’s house with the Neo-Gothic façade in the building block between Graudu and Lielā Streets. The owner of the building submitted a request on the development of a new project and wanted to join groups of buildings in a united building block in 1897. The complex of buildings was completed around 1899. The wholesaler Hugo Smit’s house was built next to it. The block of buildings along the perimeter was surrounded by dense construction. After building the electric street railway in 1899 the New Market Square became a traffic hub (Figure 4). An electric lantern was installed at the crossing of Lielā and Graudu Streets to illuminate the traffic junction. Traffic to the south from the New Market was organized along Tirgoņu Street passing Virssardzes Square till the Hay Market where the road led out of the city.



Figure 5. The New Market Square. 1895 (BCB-1)



Trade in the centre of Liepāja disturbed traffic. The New Market in 1903 had become inconvenient. In 1910, a Peter's Market pavilion was opened; it was designed by the architect Ludwig Melville. Liepāja's resort contributed to the improvement of city planning. Parks, gardens, avenues, and squares formed Liepāja's greenery system. The Liepāja City Council took a decision on closing the New Market. (Figure 5)

### The Layout and Planting Composition of the Rose Square

Decorative plantings were widely used in the 20<sup>th</sup> century European urban design. German and French florists created new flower varieties that increased plant diversity and contributed to an unprecedented variety of carpet plantation compositions in spring and summer seasons. Shape, height, and color of plants were important in decorative compositions.<sup>1</sup> Flowering shrubs and roses were also used in parks and gardens. Since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Western Europe *Rosa chinensis* was begun to cultivate. Jean Laffay (1795 – 1878) in 1839 selected *Remontant-Roses*, they were crossbred with Hybrid tea rose for growing 50 to 80 cm high roses with big flowers. In floriculture the modern garden rose era began. *Rosa polyanthum* – up to 45 cm high, steep, densely branched-growing shrubs were selected. In 1875, the first five-meter tall Climbing Roses appeared (*Rambler-Rose*). *Stammrosen* and Garden Roses were planted in private and public plantings.

In 1881, a city gardener in Riga Georg Friedrich Ferdinand Kuphaldt (1853 – 1938) refurbished the most representative public garden – Vērmāne's Garden. He planted new parterre beds, exotic trees and shrubs. In 1889 the first rose garden in Riga was set at the sun-dial.<sup>2</sup> The urban design of Liepāja was improving and the New Market Square as the traffic center became the dominant place in it. In 1911 the New Market Square

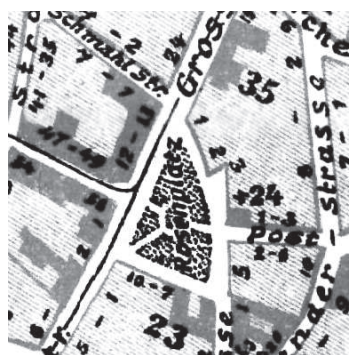


Figure 6. Layout of the New Market Square around 1916 (LNB-3)

was transformed into the Rose Square (Figure 6). It is supposed that Kuphaldt could be the author of the Rose Square; unfortunately this fact has not been proved yet. Around the electric lantern opposite Graudu Street, a circular rose bed with a trail for walks in a small circle was created. The big circle of the walking trail was surrounded by 12 wooden benches, separated by intervals of 15 hornbeams (Figure 7). From the large walking trail circles three radial direction walkways led to the nearby streets. A walkway surrounded by flowering shrubs led to Pasta Street, but to get to Tirgoņu and Graudu Streets people went along tree alleys. Pink and white floral rug ornaments decorated lawns, but the main trail in the direction of Graudu Street was surrounded by white and a pink oval flower beds on both

sides in the lawn. The corner of the square opposite Lielā Street was highlighted by a round flower bed of pink flowers on the lawn. Along the perimeter of the Rose Square trees and low shrub hedges were planted. There was a cupola on the corner of Landau house around 1914. Interaction of German and Russian cultures resulted in the multi-functional image of Liepāja's center.



Figure 7. The Rose Square. 1911 – 1912 (BCB-2)

### **Liepāja Centre and the Rose Square in the period of the Republic of Latvia**

At the end of World War I, on 18 November, 1918 the independent Latvian Republic was proclaimed. New urban plans were developed meanwhile. Architecture in Latvia grew stylistically more diverse. Modernization trends interchanged and efforts to maintain national identity had been expressed. Searches for a new national style became very significant. The landscape style in the garden art was improved by new elements.

A new visual image adequate for the era had been created for the centre of Liepāja in the 1920s. Trees had been shorn and low hedges highlighted the triangular shape of Rose Square (Figure 7), but the center of the composition, around the electric lantern, was highlighted by a circular rose bed with a walking path (Figure 8).



Figure 8. The Rose Square before 1925 (EH)

The big walking circle was surrounded by hornbeams with shorn leafages. Spaces between trees were filled by benches and *Stammrosen*. The main entrance to the square from Graudu Street was highlighted by flowerbeds on each side of the lane. From Zivju Street a colorful flowerbed on the corner of the square, surrounded by three “balls” of shorn bushes on each side, was seen. Separate pyramidal trees, groups of flowering shrubs and multicolored flower beds in the lawn created a joyful atmosphere.

It is possible that the prominent Latvian garden architect Andrejs Zeidaks (1874 – 1964) was involved in the reconstruction of the Rose Square. He synthesized the landscape and geometrical shapes, thereby creating a specific type of garden, which reflected the nature of Latvia. Plantations of bright blooming perennial flowers, contrasting trees and flowering shrubs were made against the background of a large lawn (Figure 9). Low-sheared and free-growing hedges were popular. Rosaries were enriched by new sorts of roses.



Figure 9. The Rose Square after 1935 (VG)



Figure 10. The Rose Square in the 1930s (LM)



## Results

Creation of the greenery system and landscape in Liepāja was finished by a decorative accent – the Rose Square. Liepāja got a specific symbol – a masterpiece of landscape architecture, typical of each historical period which demonstrated not only the skills of architects and gardeners, but also the town's identity. Until World War I the image of Liepāja multifunctional center was formed by interaction of Russian and German cultures, but in the period of the Republic of Latvia the main motto was sunshine – a symbol of life and joy.

## Conclusions

1. The New Market Square became the main traffic center of motorways in Liepāja. To create an artistically expressive urban environment the best traditions of urban planning practice and transport demands from Europe were followed. Complexes of buildings and public buildings created an architecturally unified building area in the town center.
2. Until World War I the concept of the urban development, including the Rose Square, in Liepāja incorporated the latest achievements and best practices of landscaping. The most typical types of plantings of that time – trees in groups and flower edges, carpet bedding (*Die Teppichgärtnerei*) and arabesques or lawn ornaments, as well as mosaics against the background of the well-tended velvety green grass, were used for creating the visual image of the Rose Square.
3. During the period of the Republic of Latvia the planting concept of the town centre, adequate to the epoch, was developed; it changed the visual and artistic image of the Rose Square. Shorn greens highlighted the geometric shape of planning.
4. In the 1930s the greenery of the Rose Square was supplemented with Latvian accents – multicolored flower beds and beautiful groups of flowering shrubs which made the landscape lively and colorful.

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BCB-2 – The Baltic Central Library, postcard Rose Square. 1911 – 1912.

EH-2 – Postcard collection of Ēriks Hūns, photo Rose Square before 1925.

KB – Map collection of Kiril Bobrov, plan of Liepāja. 1848.

LNB-1 – National Library of Latvia, the cartography material Ktc/122 Plan der Seestadt Libau (Entw. und gez. E. v. Schwarzenfeld: 1:4200) Berlin: Greve, 1887.

LNB-2 – National Library of Latvia, the cartography material plan of Liepāja Kt L1-3/105, 1903.

LNB-3 – National Library of Latvia, the cartography material KtL1-1/51 (Plan von Libau).

LM – Liepāja Museum, postcard collection, postcard Rose Square in the 30<sup>th</sup> of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

VG – Postcard collection of Vera Gubina, photo Rose Square after 1935.



BALTIC LITERARY LANDSCAPES



Rudīte Rinkeviča

## LANDSCAPE IN LATVIAN CHILDREN PROSE OF THE 1930s IN THE CONTEXT OF ESTONIAN AND LITHUANIAN LITERATURE

### *Summary*

*Characteristics of the semiotic of childhood is focused on a particular system of signs providing a possibility of stating typological similarities and differences in Latvian childhood narratives and those of other nations. The most essential semantic components of childhood semiotic and landscape in Latvian children prose are house / home (in the town or country-side), the opposition of civilization and nature, school, book, road, games, mischief, adventure, mystery, a certain system of characters centering on child. The Latvian, Estonian and to some extent also Lithuanian children prose of the 1930s is marked by the opposition of civilization represented by the urban environment and nature (rural environment). Both Latvian and other nations' childhood narrative is characterized by a rather typical, yet diverse as to the expressive means of its depiction, artistic chronotope entailing the depiction of house / home (urban and rural, destructive and harmonious), the opposition of civilization and nature as well as depiction of the poetic space and time of school.*

*Key words: landscape, childhood, Latvian children prose, civilization, nature*

\*

### **Introduction**

Landscape of childhood has been treated as the source of creativity in its general and literary sense both in Latvian and other nations' literature; at the same time, depiction of childhood in fiction depends on the individual experience and artistic awareness of each author. Hence, childhood depiction is an important element of the world model of each writer that is functional for creating the spatial model and the system of characters, making a considerable impact on the ideology of the text. Characteristics of the semiotic of childhood is focused on a particular system of signs providing a possibility of stating typological similarities and differences in Latvian childhood narratives and those of other nations. In this way it is possible to determine and substantiate the poetic principles of childhood depiction in the Latvian prose of the 1920 – 1930s.

The most essential semantic components of childhood semiotic and landscape in Latvian children prose are as follows: house / home (in the town or country-side), the opposition of civilization and nature, school, book, road, games, mischief, adventure, mystery, a certain system of characters centering on child. Their diversity shows that the topic of childhood is not isolated or peripheral; instead it brings together global historical and psychological conceptions of the human that makes the research of childhood semiotic more varied.

## Urban Environment – Rural Environment

The Latvian, Estonian and to some extent also Lithuanian children prose of the 1930s is marked by the opposition of civilization represented by the urban environment and nature (rural environment). Among the stories and narratives dedicated to the topic of childhood, there are just a few texts where town functions as the natural living environment for a child. Many writers were born in the countryside and depict their literary characters in the rural environment. But landscape of the countryside or town is presented as the natural living environment of the child. Besides, notwithstanding the similarity of spatial signs characterizing either the child's natural living environment – the countryside or the artificial one – town, their evaluation still differs; it depends on the narrator's world vision. The important semantic component of the landscape of the countryside and town is a house / home. Especially in the 1930s, under the impact of Positivism in Latvian literature the stabilizing factor and the grounds of statehood were sought in the countryside; therefore rural landscape with a country house in its centre dominates in the depiction of artistic space in the prose dedicated to the topic of childhood.

## Literary Tradition

The system of childhood semiotic of the Latvian prose of the 1920 – 1930s is rooted in the literary tradition that since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century has foregrounded the category of memory as well as the ascertainment of national code (home, fatherland, work, education) essential for the period of the independent national state in Latvia. This was the *interbellum* period when, along with social and political events, the development of literature was determined by ethical factors that find their origin in national folklore and idealization of the past. After the foundation of the Republic of Latvia, especially in the 1930s when Positivism was dominant in Latvian culture, the topic of statehood and land became particularly important along with the return to stable, what may be called Latvian, values that formed a certain canon in the literature of that time. Depiction of country life in the context of the poetics of childhood memories appears also in Latvian autobiographical prose of the 1920 – 1930s: the tradition of autobiographical childhood memory narratives initiated by Jēkabs Zvaigznīte, Doku Atis, Vilis Plūdons, Kārlis Skalbe, Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš and others is carried on by Anna Brigadere in her trilogy *God, Nature, Labour* (*Dievs, daba, darbs*), *God, Nature, Labour* (*Dievs, daba darbs*, 1926); *In Harsh Winds* (*Skarbos vējos*, 1930); *In Stone Cage* (*Akmeņu sprostā*, 1933); Ernests Birznieks-Upīts in his trilogy *Pastariņš' Diary* (*Pastariņa dienasgrāmata*, 1922); *Pastariņš at School* (*Pastariņš skolā*, 1924); *Pastariņš in Life* (*Pastariņš dzīvē*, 1924); Antons Austrīņš in his childhood memory narrative *Lad* (*Puišķans*, 1931), Aspazija in her childhood stories *The Blue Sky in Golden Clouds* (*Zila debess zelta mākoņos*, 1944), *The Blue Sky* (*Zila debess*, 1924); *Golden Clouds* (*Zelta mākoņi*, 1928), Jānis Grīziņš in his story *The Republic of Vārnu Street* (*Vārnu ielas republika*, 1925), that provides a possibility for the authors to express their individuality and transform the subjective reality by poetic elements of Neo-Romanticism.

## The Semiotic System of Childhood

Childhood as a semiotic sign is very essential in the overall system of the creative work by each aforementioned writer and its semantic components draw us closer to the world view of these authors. As the motif of childhood is conceptually important in Jaunsudrabiņš' trilogy *Aija* (part 3 *Winter (Ziema, 1925)*), this novel by Jaunsudrabiņš also fits into the comparative context revealing a completely different vision of childhood as compared to other memory narratives and children's stories.

Jānis Širmanis was the most popular writer of children and adolescent adventure stories in the 1930s; Jaunsudrabiņš also wrote in this genre producing the collection of stories *Little Town-Dwellers (Mazie pilsētnieki, 1928; in 1929 in periodicals, in 1930 – in volume 7 of complete works)*. The topic of childhood was suggested not only by the existing literary tradition; childhood stories were greatly produced as an alternative to the accepted literary canon, as not all of the writers wished to follow the topics accepted or suggested by this canon, i.e. state. Therefore writers sought for alternatives, including those regarding childhood as a phenomenon of human life and fiction. Besides, there was a lack of either original or translated literature for children.

Besides, the semiotic system of childhood that these texts have in common with Latvian prose is represented by a more or less different semantics: Friedebert Tuglas' childhood memory narrative in Estonian literature *Little Illimar* (1937) that was defined by the author as an autobiographical novel, whereas in the Latvian version it was called a childhood story.<sup>1</sup> This context does not entail Lithuanian prose, as childhood memory narrative is not characteristic of the regarded period of time in Lithuanian literature.<sup>2</sup>

The characteristics of the semiotic of childhood, landscape of childhood in the Latvian prose of the 1920 – 1930s in the context of European literature makes it possible to determine the major concepts of childhood narratives and come to the conclusion about the dominance of typological similarities instead of direct borrowings. Typology in the mapped discourse manifests itself in the form of thematic and sign system parallels in childhood depiction in Latvian and other nations' literature that have been affected by diverse factors – historical and social ones, changes in the individual psychology, peculiarities of the national character<sup>3</sup>, etc.

Both Latvian and other nations' childhood narrative is characterized by a rather typical, yet diverse as to the expressive means of its depiction, artistic chronotope entailing the depiction of house / home (urban and rural, destructive and harmonious), the opposition of civilization and nature as well as depiction of the poetic space and time of school. The child's existence in the actual space and time constitutes his or her individual subjective experience; in the same way the forms of depicting the categories of time and space of the artistic world are individual for each writer.

## Civilization – Nature

The Latvian prose of the 1920 – 1930s is marked by the opposition of civilization represented by the urban environment and nature (rural environment). Among the stories and narratives dedicated to the topic of childhood, there are just a few texts where town functions as the natural living environment for a child. Hence, Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš, Ernests Birznieks-Upītis, Anna Brigadere, Antons Austriņš, Kārlis Skalbe, etc. were born

in the country-side and depict their literary characters in the rural environment, marking town either as a *stone cage* (Brigadere) or a place promising new opportunities, where people are ‘smarter’ and life is ‘finer’. Similar opposition of the urban and rural environment is characteristic of F. Tuglas’ childhood narrative *Little Illimar* and Selma Lagerlöf’s collection of stories *Mårbacka* that were also written in the 1920 – 1930s and reveal typological similarities in childhood depiction in Latvian and Nordic literary traditions.

Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš and Jānis Grīziņš, proceeding from their own individual experience, show a different picture of childhood against the background of Riga, its fringes or the *Riga of sands* as Grīziņš calls Grīziņkalns in his story *The Republic of Vārnu Street*. Social contrasts are the uniting element of childhood depictions in the urban and rural environment: the main character in both cases comes from a poor family and in the course of action continuously faces the representatives of the other – more well-to-do – social layer. He or she is gifted, clever, literate and both in the country house and urban apartment reads aloud to illiterate adults. The character’s childhood that has been spent in poverty in each case gets a certain resonance; the character either reconciles with his or her social identity or dreams of breaking away from it.

The contrast of town as the achievement of civilization and the rural environment is represented in childhood narratives in a two-fold manner. Firstly, childhood memory narrative is characterized by a particular plot model where a child from the countryside views town as a totally novel environment; sometimes, but much more seldom, it is vice versa. Secondly, town or countryside is presented as the natural living environment of the child. Besides, notwithstanding the similarity of spatial signs characterizing either the child’s natural living environment – the countryside or the artificial one – town, their evaluation still differs; it depends on the narrator’s world vision.

The opposition of civilization and nature is not characteristic of the regarded German, Russian, French authors’ texts where life in town or city is a part of the characters’ natural life-style, and the urban structuring of space is more directed towards the revelation of the characters’ relations.

## House / Home

The artistic world of the writer may be characterized either as semiotic or metaphorical, its spatial models revealing the portrayal of the human’s inner world and human consciousness.<sup>4</sup> House/home as the space of living is one of the major signs of the childhood space having a particular semantics in Latvian writers’ memory narratives and prose dedicated to the topic of childhood produced in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Urban House / Home – Rural House / Home

The sense of belonging to one’s native place in the geographical context is a distinct marker of childhood in childhood memory narratives of the 1920 – 1930s both in Latvian and Estonian literature; it is related to the formation of the personal and national identity<sup>5</sup>, at the same time revealing a wide historico-cultural panorama of the contemporary epoch (most often it is the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and a psychologically nuanced process of child’s personality formation. Besides, in the 1920s and especially in the 1930s, under the impact of Positivism the stabilizing factor and the grounds of

statehood were sought in the countryside; therefore rural landscape with a country-house in its centre dominates in the depiction of artistic space in the prose dedicated to the topic of childhood.

Childhood in town was comparatively rarely depicted in the Latvian prose of this period. For children living in the town or city, this space is neither destructive nor glorified. It is rather a place of living where the sense of home is related to particular people and a number of attributes of the urban environment. City house – apartment in Latvian childhood narratives mostly performs a more static function – that of a cage or enforced residence, while outside awaits the world full of adventure. In the literatures of other nations, the depiction of city house/home is rather disparate – from ‘my house is my castle’ (Thomas Mann) to house as a specific variation of prison.

### **Destructive – Harmonious House / Home**

The semantic opposition of the rural and urban house / home is not the only peculiarity of the childhood narrative. The sense of childhood is as much determined by the micro-climate of the living environment attributing either harmonious or destructive connotation to the space of the house / home. However, neither urban nor rural Latvian childhood memory narrative is characterized by depicting house / home as a totally destructive space as it is in, e.g. Russian and French literature. In Latvian writers’ texts only some parts of space arouse unpleasant emotions for the child. Acceptance of the home space in child’s consciousness in the literature of the regarded period is indirectly associated both with the tradition of idealizing the past in Baltic literatures and the archetype of fatherland rooted in folklore that puts a special emphasis on the sense of belonging to one’s native land.

### **School**

School has always been a significant factor of representation of the late childhood period (the time when children start their education in the near-by school) in the Latvian childhood stories and memory narratives produced in the 1920 –1930s (Brigade’s *God, Nature, Labour*, Birznieks-Upītis’ *Pastariņš’ Diary*, Aspazija’s *The Blue Sky in Golden Clouds*, Austriņš’ *Puišķans*, some stories by Širmanis); hence, diverse invariants of school occur in these texts. Firstly, the description of school space and principles of its action functions as the historico-cultural background of the characteristics of a particular rural or urban environment. Secondly, the beginning of education for a child character in the text is a significant line of division separating the familiar world, centered around the house / home, from the child’s independent living in the unfamiliar, alien world. School fits into the spatial structure of these stories as a manifold component of childhood entailing the traditionally accepted canons of literary depiction. Thus, school as a spiritual environment providing an opportunity to fulfil one’s thirst for knowledge becomes a major invariant of the image of school in general. The diverse semantic of school reveals several associative components of the concept *school* that are analyzed in this subchapter: 1) child’s way to school, his or her dreams and the pre-conceived perception of school; 2) first emotions gained at school, school as the line of division between the early and



late childhood; 3) school time; 4) spatial realia and the respective non-formal activities of school-children; 5) knowledge acquired; 6) the image of a teacher.

Hence, the concept of school, according to both the Neo-Romantic and realist principles of depiction, is manifold entailing personal, social, and religious aspects that provide an opportunity to construct the late childhood period and reveal the formation of a child's world views in the artistic world picture by the writers.

### Child and Neighbours, Cranks, Eccentrics

The field of communication in childhood narrative is rather wide and some unusual persons may enter the child's field of vision who, firstly, contribute to revealing a panoramic scene of the epoch entailing diverse mentalities, different social groups, including unusual people and eccentrics. Secondly, persons, who are more emphasized against the common background of the character system and brought closer to the child, to a certain degree have made the child's life more unique and facilitated the development of a child's personality. Apart from the image of a teacher, either people of elder generation or cranks from the adults' point of view gain importance in relation to the child who either can or cannot find a common language with children.

Latvian writers have applied the principles of autobiographical writing<sup>6</sup> and created didactic adventure stories in children's literature. The concepts that characterize childhood are also represented in the European literary tradition; in Latvian literature they are attributed a historico-cultural but no destructive connotation. Each childhood narrative is a peculiar national identity code of the people focusing on a child's personality formation.

### Conclusions

Latvian writers have applied the principles of autobiographical writing and created didactic adventures stories in children's literature. Landscape is one of the concepts that characterize childhood. This concept is also represented in the European literary tradition; in Latvian literature it is attributed a historico-cultural but not destructive connotation. Each childhood narrative is a peculiar national identity code of the people focusing on a child's personality formation.

<sup>1</sup> Burima M. Frīdeberta Tuglasi "Mazais Ilīmārs" bērības atmiņu tēlojumu kontekstā. *Letonica* Nr. 17, 2008. – p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Daukste-Silasproģe I. Igaunņu literatūra Latvijā un latviešu valodā. 1900 – 2007. *Latvieši, igauņi un lietuvieši: literārie un kultūras kontakti*. Rīga: Latvijas Universitātes Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2008. – p. 244.

<sup>3</sup> Skultans V. Habitable Identities. *The Testimony of Lives: Narrative and Memory in Post-Soviet Latvia*. Routledge, 1998. – p. 149.

<sup>4</sup> Bormane D. Māja. Mājas dzīves topogrāfijā: ideja un dialogs ar atmiņu. *Atmiņa kultūrvēsturiskā kontekstā* (2). Daugavpils: DU izdevniecība "Saulē", 2002. – pp. 91–92.

<sup>5</sup> Apanavičius R. (ed.) *Ethnic Culture Traditions and Innovations*. Research article collection. Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University, 2004. – pp. 195–196.

<sup>6</sup> Spengemann W. C. *The Forms of Autobiography: Episode in the History of a Literary Genre*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980.

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Inguna Daukste-Silasproģe

## AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE THROUGH THE EYES OF LATVIAN WRITERS

### *Summary*

*When first Latvians started to leave the refugee camps for Australia in 1947, they scarcely had any idea of the country. The first impressions about Australia were formed when they arrived there: 'This land is wild' ('The Extirpated' (Ar saknēm izrautie, 1968) by Elza Ābele); 'Nature here looks so cruel and unyielding. It seems to me that it has no soul' ('Eingana' ('Eingāna', 1973) by Lūcija Bērziņa,); '[...] I don't like this land. [...] Everything here is so unusual, strange, even dangerous' ('New Australians' ('Jaunaustrālieši, 1998) by Richards Kraulis).*

*Latvians regarded the Australian landscape in a detached and disassociate manner; the scenery they saw was strange, unfamiliar and worlds apart from the Latvian landscape which was the only illusory connection with their lost home, land and the loved ones.*

*The Australian landscape is depicted both in prose fiction and poetry. Although landscape description is not a dominant feature of exile literature, but merely used as a means to emphasize the contrast between the native and the foreign, to show the otherness of the new home country, it becomes the background against which the world perception and feelings of Latvians are depicted. Reflection of landscape and its uniqueness in literature adds a new page to the geography of Latvian exile literature.*

*Landscape is depicted as nature and environment (rocks, the blue-green ocean, the outback, flora, especially eucalyptus, Jacaranda blossoms, acacias, oleanders, magnolias, etc. and fauna – kookaburra, opossums, etc.).*

*Compared to the works of other exile writers (USA, Canada, Sweden, Great Britain) Australia is marked by a much stronger denial of the new environment, unfriendliness of the landscape. This alienation was aggravated by the climatic conditions, which were difficult for Europeans.*

*Key-words: landscape, native, foreign, home, exile, Latvian exile literature, Australian flora, Australian fauna, Australian climate conditions, Australian nature*

\*

### **Introduction**

*The Eastern coast of Australia is washed by the Pacific Ocean, the Southern and Western coast – by the Indian Ocean, in the North – surrounded by Australia, Sunda Islands and New Guinea – there is the Arafura Sea,<sup>1</sup> Valdemārs Mežaks described Australia as Terra Australis. In the late 1940s when former displaced persons\* (Latvians*

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\* World War II with the approach of the front and battles on the territory of Latvia in the autumn of 1944 and spring of 1945 influenced the destiny of Latvians. A large part of Latvians

from refugee camps) started to arrive in Australia they had almost no idea of this distant land. It was only seen in coloured promotional booklets and scenic posters in German emigration camps or it was called to mind from geography books. The first real impression was formed upon the arrival to this land. By the 1950s about 22 thousand Latvian refugees immigrated from Germany. For Europeans this new homeland seemed strange. This feeling was increased by the landscape, which was different from their native one. However, landscape is not an abstract idea. It acquires a spatial dimension – one must live in this landscape or peacefully coexist with it. Photographer Mark Robertz considers that landscape forms a bridge between the outer image of nature and its inner essence and meaningful self.<sup>2</sup>

British photographer and practitioner Liz Welles wrote in the introduction of her book *Land Matters. Landscape Photography, Culture and Identity*:

*Representation of land as landscape, whether in romantic or in more topographic modes, reflects and reinforces contemporary political, social and environmental attitudes. This is seated within and influences cultural identity, which can be defined as a complex and fluid articulation of the subjective and collective that draws into play a range of factors such as class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, but is by no means limited to these social formations.*

*Landscape is a social product; particular landscapes tell us something be vistas encompassing both nature and the changes that humans have effected on the natural world. [...] Landscaping involves working with natural phenomena. Environmental interventions anticipate natural change and development: growth of trees and plants; weathering of buildings, furniture, statues; animal behaviour; erosion of the earth by rain, river or seal and so on. [...] Landscape as a genre within visual art shares investigative concerns with geography and feeds into geographic imagination. As has been acknowledged in recent developments in cultural geography, space is rendered into place through representation, the domain of the cartographers and artists, as well as writers and storytellers.*<sup>3</sup>

Professor of English and Art History William J. Thomas Mitchell who investigates landscape from the historical and other perspectives has defined the following ideas:

*[...] landscape is not a genre of art but a medium; landscape is a medium of exchange between the human and the natural, the self and the other; landscape is a natural scene mediated by culture. It is both a represented and presented space, both a signifier and a signified, both a frame and what a frame contains, both a real place and its simulacrum, both a package and the commodity inside the package.*<sup>4</sup>

Landscape as a genre is studied and analyzed more by art and photography theorists, but writers can also give an interesting perspective of landscape; particularly if the described landscape is of a foreign country, attempting to find out which elements of the landscape draw the attention and define the relationship of the newcomer with the new environment. The visual characteristics of the new homeland in literary texts may

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(more than 10% or about 200 000) left for Germany or in small unsafe boats crossed the Baltic sea to Sweden; a smaller number of them went to Denmark, Belgium, Austria. In Germany in refugee camps there was active cultural life in all aspects; concentration of Latvians stimulated the creation of Latvian cultural space. Latvian refugees came together in camps administered by English, American and French authorities (about 300). At the end of the 1940s emigration started to the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Australia and other countries.

turn out attractive and innovative within the limits of national writing. Even though the first impressions of Australia were marked by a denial of this new homeland, Latvian writing in exile was geographically extended. The uniqueness of Australian nature and climate, elements of flora and fauna, new, unprecedented images, phenomena, plants, trees, etc. were directly and indirectly introduced into literary works. Lives and destinies of Latvian people were depicted against the background of this strange landscape.

A sharper picture of the Australian landscape and natural contrasts were drawn by correspondence, notes, diaries, memoirs documenting first years in Australia when Latvians were employed under contract for two years\* in different places of the continent including the fields of sugarcane in subtropics and quarries. These places are marked by absolutely different flora and fauna – for example, the Northern territories are known for their sultriness, snakes and different insects or felling the forest in Queensland – for its subtropical humidity. In these texts the characteristic flora is mentioned – coconut trees, banana trees, bamboos, etc.

From the distance of time the new literary depictions of the setting and landscape have acquired a photographic perspective. Observations are penetrating, cultural, historical and documentary. Australia appears in these descriptions, letters, notes, reflections the way it was seen by Latvian immigrants, its image is now to be found only in old postcards and photographs. The predominantly one-storeyed buildings even in the biggest Australian cities and the primordial descriptions of nature discovered by Latvians on their arrival in this country belong to the past. After the arrival of immigrants Australia accelerated its economic development. As a result the skylines of the big Australian cities are now completely different from those of the end of the 1940s and 50s when they were first seen by Latvian immigrants.

### First Impressions

Latvians came to Australia in the former army troopships from Germany or Italy having spent several weeks in the sea. Ships put in to the shore in Melbourne or Sydney or in Western Australia – Fremantle port. Thus the first impressions of the new homeland were made up by the surroundings of the port. After the tiresome sea-voyage Australia seemed grey, comfortless and denying.

Here are some of the first impressions in chronological order:

The newcomers of the first refugee ship experienced a 'culture shock' – a trip from the port *in old carriages first through the labyrinth of the rusty tin shacks and then across the sun-parched midland of Victoria and to the barracks of Bonegilla Migrant Camp. Then followed gradual sedation, habituation, settling down and getting ready for independent life.*<sup>5</sup> (author Emīls Dēliņš, who later became the publisher and editor of the newspaper *Australian Latvian*, came to Melbourne by the first ship on December 7, 1947)

*We watched inquisitively the distant coast and the hills covered with brownish grass and trees like telephone poles. [...] Now we know, of course, that these were the*

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\* Latvians came to Australia as simple workers. Their previous education and profession in the new land were not so important. Latvians then entered two-year contracts with the Australian Department of Employment.

*shrivelled up trees.*<sup>6</sup> (author Jāzepts Larko, arrived in Australia on May 20, 1949 by ship 'Wooster Victory')

*Low houses were arranged in an endless row along the coast. For me they did not seem like a big city. [...] I was looking through the window for the imagined skyscrapers of Melbourne, but in vain, there was nothing but the low houses in the endless dull vastness. At twilight the train left the city. From time to time a large cactus or an unknown blue-grey tree slid past the window in the dusk.*<sup>7</sup> (author Aleksandrs Gārša, Jr., 1949, Melbourne)

Some other newcomer to Fremantle port remembers that after short formalities they could go ashore. On their way to the immigration camp everybody would look around in silence:

*Everybody was looking through the window to get the first impression of this 'happy land'. Eyes were looking for something familiar, some blossoming tree, green fields, a cow or a sheep grazing in the meadow, but instead there were crippled, grey-green, unfamiliar trees, parched grass and small one-storeyed family houses with red tin roofs which looked like old overgrown russulas.*<sup>8</sup>

Often the first impressions of the new homeland made the newcomers think about the previous life in German camps, disappointed, doubting if their decision to go to Australia was right. Latvian philosopher Pauls Jurevičs wrote:

*[...] the neighbourhood here is so dull, so blank, so poor that my heart wrings with pity. Indeed, about 5/6 of Australia is flat land, most of it is outback but in some places it is slightly covered with grass or shrubbery. [...] Such nature is strange for us especially [...] for its drought. [...] watching the nature, we start to realize that people here lack the tenderness and the spirituality and definitely the lyricism which are aroused in us by emanation from our sweet, inspiring nature. [...] Most Latvians do not like Australian cities either. What is the sense of these absurd, impassable and immense clusters of small houses which make up the majority of Australian cities – be it Sydney or Melbourne, – they are endless – a formless muddle of negligible, depersonalized buildings!*<sup>9</sup>

Writer Jānis Sarma who came to Australia later, in spring 1951, has put down his first impressions in his diary:

*[...] I'm watching the Australian landscape. It has the tenderness of an old age. In the mountains there are rocks worn in the passage of time, they are covered by soil, rounded. This tenderness is intensified by sparse trees with rounded treetops, placid herds of sheep in the fields fenced in by barbed wire, small cows and horses. Farm houses are small, light, playful one-storeyed buildings, closely pressed to the ground, cheerful, cosy, and mainly made of wood.*<sup>10</sup>

Eduards Silkalns remembers that for Latvian immigrants Australia seemed an odd country: *summer in winter and winter in summer, trees that do not shed foliage but shed bark instead, the crescent moon with both sharp horns upwards, and in addition the strange placenames.*<sup>11</sup>

Latvians were distanced, alienated from the Australian landscape, it was foreign and extraordinary for them, so different from the Latvian landscape which was the only connection with the lost home, motherland and kinsmen.



## Australian Landscape through the Fences of Migrant Camps

An essential part of the depiction of the Australian landscape is the so called description of migrant camps. They are next impressions after those of the surroundings of the port. Having found themselves in another camp, a closed area right after German migrant camps Latvians started to have a distanced view of the landscape of the new homeland. Immigrants were first put on the train, later on buses and taken deeper into the continent to migrant camps in Bonegilla, Bathurst, Greta and other places.

*Stones and sheep were the same colour of grey, indistinguishable. Eucalypts were looming frozen into the landscape like white specters with their gnarled, bony arms pointing at the sky. Elsewhere – just black shrivelled up trunks.*<sup>12</sup>

The camps were arranged in the former army barracks, the territory was enclosed by fences. A different landscape of Australia was seen through these fences which separated the immigrants from the new world symbolically. Before the eyes of immigrants the world outside the camp fence was grey. Yet the 'colours' of impressions were dependent on the season when the person arrived in the new homeland. They had to spend several months in migrant camps.

Bonegilla camp (about 350 km from Melbourne) was situated close to the Murray river, in the distance one could see the mountain tops:

*Nature, unusual as it was, was extremely beautiful, wattles were blooming everywhere and many-coloured birds were flying around and singing in the whole gamut of tones. The most musical were the songs of Australian magpies – as if coming from magic whistles. We were cheered up by the nervous laughter of kookaburra. We walked in the interesting neighbourhood of Bonegilla and the great Hume Dam behind which lofty mountains with snowy peaks were rising.*<sup>13</sup>

Writer Sarma was staying in this camp for a short time. He wrote in his diary:

*There are lovely sunsets and sunrises. When the sun is setting, the mountains become softly purple, when the sun rises, the sky above the mountains is very beautiful. The sun shines into our door and window and I have the opportunity to watch it every morning. Some mornings are like sweet water colours.*<sup>14</sup>

Bathurst camp (about 130 miles to the West from Sydney) was arranged not far from the Blue Mountains. The only colours in the life of immigrants were brought in by the new landscape behind the fence:

*[...] the sky is incredibly blue. Streaks of clouds high in the sky, illuminated by the sun, were seen in violet and yellow contrast unsurpassed by any banal postcard. This was a kind and reassuring smile of the new land to the sulky and depressed souls.*<sup>15</sup>

In Queensland and Greta the migrant camps were also arranged in a former military camp. Writer Mintauts Eglitis and his family arrived there; he later said:

*In Australia, in Greta camp I enjoyed the serene mornings, the peculiar skyline of the Blue Mountains on the horizon and the screeching of Australian magpies.*<sup>16</sup>

In her novel *The Extirpated* (*Ar saknēm izrautie*, 1968), Rūta Elza Ābele writes:

*When after having been annoyingly tossed by the sea for weeks she and other newcomers went ashore and changed for a special immigrant train, the carriages*

*rushed jolting across endless plains with eucalypts and pale grass and nothing else. In the camp Rūta heard the voices of unknown birds as if rumbling a small pipe-organ.<sup>17</sup>*

Another unprecedented feature, even a historical ‘novelty’ in the Australian landscape which appeared with the arrival of immigrants from Europe was the tent cities. They emerged around construction sites all over Australia where houses were under construction or renovation. It was a temporary solution to accommodation of the immigrants:

*If one has to travel a long way in Australia, they often put up tents or even tent cities and now there are lots of our people living in such tent cities. [...] Tents are different. In some tents one person lives in each end, but in the middle there is a corridor where the two inhabitants cook their meals. Other tents are meant for one person. The winter frost is followed by the summer swelter when the roof of the tent is heated by the sun and every tree with its shadow and every cloud seems like a dear friend. This time is coming because right now it is winter in Australia – the most difficult time for those who live in tents.<sup>18</sup>*

Beyond the fenced territory of the migrant camp there was a completely different world. Anna in Lūcija Bērziņa’s novel *Eingāna* observes the might of Australian landscape:

*This mighty landscape which emanated incredible beauty did not display any signs of being inhabited. [...] There were only rocks, woods and loneliness.<sup>19</sup>*

Another type of landscape depiction in literary texts and notes is made up by observations while living in different Australian cities. Thus the rural landscape is replaced by the urban one.

## The Urban Landscapes of Big Cities

Latvians have documented the development of Australia in their memoirs, notes, letters, diaries and fiction. Along with the numerous immigrants from other nations since the 1940s and 50s Latvians have witnessed and participated in the construction of new railroads and houses, in transition from low-rise buildings to the engineering of skyscrapers, the construction of new bridges and cultural buildings, planning of gardens and parks, etc. Today, when we read these notes, it is possible to return visually to the Australia of those days when Latvians first arrived there. With the help of these notes, albeit they were subjective, it is possible to understand better (or at least to try to do it) that place and situation. The time of war, refugees and migrant camps was over. Yet Latvians still had pain about their lost homes and relatives, destroyed families and years spent in forced idleness.

Notes and observations describe Australian cities of that time through the eyes of Latvians. Brisbane, a city on the Pacific coast and the administrative centre of the state of Queensland, is captured by the Latvian writer Andrejs Ikstens:

*The entire city is located upon a hundred or thousand small and high hills. From above one can see a broader picture and the amount of colours, mainly red and green, gives a picturesque pleasure to the eye. It is a beautiful and unforgettable sight; however, for the people from the Northern hemisphere it is very unusual.<sup>20</sup>*

*Sydney* also seemed to be closely pressed to the ground. Every four or five storeyed building stood out among all other small houses. At that time – forty-five years ago – Sydney was not yet that beautiful, majestic city of today. The high and mighty skyscrapers were not towering side by side making the streets look like narrow dark gorges. [...] Many many years ago when our ship was passing the coast of Sydney there was no trace of all this wealth, joy of life, beauty and might. There was only the low coastline of the port, the sad nature and anxiety about our future,<sup>21</sup> Lūcija Bērziņa recollected after many years in exile.

*Canberra* – the capital city of Australia – how much surprise it had in store for us! The railway station where we arrived was a small wooden shack and Canberra itself seemed like a broadly dispersed small town with the house of parliament, slightly bigger government premises and three shopping centres. The dwelling houses in some suburbs were surrounded by beautiful gardens and the streets were planted with trees. Elsewhere there were small houses and small gardens and I found only one apartment house in the main street. And a few hotels and dormitories,<sup>22</sup> some newcomer remembered. Latvian immigrants compared Canberra to Bavarian resorts. Here men had planted oaks, limes, white birches, asp, maples and these trees let people feel the passage of seasons.

A poetic and associative description of *Melbourne*, where many Latvians lived, is given by Emīls Dēliņš:

*If you drop a piece of Valdemāra street in the middle of Smārde plain, scatter a handful of Anņīmuiža family houses, replace limetrees by palmtrees but birches by eucalypts and wrap it all up in a humid and rainy shroud of clouds: maybe then you will have captured a piece of Melbourne. [...] Melbourne is the farthest Southern point of European spirit, this is why Latvians do not yet have to compete with the speed of the New world for it has not yet pushed out the romance of the Victorian age.*<sup>23</sup>

*Adelaide*, on the Atlantic coast is called the Southern queen, the city of gardens and almond blossoms. *Adelaide is a beautiful and clean city where the climate is suitable for Europeans, that is why it attracts people. Latvians from other places in Australia also come here,*<sup>24</sup> Roberts Dambītis admits. The writer and young scientist Kārlis Ābele reveals his impressions:

*Adelaide is rich in bright colours – neon illuminated signs, rich exotic flowers, bright sunsets. [...] The territory of Adelaide was huge, so was the distance, and very serious lack of apartments. In the mountains near Adelaide there are many birches, maples and oaks. However, they seem to be strangers here.*<sup>25</sup>

## An Outline of Australian Landscape

Australian landscape is outlined both in prose fiction and poetry. Although landscape is not a dominant element and rather belongs to the field of denied otherness which is so indicative of the situation of exile marked by the contrast between one's own and the foreign, landscape serves as a background against which Latvian vision of the world and feelings in this distant land are revealed. Compared to the works of other Latvian writers in exile (USA, Canada, Sweden, Great Britain) Australia is notable for a greater denial of the new environment, unfriendliness of the landscape. Alienation was amplified by the climatic conditions which seemed absurd for Europeans.

Landscape is revealed through the elements of nature (rocks, mountains, bay, blue-green ocean, outback), fauna (especially eucalypts, the purple-blue blossoms of jacaranda, cypress trees, acacias, oleanders, magnolias, almond trees, camellias, fig trees and others); and flora (the laughing bird kookaburras, opossums, Australian magpies, black swans, koalas, kangaroos and others). The depiction of the environment itself – rural or urban landscape – is also essential.

For instance, the newcomers witness the beauty of the blossoming almond trees:

*[...] having covered the grey of their bodies with super white or tenderly pink blossoms they were happily reaching against the incredibly blue sky.*<sup>26</sup>

*When acacias were blossoming, in the old mountains someone had scattered gold by the armfuls. The trees were bringing up their blossoms against the bright blue sky, blossoms alone, no branch was visible under the fluffy golden beads and fringe which seemed like made of the finest silk. One could only see it in nature – on a broken branch these blossoms were fresh only for a short while.*<sup>27</sup>

There are different landscapes – the **first impressions** about Melbourne, Sydney or Perth as seaports with their mainly low-rise wooden buildings, country look, dusty streets, etc. This landscape is shown mainly negatively, emphasizing its foreign nature. Later when Latvians lived in the biggest Australian cities, they looked at Australian nature more ungrudgingly and with admiration their eyes rested upon the magnificence of nature when the unique, unusual trees blossom: the coral tree with its intertwined branches looking like red flaming firebirds, the radiant poinsettias and the special brightness of the blue sky which cannot be seen in Europe.

### Some Emphatic Elements of Landscape

The roots of Latvian world outlook and life perception are related to the rural environment. It is vitally important to be able to merge with the nature, to identify themselves with it and to be able to draw strength from the soil, regenerate from this strength, walking barefoot in the grass. Inability to see nature as something close and congenial and apprehension that here, in Australia, nature is indifferent towards people makes the relationship with nature complicated in this new homeland. *Fawn-coloured hill, grey stones among the sparse eucalypts.*<sup>28</sup> The course of life of Latvians as farmers and cultivators of land was harmonized with the processes in nature. But in the new homeland man had to adapt to the sun because it determined all life and not land. Another conspicuous contrast emerging in the Australian landscape was that the land was not green, but it was yellow-brown, parched by the sun and this created a feeling that nature has no life. Writers and poets and Latvians in general are looking for the common features of landscape in Latvia and Australia but what they have found is the dramatic differences. Daina Šķēle in her short story *In a Foreign Land* (*Svešā zemē*) has described the following scene:

*In Western Australia a morning in May does not come with the scent of grass and humming of bees as it is in the old world – in Europe. The morning can be dank and foggy even though later the dew disappears and white butterflies are hovering among the chrysanthemums. Everything is green because the first autumn rains have come with the abundance of weeds.*<sup>29</sup>

Observations of nature and Australian seasons depicted in literary texts clearly show that Latvians distance themselves from the new environment, not being able to identify themselves with the new place.

**Land** in spring (which is European autumn) is *not black but utterly red like rust*<sup>30</sup>. Australian spring creates the autumn feeling in the newcomers because it does not promise that nature will be green, growing, blossoming; birds do not sing, they caw in strange voices. *The neighbouring farm is over there, its orange garden reminds of an apple garden. [...] Those eucalypts look like pine trees in the evening sun.*<sup>31</sup>

Bērziņa in her novel *Eingāna* writes: *I'm unhappy that I've come to this continent. [...] Nature looks so cruel, so obstinate here. I think nature here has no soul.*<sup>32</sup>

*Ground was red-brown, cracked from the heat, and the grass wedging from this ground was different from that in my home land. [...] On the first evening I was looking at the sky too. The stars were grouped in a different way than in the Northern hemisphere but what sense does it make? Great Bear or Southern Cross – all of them were stars.*<sup>33</sup>

Iza's impressions about the new land in the novel *New Australians (Jaunaustriēši)* by Richards Kraulis are the following:

*[...] I don't like this land. [...] Everything here is so unusual, strange, even dangerous. Look – there are trees around but are they really green? They are all grey, as if covered with dust, without the freshness of summer, without life. Look – many trees have entirely black trunks, like burned, and the shrivelled up branches reach at the sky gloomily like bones bleached in the sun. And grass – do we call it grass? Grass is green in summer, but this grass is brown like straw! Everything here lacks freshness and life. Have you heard here any birds singing? No, there are no songbirds!*<sup>34</sup>

Another observation by a university teacher Ozols:

*This land is a desert, [...] and these houses remind me of Pĥre Lachaise Cemetery in Paris. There too everybody has their own small place behind the fence and decorated with specially grown greenery and flowers. [...] No green grass, no shady trees. Only the dry, hard eucalypts.*<sup>35</sup>

Forest in Australia also seems different from the native forest. *Forests were high in the Australian Alps and did not look like the forests of our motherland. The hill-sides and cliffs were dizzyingly steep, trees – evergreen giants which, when withered away, kept standing reaching their branches like arms to the sky, white knotty branches like the fingers of a skeleton.*<sup>36</sup>

The other was intensified by the different seasons, especially during the Christmas – the sultriest time of the year in Australia. Some observations of seasons are surprising. *The most beautiful is springtime. Summer has a fiery harshness. But winter is like a long grey October day by the retery.*<sup>37</sup>

*There is no real winter in Australia. Roses are blooming all year round. In the North, near to Darwin, there is no difference in seasons, but in the South Latvians celebrate St. John's day 'in winter'. Christmas comes during the sultriest time of the year when all – men and trees have lost their shadow... Springtime in South Australia comes with the scent of almond blossoms.*<sup>38</sup>

The attitude of Latvians towards the Australian landscape is characterized by several vivid elements. They are powerful, alluring and admirable – eucalypts, the sea, the ocean, mountains and the sky.

### Eucalypts

Almost everybody who has portrayed Australian nature as a background to describe the feelings of Latvians in the new homeland has especially dwelt on the description of eucalypts. Eucalypts highlight the contrastive character of Australian nature because eucalypts are also quite contrasting – they seem powerful to look at from the distance, green and with seemingly soft leaves, with their bark peeled off. Eucalypts for the eyes of Europeans appear strange, most beautiful in twilight – with their sparse, fan-like branches reaching to the sky.

Anna's observations in Bērziņa's novel *Eingāna* are the following:

*The blue-grey eucalypts which had covered the mountain slopes from the distance looked like soft blue-green moss. What a mirage! How can the dry, hard eucalypts look so velvety soft? In the forested highlands the long dark blue shadows were competing in the beauty of colours with the sun-lit golden tree-tops.<sup>39</sup>*

The naked branches of eucalypts without leaves look like bones, they reach for the sky dead and gloomy:

*A young eucalypt nearby is flapping its long narrow leaves, is shedding its bark in dry strips, under the old bark the new trunk seems tender, moist, light, spotty, greenish and light yellow. [...] In Australia one has to wonder often about the resistance of life, about how much can be endured in nature. Once you see the forest after fire – everything black, just ashes. [...] several weeks later the same place surprises so much that someone who does not know must exclaim 'It's not true! It can't be!'<sup>40</sup>*

Rūta in the novel *The Extirpated* (*Ar saknēm izrautie*) by Elza Ābele is surprised by eucalypts – with tall, light and smooth trunks. *It seemed to Rūta that their skin has been peeled off – like alder in the Northern hemisphere when one is making a whistle from its skin.<sup>41</sup>*

### Sea

The sea and the ocean are most fascinating elements of the Australian landscape with their primordial force, majesty, colour. A newcomer may look at the sea and think: *how can it be that the sea looks alive enjoying its own colours, serenity... Whereas the land behind us is grey, colourless. With bated breath it is waiting for the moment to attack someone.<sup>42</sup>* The waves are blue-green like the wings of birds. The sea as the element of landscape is revealed in Latvian poetry too and symbolizes majesty and freedom.

### Mountains

Immigrants from Latvia look upon the nature of Australia through the eyes of Europeans and compare the new landscape to their native land. They admire the mighty mountains, which *emerge in their major power, bare reaching to the blue sky, as grey as eternity<sup>43</sup>*, the same mountains which for the native Australians is just a place to go out on a picnic.

When the sun is setting the mountains look purple, a short while later the mountains *blaze up like a bright red flower changing the colour from fiery red to carmine bluish.*



*Against the background of the dark purple mountains and the blazing sky emerged some black laborious silhouettes of eucalypts as if drawn by a Japanese painter. Never before in her life Anna had seen such colours in nature. What an incredibly beautiful sunset. So dramatic! So unrealistic!*<sup>44</sup> *The old mountains, the old mountains! Such beauty, but also such indifference!*<sup>45</sup>; *The sun was setting behind the jagged mountain tops.*<sup>46</sup>

Looking at the majesty of Australian nature, the newcomers were seized by the feeling of triviality and futility of their own being and *bitterness towards the wild mountains and the evergreen gigantic trees.*<sup>47</sup>

### The Sky

Many have noticed the special beauty of the Australian sky. One cannot see this kind of sky anywhere else in the world; *and the sky incredibly blue. Streaks of clouds high in the sky, illuminated by the sun, were seen in violet and yellow contrast unsurpassed by any banal postcard. This was a kind and reassuring smile of the new land to the sulky and depressed souls.*<sup>48</sup> Erna Ķikure sees the sky as blue as the sea. Yet this blueness is often associated with bleakness but not with warmth.

Colour is a very important element of landscape; Australian summer has especially bright and unusual colours – red, purple, yellow, white and the incredibly blue of the sky.

### The Australian Landscape through the Eyes of Painters

Another means of seeing the Australian landscape is the works of art, which have been created in this land. Landscape is depicted in paintings, graphic art, drawings, sketches. In brief, several literary works have painters as characters. For example, in the novel *A Game Without Rules* (*Rotaļa bez noteikumiem*, 1968) by Jānis Sarma, painter Luize Laugale paints palm trees, eucalypts, the ocean coast, *further away a red sunparched lawn was seen and eucalypts with sparse foliage.*<sup>49</sup> The eyes of a painter are sensitive towards the abundance of colours in the Australian landscape. For example, painter Ludmilla Meilerte who arrived in Australia on February 13, 1948 says:

*It was the warmest time of the year and maybe because of that the sun seemed to me incredibly bright but the ground – parched. Yellow, brown and red tones dominated everywhere. I was watching the nature and thinking that I should paint it all.*<sup>50</sup>

She compared the sky in Europe with that in Australia; the Australian sky without a single cloud had no appeal for her. She was travelling from Grayland temporary migrant camp to Bonegilla and was watching the landscape outside – the Central Australian desert:

*[...] the upper layer of the ground reaches endlessly, it is red, sparsely covered with eucalypts which have a slightly similar form and size as apple-trees in our native land. There is no low grass in the desert but only separate clumps of grass in silvery tone. Peculiar albeit strange scenes.*<sup>51</sup>

Meilerte comparatively acknowledges: *Australia is as golden as Europe green*<sup>52</sup>.

## The Australian Landscape through the Eyes of Visitors (other Latvians)

Another aspect is how visitors from other home countries see Australia. The first visitor was poet Andrejs Eglītis from Sweden in 1956. He cannot find anything sincere, congenial to Latvia – *There is nothing dear, there are no friends among flowers, plants, birds and waters. The grey Latvian stem of grass would reveal a much dearer and deeper world. [...] Flowers here surround me with bloody and extravagantly purple colours. [...] The highways, plains and cliffs have black capturing queer eucalypt fingers.*<sup>53</sup>

However, these were not the dominating impressions. Generally, when Australia was visited in the 1970s and 80s by Latvians from the USA, Canada, Sweden and other countries, they enjoyed the unusual nature, the landscape, trees, birds and animals. They were fascinated by the originality and nature of Australia. They also gave up the habit of comparing the native land with the new homeland. The visiting Latvians admired the huge eucalypts, the blossoming trees, the brilliant blue of the sky and the ocean, they were interested in the unique animals and the voices of the outlandish birds. Those who had lived there already for years had already got used to the foreign country and had distanced themselves from the strange landscape. They were trying to cultivate their own – Latvian landscape in their own courtyard.

## Conclusions

The newcomers were interested in the Australian nature, flora and fauna. Peculiarity of nature encouraged this interest but Latvians usually compared it with the Latvian nature and as a result were disappointed:

*Australian nature is rich. It seems that the creator has been generous with bright colours and imagination to embellish the nature. [...] In vain we will look for shadow in a thick eucalypt forest because their branches are sparse and leaves are narrow. It is not pleasant to lie down in the thick green grass like we used to do at home, it is safer to find a bare hard rock to avoid being stung by an insect. [...] Australia is rocky, this is why it is heated up quickly and in the evening it cools as quickly. Australian coast is jagged; the deep and winding bays make good natural ports. The centre of the continent is wild and bare, there are such places where man has never set his foot. The continent is inhabited along the coast and close to the natural waters. [...] Australia has different climatic zones ranging from tropical to temperate climate.*<sup>54</sup>

In general the nature of the new homeland creates the feeling of alienation because it cannot offer any similarities with the Latvian nature. Literary characters in the short story by Erna Ķikure acknowledge the following: *It was October – spring. The bush along the road was filled with the voices of birds – caws, laughter, whistle, ringing*<sup>55</sup>; *there is no spring. [...] The everlasting summer hot and dry or cool and humid... Eternal verdant growth, sad like eternal death*<sup>56</sup>; *there are no meadows with flowers, [...] only pasture.*<sup>57</sup>

In other home countries nature and impressions were not so alienated. Latvian writers depict the Australian landscape in a different way – the background, the poetic portrayal of nature, the mentioning of separate inherent details are characteristic of

Australia. Like in other countries where Latvians cultivated their own homes and gardens they added to the local flora to remind illusively the landscape of the native land. In Australia there were apple trees and birches in their court yards side by side with orange trees, white oleanders and almond trees. In fiction sometimes only separate natural phenomena, mentioning of flora or fauna indicate that the literary texts have been written outside Latvia. The characteristic phenomena of the depicted country are like signs. In literature it is obvious that the landscapes (the native and the foreign one) tend to overlap and merge.

The Australian landscape drawn by the Latvian writers has acquired a cultural and historical significance, it is a fixation and documentation of the environment, epoch, place, natural and landscape elements. Landscape becomes an intermediary for Latvians who are looking for their place in the new homeland Australia and its society. This is a quest for one's own identity which takes place through the seemingly foreign and unknown.

<sup>1</sup> Mežaks V. Terra Australis. *Viesis* Nr. 1, 1954. – p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Robertz M. *Landschaft. Entdeckung – Wahrnehmung – Wirkung. Essays*. Nordestedt: GRIIN Verlag, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Wells L. Introduction. *Land Matter. Landscape Photography, Culture and Identity*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Mitchell W. J. T (ed.) *Landscape and Power*. Second edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2002. – p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> E. D. [Emīls, Dēliņš]. Pirms 40 gadiem uz Austrāliju. *Austrālijas Latvietis* Nr. 1901 (30. okt.), 1987. – p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Larko J. Pirmie soļi Austrālijas krastā. *Stipnieks G. (red.) Kanberas latviešu saime. Piecdesmit gadi. 1947 – 1997*. Kanbera: Kanberas LB izdevums, 1998. – p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Gārša A. Ar zābakiem uz Austrāliju. *Laiks* (ASV) Nr. 10 (5./11. marts), 2011. – p. 12.

<sup>8</sup> Titmanis Z. Pirmie divi gadi Austrālijā. *Pertas Latviešu centrs 1972 – 1994*. Perta, 1994. – p. 33.

<sup>9</sup> Jurevičs P. Austrālijas perspektīvas. *Priedītis A. (red.) Latvieši Austrālijā*. Melburna: apgāds Austra, 1953. – p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> RMM. *Jāņa Sarmas kolekcija. Rokraksti. Dienasgrāmata*. Inv. nr. 587132. Datējums: Melburna, 1951. g. 24. aprīlis

<sup>11</sup> Silkalns E. *Dienu zaglis*. Rīga: Pētergailis, 2003. – p. 21.

<sup>12</sup> Plaudis A. *Kliedziens naktī*. Vesterosa: Ziemeļblāzma, 1975. – p. 49.

<sup>13</sup> Gārša A. Ar zābakiem uz Austrāliju. *Laiks* (ASV) Nr. 11 (12./18. marts), 2011. – p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> RMM. *Jāņa Sarmas kolekcija. Rokraksti. Dienasgrāmata*. Inv. nr. 587132. Datējums: Bonegillā, 1951. g. 5. maijs.

<sup>15</sup> Plaudis A. *Kliedziens naktī*. Vesterosa: Ziemeļblāzma, 1975. – p. 56.

<sup>16</sup> Zariņš A. Ar sālsmaizi pie Mintauta Egliša. *Latvju Žurnāls* (ASV) Nr. 14, [1952]. – p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> Ābele E. *Ar saknēm izrautie*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1968. – p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Šmits A. Cilvēki teltīs un pie kamīniem. Mūsu speciālkorespondenta vēstule “Latvijai” no Austrālijas. *Latvija* (Vācija) Nr. 81. (10. aug.), 1949. – p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Bērziņa L. *Eingāna*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1973. – p. 61.

<sup>20</sup> Iksens A. Cukura un gaļas zemē. *Priedītis A. (red.) Latvieši Austrālijā*. Melburna: apgāds Austra, 1953. – p. 73.

<sup>21</sup> Bērziņa L. *Ko tu man gribēji teikt, Dienvidu zeme? Atmiņu skicējumi*. Rīga: Elpa, 1997. – pp. 11–12.

<sup>22</sup> Sjuarte (Lāne) V. Ar pirmo transportu uz Kanberu. *Stipnieks G. (red.) Kanberas latviešu saime. Piecdesmit gadi 1947 – 1997*. Kanbera: Kanberas LB izdevums, 1998. – p. 7.

- <sup>23</sup> Dēliņš E. Romantika miljonu pilsētā. *Latvija* (Vācija) Nr. 50 (5. jūl.), 1950. – p. 3.
- <sup>24</sup> Dambītis R. Brauc 2000 jūdzes, lai redzētu bērzus. Vēstule no Adelaides. *Latvija* (Vācija) Nr. 5 (17. janv.), 1951. – p. 3.
- <sup>25</sup> Ābele K. Viss spilgtās krāsās. *Latvija* (Vācija) Nr. 50 (5. jūl.), 1950. – p. 3.
- <sup>26</sup> Ābele E. *Ar saknēm izrautie*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1968. – p. 141.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid. – p. 99.
- <sup>28</sup> Plaudis A. *Kliedziens naktī*. Vesterosa: Ziemeļblāzma, 1975. – p. 48.
- <sup>29</sup> Šķēle D. *Te un tur: īstāsti*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1979. – p. 18.
- <sup>30</sup> Kraulis R. *Jaunaustrieši*. Rīga: Junda, 1998. – p. 46.
- <sup>31</sup> Ķikure E. *Mūsu kaimiņš*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1962. – p. 61.
- <sup>32</sup> Bērziņa L. *Eingāna*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1973. – p. 14.
- <sup>33</sup> Ābele E. *Ar saknēm izrautie*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1968. – p. 20.
- <sup>34</sup> Kraulis R. *Jaunaustrieši*. Rīga: Junda, 1998. – p. 91.
- <sup>35</sup> Ābele E. *Ar saknēm izrautie*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1968. – p. 12.
- <sup>36</sup> Neboisa A. Uguns orchidejas. *Neboisa, Aina. Laikmeta drupas*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1963. – p. 10.
- <sup>37</sup> ZA FB RK 9710. Artura Plauža fonds. 01943/11 Arturs Plaudis – Pāvilam Klānam 1968. g. 31. oktobris.
- <sup>38</sup> Mežaks V. Terra Australis. *Viesis* Nr. 1, 1954. – p. 16.
- <sup>39</sup> Bērziņa L. *Eingāna*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1973. – p. 28.
- <sup>40</sup> Ķikure E. *Mājas un ceļi: izlase*. LaRas Grāmatu klubs, 1996. – p. 242.
- <sup>41</sup> Ābele E. *Ar saknēm izrautie*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1968. – p. 98.
- <sup>42</sup> Bērziņa L. *Eingāna*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1973. – p. 123.
- <sup>43</sup> Ābele E. *Ar saknēm izrautie*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1968. – p. 33.
- <sup>44</sup> Bērziņa L. *Eingāna*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1973. – p. 29.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid. – p. 28.
- <sup>46</sup> Neboisa A. Uguns orchidejas. *Neboisa, Aina. Laikmeta drupas*. Sidneja: Salas apgāds, 1963. – p. 7.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid. – p. 9.
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Oksana Komarova

## EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE AND MEMORY IN SKAIDRĪTE ANDERSONE'S SKETCH BOOK FRAGRANT TRACES

### Summary

*The present article is dedicated to the analysis of the childhood memory sketch book 'Fragrant Traces' ('Smaržīgās pēdas') written by the biologist Skaidrīte Andersone (b. 1926) and published in 1974 in the publishing house 'Liesma', Riga. The given work has received no systemic study in the context of Latvian childhood narrative so far. The article is focused on the system of artistic signs produced by the author that creates a unified construct of memory space in readers' perception, in other words, participates in the formation of the artistic image or emotional landscape of the world of childhood. On the one hand, the sketch book obviously manifests the canon of depicting the world of childhood that was established in Latvian literature in the period from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century till the 1920 – 1930s (with such markers as the patriarchal life model, aesthetic rural landscape, the sacred positioning of the topos of house, bond with nature, etc.); on the other hand, it manifests the individual searching of the author and the artistic peculiarity of her writing (fragmented character, lack of a unified narrative position, the prevalence and subtle synthesis of sensual and visual codes, breach of stereotypes, emphases and attributes characteristic of a biologist). Andersone's book is also enriched with the ethnographic and historico-cultural material as well as the mythic dimension that marks it as a potential object for further interdisciplinary research.*

*Key-words: emotional landscape, memory space, childhood, memory sketch, narrative, sensual code*

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Skaidrīte Andersone (born on 14 September 1926 in Gaitinieki homestead of Kosa civil parish) is a biologist, she graduated from Latvia State University, Faculty of Biology in 1953 and in 1956 she completed her doctoral studies at the same university. There is scarce information about her work at Daugavpils Teacher Training Institute where she held an academic position, in Forestry department and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Neither is it certain what exactly motivated this scholar to become a writer and take up the tradition of childhood memory narrative in particular. Her literary debut was in 1966 when her poem *Asp Tops (Apšu galotnes)*, dedicated to nature, was first published in *Rural Life (Lauku Dzīve)*<sup>2</sup>. After two years a text of similar subject matter *The Sick Fir-Tree (Slimā egle)* appeared in *Literature and Art (Literatūra un Māksla)*<sup>3</sup> where the first fragment of her prose book *The Bath-house (Pirts)* was published in 1969<sup>4</sup>. There were rather numerous publications of the same type in the paper *Literature and Art* and the literary journal *Banner (Karogs)* in the 1970s (10 works in total)<sup>5</sup>, while in the 1980 – 1990s



just some brief news of the writer can be traced in press. The biologist and university teacher who came forth as a writer and then soon faded away from the scene of writing incites interest in her fate epitomized by the book that seems to be worth our attention.

The French philosopher, aestheticist and the researcher of psychology of creation, Gaston Bachelard (1884 – 1962) considers that a poetic image does not exist as a direct echo of the past but specifies that the distant past addresses us through the ‘flash’ of an image. This gives rise to a rich polyphony of sounds, the origin of which as well as the conditions of its loss are not clearly identifiable.<sup>6</sup> Pennsylvania University professor Anne Whiston Spirn specifies that *Landscapes were the first human texts, read before the invention of other signs and symbols*<sup>7</sup>. Architecture and design researcher Richard P. Gabriel in one of his literary essays notes the following:

*Landscape is not limited to physical setting but includes people, events, ideas, concepts, principles, words, works, and just about anything subject to memory. Because experience is filtered through memory, memory becomes landscape.*<sup>8</sup>

The Australian National University professor Ken Taylor defines a landscape as a *cultural construct, a mirror of our memories and myths encored with meaning which can be read and interpreted*<sup>9</sup>. According to all these theories, Skaidrite Andersone’s book *Fragrant Traces* (published in a separate edition in 1974)<sup>10</sup>, in essence *a static text*, can be analysed as a *nerve centre of [...] personal and collective memories*<sup>11</sup>, in other words, artistic and emotional landscape, represented in the nationally and historically specific manner. It makes use of a vast array of artistic means of depicting the scenes of childhood, however, the sensual and visual world perception is dominant in it. The codes of colour, scent, sound and touch that coexist in a close interaction organically supplementing each other, help the author create a maximally attractive and at the same time ‘lively’ landscape of Vidzeme rural homestead that is positioned by the author as a product of the past (childhood) memories. Proceeding from the established tradition of Latvian childhood memory narratives by Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš, Antons Austriņš, Anna Brigadere and possibly others, the writer produces a monolith design of the rural microcosm, which is undoubtedly centred on rural homestead – *one of the most important semiotic components of childhood*<sup>12</sup> – and various outbuildings (bath-house, threshing barn, cattle-shed, etc.) with precisely specified paraphernalia and their functional application. However, this is not an isolated environment in fact. The open character of the homestead is revealed by the nature realia closer or more distant from it (garden, forest, the eddy of the river Amata, the river Dzirkstupe cove meadows, Bernāta groves, etc.) as well as the spatial marking of separate regions of Latvia (Riga, the town of Cēsis, Latgale). Thus, in a rather traditional manner the bond of rural people and nature is expressed, conveying the cyclical character of the rural labour based on the distinct change of seasons and the opportunities of communication outside the homestead with neighbours, odd people, people of other ethnicities and nations. However, against the background of other authors, Andersone’s sketch book stands out with some essential factors that provoke a more careful study of this text:

1) **Lack of a unified narrative position** that is testified to by the variations of temporal designations (*then*<sup>13</sup>, *I remember*<sup>14</sup>, *now*<sup>15</sup>, *in childhood*<sup>16</sup>, *when I am still a small and curious poop*<sup>17</sup> and finally a fragment that identifies a particular historical period – *Back in the twenties Rudzīšu Ķīpars gave hay and clover to mow half-in-half but now*

in the thirties – where can you find anything like that<sup>18</sup>, as well as signs representing various time periods (civil war in Spain, *uradnik*, electricity, cars, etc.).

2) **Specific genre.** The book *Fragrant Traces* contains seven independent thematic parts (they are mostly available in periodicals) that are united by the space of action, a stable system of characters (father, mother, two daughters and granny) and the narrator (Andersone at different age and in different roles – a child, adolescent, a writer). Thematically these fragments are introduced by the descriptions of the central spaces of childhood (*Bath-house, Barn*), work done and season peculiarities (*Flax, Summer Reflections, The Time of the Big Stars and the Bright Moon*), animals (*Animal Creatures*) and fatal incidents (*Funeral at the Time of Dead Souls*). In fact, every part is perceived separately, disregarding the sequence suggested in the book that makes it flexible and mobile in perception.

3) **The ethnographic component.** Andersone's book provides a vast array of Vidzeme ethnographic and folklore materials that calls for a special study. They include: a) folk song and rhyme texts that are performed at various everyday life situations (thanksgiving words in the bath-house, fire words, songs by the spinning-wheel, words of bolting, songs of night-herdsmen, bequests for shearing sheep, songs after bathing piglets, when cooking porridge, sitting by the table, mimics of sacred rhymes with a comic content, etc.); b) the culinary details characteristic of the author's native region (specifically cooked peas, milk porridge of Vidzeme, the ritual of baking bread, etc.); c) the results of nature observation (for instance, the signs warning of a snow storm); d) practical advice in housework (e.g., washing linen) and agriculture (nuances of shearing sheep, stretching the cloth, etc.); e) riddles (about horse), beliefs (a pinch of hay brought with a new horse will surely bring luck) and rituals (spanking children, sweeping the yard, *so that garbage would not pierce the feet and eyes of the deity Laima when she walks across the yard on Saturday night*<sup>19</sup>, the detailed and humorous description of the procedure of fortune-telling). Granny is the main gatherer of the folk wisdom in the book and she represents the sacred and the spiritual realm. At the same time the impact of the author's life experience is present as well and she willingly shares it with the reader.

4) **The mythic dimension.** In this regard the neighbours' stories of the bet in the barrelhouse and the stolen graveyard cross are to be mentioned along with the description of the death of the crazy foreman and the misdeeds of devils. Andersone's sketches depict the merman whom the granny surprisingly ran into and later related this encounter in great detail; the small girl Skaidrite starts a dialogue with the spirit of the barn and they talk in dream; gradually the girl learns about the mystical forest spirit and Grieta who lives in the well; she hears stories of the old woman who pretended dead but then became alive and similar information that certainly enriches and makes livelier the author's narration.

5) **Breaking stereotypes.** First, this happens in the extended description of the trip to Latgale. The region on the whole is marked as a 'deep' province but it is noted that it is best for buying horses. For this reason Skaidrite's mother makes a trip to Latgale accompanied by the neighbour carpenter Frīcis Rauss. Both travellers are surprised by the hospitality of Latgalians and their peculiar cuisine, they are enraptured by the Latgalian craft masterpieces (pillows, necklaces, wood carvings), the peculiar religion and

cults worshipped by Latgalians (the image of Virgin Mary) as well as opportunities of recreation and entertainment (horse sledge races on the ice of Latgalian lakes). The only negative feature in their perception is the rashness of the local men who get engaged in a fight observed by the guests from Vidzeme with fear. It is noteworthy that against the background of the vivid depiction of Latgale, the accustomed images of Cēsis and Riga appear so unimpressive: it is noted once that Saldumu Milija works in the capital city while in Cēsis there is the nearest vet, but names of other towns are not even mentioned in the book.

Another significant tendency is the depiction of Roma people in *Fragrant Traces*. In Latvian literature of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century they often are depicted with a negative connotation, the word 'Roma' featuring a thief, vagabond, loafer, a stupid person without a stable place of living and occupation who is actively involved in comic situations (a distinct example of this is Pērsietis' play *Destroyed International Wedding* (*Izjauktas starptautiskās precības*)). Andersone breaks this stereotype in her sketch book. In the artistic world of her book Roma people never appear as a distinctly alien nation. When characterizing these people the author repeatedly uses the word *our own*, justifying her view with scenes of friendly relations between both nations (barter of commodities, advice in buying horses and grooming them, etc.). In *Fragrant Traces* Roma people do not cheat and steal, they even tell the fortune only to the landlady of the neighbouring homestead who is known as a well-to-do and not a very clever woman. The problem of money as such does not exist either because [...] *they* [Roma – O. K.] *have bought land and houses in Kurzeme – they have taken up economy and given up their vagabond lifestyle*<sup>20</sup>.

6) **Sensual code.** Returning to the idea expressed in the introduction of the present article about the range of the means of depicting emotional rural landscape used by Andersone, it must be noted that each of them may be deciphered both individually and in close correlation to others.

Quantitatively the most popular code in the book is odour (this is encoded in the title of the book – *Fragrant Traces*). Nature recurrently appears in the narrative as a direct and powerful source of odour: trees and shrubs growing near the house (lilac, fragrant shrubs, May roses, bird-cherry-tree, maple, etc.), the new crops and the freshly mown hay, even fog and forest that come from the outside. Such descriptions often surprise with their poetic character and a certain prose rhythm, e.g., [...] *the odour of maturity comes from the fields across the mellow green meadow aftergrass with soft steps into the yards of homes*<sup>21</sup>. The gallery of objects with pleasant odour entails the houses and outhouses (the white scent of the bath-house and blue fragrant smoke, the pleasant odour of swabs/brooms; the house smelling like a barley flat cake; the barn that smells of fresh smoke and autumn, etc.), cattle (there is no bad odour coming from the horse in the stable<sup>22</sup>) and food (the aromatic butter, yellow-green maple honey). The symbolism of the odour of bread is especially emphasized in the sketches – it most directly expresses the very essence of the native home and homeland:

*When the bread is baking, the kitchen is flooded by the odour of rye bread that is better than all the delicacies of the world; when the bread is taken out of the oven, this odour goes all over the house and the yard.*

[Maizei cepoties, virtuvē ieplūst ne ar kādiem pasaules gardumiem nesalīdzināmā rudzu rupjmaizes smarža, kas, maizi no krāsns laukā velkot, izstaigā pa visu māju un pagalmu. Tā ir smarža aicinātāja: mājas un dzimtenes smarža.<sup>23</sup>]

The odours of people depicted in the book vary. Skaidrīte's mother is characterized as more fragrant than all the meadow flowers<sup>24</sup>, it is also noted that the sister's hair glows and smells like summer<sup>25</sup>. At the same time there is also the fierce and salty odour of sweat – the epitome of hard labour that the rural people do as well as disgusting stench that are associated in child's consciousness with some elderly people (Pilipa Jānis, etc.). It is noteworthy that sometimes odour helps distance oneself from the harsh reality, find long cherished peace and happiness, yet this idyll is destroyed by the fading dream-like mirage:

[...] *last night I [Vāliņš – O. K.] saw such a light dream: imagine, it is the peak of mowing clover. Everything smells of withering clover and wild bee honey. Clover – thick as a wall and high as a fence. [...] the old woman gave a punch in my side and croaked: 'Will you get out of bed? How long are you going to sleep? [...] I got up slowly and heavily. [...] Neither do I see what kerchief my wife is wearing at work nor do I feel the odour of clover. Fatigue is breaking my bones. [...] The fierce and salty stench of sweat. And myself like stunned – lifting and lifting.*

[...] *pagājušo nakti es (Vāliņš – O. K.) redzēju tādu gaišu sapni: iedomājies, pats āboliņa plaujas laiks. Viss smaržo pēc vīstoša āboliņa un zemes bišu medus. Āboliņš – biezs kā siena un augsts kā žogs. [...] vecene ieģrūda dunku sānos un noķēra: "Vai velsies no gultas laukā? Cik ilgi gulēsi? [...]" Cēlos augšā smagi un gausi. [...] Ne es darbā redzu, kāds sievai lakatiņš, ne jūtu, kā smaržo āboliņš. Nogurums kaulus lauž. [...] Sviedru smaka asa un sāļa. Un pats kā apdullis – cel un cel<sup>26</sup>.*

Touch is no less important indicator of emotional childhood landscape in the book and through it the heroine communicates with the surrounding world trying to make sense of it. In this respect, the epithet 'warm' is an especially efficient tool in the narrative: the feet of Circenis (a nickname given to the heroine by her father, meaning 'cricket') sink into the soil which is *warm and soft as a down*<sup>27</sup>, warm is raining outside, the granny's face radiates warm light, warm breath is coming from horse's nostrils, etc. Similarly positive emotions arise when the girl sees the light brown and slick flax-seeds, horse's delicate lips, caress of water as well as the touch of the trees by the old bath house that trigger off a range of associations and memories. Significantly, Skaidrīte relies much more on touch, whereas taste is alluded to rather rarely in the narrative (sour cranberry juice, the taste of berries in winter and some other examples).

Sound is the third sensual code by frequency that occurs in the analysed narratives. Here as well nature is the main source, personifications entailing both the representatives of flora and fauna. Hence, the rural landscape of Vidzeme is enlivened by cock-crow and bird clamour, every now and then songs of mole crickets and pig grunt are heard and this symphony is supplemented by tree talk and flax bells, while the climax of sound is reached in snow-storm that roars like a beast<sup>28</sup>. Human made sounds are blended acoustically with the world of nature: the song of a spinning wheel, the rash voices of scythes, the high pitched, melodious tune of hackle, and finally the songs performed by granny that introduce a sense of harmony in the reality depicted by Andersone.

It must be noted that a wide range of colours are used in the book, yet as compared to other devices, colour has been attributed a functionally secondary status, i.e., in most cases colour semantics is revealed in synthesis with the above mentioned codes in more extended descriptions of spaces and events. For instance, in the description of the fire:

*In a dark autumn night when the wind roars fuse with the heavy hiss of the drenched trees and glowing showers of rain wash buildings, in the windows and the yard of Gaitas signalling alarm glazes of trembling flames flare up like huge red sheets lifted off by the storm. [...].*

[Tumšā rudens naktī, kad vēja auri saplūst ar pielijušo koku smago šņākšanu un blāzmainas lietus šaltis skalojas ap ēkām, Gaitu logos un pagalmā, trauksmi vēstot, uzpland drebošu liesmu blāzmas kā vētras vaļā palaisti milzīgi, sarkani palagi. [...].<sup>29</sup>]

It must be added that the above-mentioned tendency is manifested as consequently also in the author's other publications in periodicals where the interaction of the artistic codes is clearly revealed even within one paragraph. A brief example from the sketch *The Thames* (*Temza*) published in *Karogs* in 1979:

*Talsi is a nice town in Kurzeme that in springs, bathing in the white of cherry-tree and apple-tree blossoms, the odour of bird-cherry-trees and lilacs, adorns itself with tulip and narcissus flowers but in summertime it is surrounded and filled with the green of the bushy trees raising round waves above the house roofs.*

[Talsi ir jauka Kurzemes pilsētiņa, kas pavasaros, ķiršu un ābeļziedu baltumā, ievu un mēļu ceriņu smaržās slikdama, tulpju un narcīšu ziediem rotājas, bet vasarās tai kuplo koku zaļums apkārt un cauri aug, apaļus viļņus pār namu jumtiem cel-dams.<sup>30</sup>]

The tradition of childhood memory narrative that started in Latvian literature in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was logically continued by Andersone's book *Fragrant Traces* published in 1974 that has received no serious attention so far. On the one hand, it demonstrates the formal and thematic stability of the given genre, in other words, it belongs to a certain canon of Latvian childhood narrative, on the other, it reveals the author's individual style and the features of the artistic evolution of Latvian auto-documentary prose. This is mainly manifested in the close synthesis of the sensual and visual codes (odour, touch, colour, sound, etc.) and a flexible narrative structure that is enriched by the ethnographical specificity of the author's native region and its historico-cultural panorama, often with a mythical tinge. Hence, by combining all mentioned technics in a united artistic system – a book –, a 'lively' and emotional landscape of Vidzeme rural homestead of the 1920 – 1930s is produced as a combination of the author's childhood expressions and memories. Hopefully, in future Andersone's writing will attract not only the attention of literary scholars but also linguists, culture historians and ethnographers.

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<sup>2</sup> Andersone S. Apšu galotnes. *Lauku Dzīve* Nr. 8, 1966. – p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Andersone S. Slimā egle. *Literatūra un Māksla* Nr. 10, 1968. – p. 8.



- <sup>4</sup> Andersone S. Pirts. *Literatūra un Māksla* Nr. 37, 1969. – pp. 5–6.
- <sup>5</sup> Some examples: Andersone S. Zirgi. *Literatūra un Māksla* Nr. 32, 1970. – pp. 6–7. Andersone S. Lini. *Literatūra un Māksla* Nr. 9, 1970. – pp. 10–12. Andersone S. Bēres veļu laikā. *Karogs* Nr. 6, 1971. – pp. 73–89.
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- <sup>13</sup> Andersone S. *Smaržīgās pēdas. Atmiņu tēlojumi*. Rīga: Liesma, 1974. – p. 5.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. – p. 6.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid. – p. 8.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid. – p. 79.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid. – p. 110.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. – p. 20.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid. – p. 13.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid. – p. 117.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid. – p. 62.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid. – p. 134.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid. – p. 96.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid. – p. 27.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid. – pp. 40–41.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid. – p. 31.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid. – p. 92.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid. – p. 128.
- <sup>30</sup> Andersone S. Temza. *Karogs* Nr. 5, 1979. – p. 56.

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Zanda Gūtmane

## THE REPRESENTATION OF THE BORDERLAND IN THE BALTIC PROSE AT THE TURN OF THE 1990s

### *Summary*

*The aim of the research paper is to deal with the significant tendency of the Baltic prose of the late 1980s and early 1990s when it is possible to talk about the representation of the Baltic cultural landscape as the embodiment of the Borderland concept and the borderline situation in the social politics and cultural life of this region.*

*Some prose texts of Latvian (Aivars Tarvids 'Transgressor' ('Robežpārkāpējs', 1990)), Lithuanian (Ričardas Gavelis 'The Poker in Vilnius' (Vilniaus pokeris, 1989)) and Estonian writers (Emil Tode (Tõnu Õnnepalu) 'Border State' ('Piiririik', 1993)) demonstrate too sharply the Borderland concept as a very complicated and dramatic one because the problem of the physical and spiritual freedom has become more acute. The research objective of the paper is to examine in what way the Baltic authors reveal: 1) the landscape as a representative of social, political and historical processes; 2) the border zone of the physical and spiritual freedom, attempts to cross the spiritual or physical borders and to move to a new place, encounter with others and life after border crossing as a new border position. The prevailing idea of these texts manifest that getting free from the physical or external borders does not guarantee spiritual or internal release.*

*The conceptual basis for this research comes from postcolonial theory and comparative literature methodology.*

*Key-words: Borderland concept, novels of liminality, mind colonization, Bildungsroman*

\*

### **Introduction**

Just with the beginning of the Third Awakening in the Baltic culture it is possible to talk about a new paradigm formation. The end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s is the time when the Baltic States regained their independence and it was also the paradigm shift or the borderline in the literature of these countries. In general, changes in the Baltic socio-political and cultural landscape may well be described using the Borderland concept.

The situation in the Baltic region during that period has been accurately described in the holistic, cross-disciplinary study *The Baltic Sea Region. Cultures, Politics, Societies:*

*During the last decade of the twentieth century the Baltic Sea region witnessed many changes in political and social constellations which had existed in Europe since the end of World War II. In the 1990s regional actors received an unprecedented chance in modern history of defining the region according to new categories*

*and new paradigms. These were different from those of a geopolitically frozen area clearly divided between two military, ideological and economic blocks. [...] This induced the construction of new cultural and spatial awareness.*<sup>1</sup>

As we know, the culture and literature are the ways of expressing our feelings, ideas, and worldview. Charles Westin, when describing the Baltic landscapes and their inhabitants in the chapter *The Cultural Landscape. History, Culture and Language* of the mentioned textbook on the Baltic region, emphasises the most basic component of culture – the Latin word *cultura* means primarily ‘cultivation of soil’, in this case cultivation of the landscape. In defining the concept of region and its landscapes, he has pointed out, that *two classes of criteria are employed: the physical factors of geography, climate or natural resources; and the social phenomena of culture, economics or government. For a region must not only have a geographical framework.*<sup>2</sup>

For this reason we can talk about literature as the embodiment of the cultural landscape essence and we can conclude that the Baltic prose texts at the late 1980s and early 1990s clearly demonstrate the borderline situation in the social political and cultural life of this region, including the individual’s inner world landscape. The literary texts we can analyse as the area in which historical process and feeling of cultural landscape are registered as the subjective consciousness of individuals in society.

### **Common Characteristics of the Baltic Prose in the Late 1980s and Early 1990s**

The prose that appeared during this time is the witness of the political liminality situation: it reflects the society’s mood and model of behaviour, living during the decline of the Soviet system and the beginning of the independence; thus living in the interspaces of two generally different systems. It is interesting that the very events (the singing revolution, rapid political collisions, euphoria of the independence restoration) are hardly reflected in the prose. The tendencies of *writing back* and *re-writing* are present in the prose much more. Turning to further and not so far past occurs within these tendencies: firstly, it is an explosive and quantitative upsurge of the memoir literature where the experience of the withheld and tragic repressions is revealed. This experience is transformed in a simple, traditionally realistic expression and in most of the cases these compositions are left in a documentary narrative form. Secondly, there appears a reflective, essay type prose where the attention is paid to the soviet / post soviet human being’s identity issues, the conditions of the identity formation, creation and changes.

In both cases the narrative prospects are directed backwards, in both cases the determined borderlines of the soviet regime are trespassed: the history is re-written through an individual’s prism, the life stories, which were forbidden and withheld before, are being told now, a traumatic experience is shown. In both cases the literary composition is one of the catalysts of the political changes: the awareness of a tragic experience is psychologically necessary for the nation’s further development. However, the philosophically reflective prose helps us become aware of the identity problems. The paper deals with just this part of prose, to the reflective, essay type and bold prose which tends to go beyond all the borderlines marked before.

When talking about the narrative formation of reflective prose compositions, the synthesis of modernist and postmodernist methods have to be mentioned. It is possible here to speak about the so called *borderline discourse* that Gerhard Hoffmann in his research *From Modernism to Postmodernism* has described as a kind of writing which places itself on the border between fiction and criticism, the border between the narrated situation and the reflection on that situation.<sup>3</sup>

Several Baltic writers of younger generation join in the mentioned *borderline discourse*. During the turn of the 1980s and 1990s in Estonia there appeared the so called ‘new, bold literature’, its representatives Mati Unt, Viivi Luik, Emil Tode, in Lithuania the threesome of the writers – Jurgis Kunčinas, Jurga Ivanauskaitė, Ričardas Gavelis, in Latvia – the ‘angry girls’ Andra Neiburga, Rudīte Kalpiņa, Gundega Repše and one author whose composition has remained an unprecedented case in the history of Latvian literature, the writer and publicist Aivars Tarvids.

### **Novels as the Embodiment of Borderland Concept in the Postcolonial Perspective**

It is possible to distinguish three novels from this prose tendency which has become a kind of a border phenomenon in the national literature context and which can be described as the embodiment of Borderland concept. They are the novels by the Lithuanian author Ričardas Gavelis *The Poker in Vilnius* (1989), Latvian author Aivars Tarvids *Transgressor* (1990) and Estonian writer Emil Tode *Border State* (1993).

When Tarvids’ composition was published, it became an event in Latvian culture space, but in comparison with the Lithuanian and Estonian provocative pieces of work, which more or less have managed to overcome the national hermetic thinking, the *Transgressor* did not cause an international echo. The most essential reason of that is the novel’s abutment with journalism and also placards and schématisme. In Latvian literature Tarvids’ novel sums up and closes the wave of the ‘new’, ‘angry’ and the so called ‘black’ prose, but it becomes an unconnected phenomenon till the middle of the 1990s<sup>4</sup> and even the beginning of the new millennium when Latvian writers turned to identity issues and the reassessment of recent past. Gavelis is called the foremost literary chronicler of the postcolonial condition in Lithuania<sup>5</sup>, and now Tode is considered to be the discoverer of the postcolonial situation<sup>6</sup>. In comparison with Lithuanian and Estonian colleagues Tarvids’ work has not been assessed from the point of view of postcolonial critique.

Apart from the fact that postcolonial studies traditionally are devoted to studying the European colonization consequences, the term Baltic postcolonialism has become stronger. David Chioni Moore in his wide-ranging article *Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique* was the first who argued that *it should be clear that the term ‘postcolonial,’ and everything that goes with it – language, economy, politics, resistance, liberation and its hangover – might reasonably be applied to the formerly Russo- and Soviet-controlled regions post-1989 and post-1991, just as it has been applied to South Asia post-1947 or Africa post-1958.*<sup>7</sup> Baltic postcolonialism scholars in the West and now the theorists from the Baltic States also recognize that a discussion is needed about the recent soviet history of the Baltics in

these terms. The opinion that it is possible and fruitful to extend the boundaries of the postcolonial studies paradigm to cover the literatures of post-communist countries becomes more popular. This would help elaborate a general comparative framework for post-communist literary studies<sup>8</sup>. The book on Baltic postcolonialism, edited by Violeta Kelertas, proves the possibilities of this methodology, where the Baltic scholars examine postcolonial conditions in the culture as well as other questions, like the search for a new identity in literary texts. The editor of this collection describes the postcolonial methodology as a fresh opportunity how we can express, discuss and analyse our experience as a new form of talk.<sup>9</sup> In the Baltic prose context it is possible to notice a productive approach to postcolonialism, so more philosophical meaning denoting a space or position beyond colonialism yet inextricably linked to it.<sup>10</sup>

The three mentioned Baltic prose compositions can be described as the novels of liminality<sup>11</sup>, which is a typical postcolonial prose variety. The novels' protagonists can be called the borderline situation heroes, for they are trying to get released from the so called 'colonization of the mind' (as Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o named it in his study *Decolonizing the Mind* (1986)) or 'the captive mind' (as Czeslaw Milosz named it in his essay *The Captive Mind* (1953)). Ngugi wa Thiong'o explains that *economic and political control can never be complete without mental control*<sup>12</sup>. The authors of the first major theoretical account of postcolonial texts and their relation to the larger issues of postcolonial culture *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) point out:

*More than three-quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism. It is easy to see how important this has been in the political and economic spheres, but its general influence on the perceptual frameworks of contemporary peoples is often less evident. Literature offers one of the most important ways in which these new perceptions are expressed and it is in their writing, and through other arts such as painting, sculpture, music, and dance that the day-to-day realities experienced by colonized peoples have been most powerfully encoded and so profoundly influential.*<sup>13</sup>

The mind colonization is performed by the help of education and culture, the colonized ones are integrated into the colonizers or other culture and history gradually, they accept this other identity, thus also thinking and language. The Estonian scholar Epp Annus points out that the experience of oppression has become a part of the national identity of the Baltic people, as the identity is formed in relation to the other, which is generally considered to be superior.<sup>14</sup> In the Baltic case inhabitants' attitude to the other is complicated and different from the European colonization model. Kelertas describes it as a changing and unstable sense of superiority in the article *Perceptions of the Self and the Other in Lithuanian Postcolonial Fiction*.<sup>15</sup> This is a specific feature of Baltic colonialism comparing with the models of Anglo-Franco colonisation. Despite this fact the Baltic people are characterized as typical hybrid postcolonial subjects.

Such hybrids are the protagonists of Gavelis, Tarvids and Tode's novels. The development objective of protagonists is to get free from the mind colonization, to break the disturbing physical and mental borders.

Gavelis' structurally complicated novel *The Poker in Vilnius* demonstrates the depressive mood which has inspired the awakening. It shows the intellectual's tragedy inside the soviet system, reveals the search for mental freedom without leaving the

captivity space. In Gavelis' novel a strong opposition is made against both the totalitarian power representatives (who are called *They* in the novel) and the mind colonization victims. These hybrid postcolonial subjects are called in the novel *homo sovieticus* and *homo lithuanicus*. One of the narrators, Vitautas Vargalis does not include himself in the group, so he has kept the illusions about the possibility of mental nonconformity. He gets into the so called inner emigration. However, this opposition does not come true in the surrounding world. Resisting the totalitarian power for a long time (which in the novel is impersonated in *Their* image), the individual also destroys his own system of values gradually. The individual 'I' becomes 'their' victim. In the novel the fact that the Georgian philosopher *Merab Mamardashvili* was very sure is proved: it is not possible to work and think *through the looking glass* or inside the absurdity world, it is important to get out of it.<sup>16</sup>

Such 'getting out' attempts are shown in Tarvids' novel. The protagonist of Tarvids' novel is a doctor depressed by the soviet system who leaves Latvia, tries to escape from his past and approaches the future which is full of hopes. As noted by Epp Annus in the article *The Problem of Soviet Colonialism in the Baltics*, Soviet colonialism created a fictional fantasy space – an idealized Western world as opposed to Soviet oppression which is full of happiness and joy.<sup>17</sup> The system has created a free world – 'out there', and the protagonist of Tarvids' novel believes it.

The narrative is made by the hero's reflections about the recent past life in the soviet space and future possibilities. The hero of Tarvids' novel looks at the whole society with cynicism and treats both the soviet officials and the members of the singing revolution in a sarcastic way. He is aware the nation of today will be inappropriate for future. He rejects the past and does not believe in future, he has got no illusions towards himself either. Using Gavelis' attributes Tarvids' hero himself is a real *homo sovieticus*, and he is well aware of it. Tarvids' hero represents an individual who has experienced a cultural bomb effect, as it is called by the theoretician Ngugi Wa Thiong'o:

*The effect of the cultural bomb is to annihilate people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from the wasteland.*<sup>18</sup>

The hero of Tarvids' novel is on the way, thus in uncertainty, movement, inter-space between the past and future, between two different systems. Being on the way marks a borderline, this has to be crossed not only physically but also mentally. Neither staying in his country nor in emigration can eliminate the existence of the border, as the hero admits, *the border is high and inviolable, one can say, it is nearly as absolutely safe as the distant wall [...]*<sup>19</sup> (here the Berlin Wall is meant). The trespasser's dreamt up freedom ideal breaks as a soap bubble in the novel. The hero is pretty aware that the limiting cage of his personal freedom is not only the frame erected by the system but also the construction that has been rooted in the mind. Tarvids breaks the illusion that the change of the place could solve the problems of the individual crippled during the soviet regime automatically.

Gavelis' and Tarvids' novels have in common first of all the fact that the heroes' reflections possess a strong negative power. The long suspended insult, nihilism, anger,



even aggression are directed against the system where the people have been forced to live during the soviet regime. This negative pathos in literature is also one of the witnesses of the socio-political changes, it proves that at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s the Baltic region was undergoing a social explosion. The second feature that is common to both novels is the choice of lexicon, where the destructive aspect of the world has been emphasized. It is possible to notice a maximal language profanity in the heroes' expressions and stream of consciousness, there is a lot of speech simplicity, Russification and slang. In order to depict the things and phenomena concentrated dark colours are mainly used, the metaphors and comparisons are chosen to confirm the decay, and everything that is physiological and extremely profane is emphasized. Due to the language of *homo sovieticus*, distortion of one's own language, gradual acceptance of the colonizer's language and depreciation of values are revealed. Literary critic Guntis Berelis admits that the *Transgressor* is in a certain way a unique work in Latvian literature, for *the language existence in a real situation* is shown in it, *the ideological slang*<sup>20</sup> formed by the socialist system. Tarvids' novel exceeds the borders of the previous literary traditions not only because of the openness but also because of the language usage.

Other methods of narrative are common in the Estonian writer Tode's novel *Border State*, it is characterized by a laconic, clear form and the choice of homogeneous narrative methods. In comparison with Gavelis' and Tarvids' work Tode's composition is much more poetic and there is no profanity. Apart from the different narrative Tode's novel merges into the mentioned threesome, for the feelings which follow after the border crossing and loss of the fatherland are revealed strongly there. Tode's hero is basically a cosmopolitan traveller, an individual who considers the change of domicile as a way of his inner problem solution.

His reflections about the recent past and present feelings reveal precisely the Eastern European human being's complicated self-feeling at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The narrator's psychological discomfort and the sharpened identity crisis reflect huge complexes of the post soviet society parts trying to integrate into the European space. The hero like thousands of others feels a strange nostalgia full of dislike for the lost fatherland and is forced to admit his alienation from the Old Europe. Although the national border has formally been abolished, the mental border still exists.

In the novel there are depicted extreme feelings of a person who has left his fatherland such as hopes, sorrow, incredulity and nostalgia, which is in a way similar to balancing on the border and searching for the balance. It is a continuous hope to see the border, *where the real world has to begin*<sup>21</sup>, and an inevitable disappointment when it is not there.

The three mentioned Baltic prose compositions can be described as the modifications of the traditional *Bildungsroman*. As Tobias Boes points out in his study *Modernist Studies and the Bildungsroman: A Historical Survey of Critical Trends*, the term '*Bildungsroman*', or '*novel of formation*', remains at once one of the most successful and one of the most vexed contributions that German letters have made to the international vocabulary of literary studies<sup>22</sup>. The researcher refers to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of 1910 with the first English occurrence of the term, which then quickly entered into more common usage as a handy designation for any novel that has the formative years or spiritual education of one person as its main theme.<sup>23</sup> Exploring the history of

*Bildungsroman* tradition, he has concluded that *the rise of feminist, post-colonial and minority studies during the 1980s and 90s led to an expansion of the traditional 'Bildungsroman' definition; the genre was broadened to include coming-of-age narratives that bear only cursory resemblance to nineteenth-century European models*<sup>24</sup>. A similar research approach is used in the investigations by the Estonian scholar Piret Peiker, for example, *Legitimacy and Fluidity: Central European Narratives of Personhood*, where she has focused on the genre of *Bildungsroman* and its development in Central Europe. She has shown that the Central European *Bildungsroman* is in some aspects quite different from its West European models and that both in its structure and motifs actually more resemble the formation of *Bildungsroman* outside Europe in the so called postcolonial world<sup>25</sup>.

According to the tradition of *Bildungsroman*, the protagonists of the Baltic writers' novels are outsiders who dissent in the surrounding world. They start the initiation, but do not complete it, for they are real border situation figures. Their identity is unstable and flowing; split, self-destruction, black-and-white thinking are common to it, it is subjugated to fast changes of mood and sudden impulses. The protagonists' disability to implement the initiation confirms also the other researchers' (for example Peiker's) conclusion:

*In the postcolonial world, such a completed Bildung is almost impossible, since the heroes must seek their identities in milieus that have no stability and consistency, but are split between different sets of values, or in constant flux.*<sup>26</sup>

Development is not possible because of the mind colonization, and release is possible only within several generations.

## Conclusion

The investigation of the reflective, essay type Baltic prose, using novels of liminality, *Poker in Vilnius* by Ričardas Gavelis, *Transgressor* by Aivars Tarvids and *Border State* by Emil Tode as examples, reveals us the miserable situation of post-soviet human beings as postcolonial subjects at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: wherever their choice, they feel fatally stamped, lost their ability for a positive approach in life, they are also insecure and tense inwardly. In the postcolonial situation the development (*Bildung*) is not possible, for the hero as if gets stranded in the development stage and cannot get out of it. So often the protagonists of novels of liminality consciously or unconsciously choose to cross the border between life and death.

In general, the representation of an individual's inner world landscape as a society living space mirror in the Baltic prose at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is very pessimistic. The mentioned prose texts show that the Baltic countries and the Baltic people at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are in the borderline situation between the past and the future. For this reason a discussion is needed about the recent Baltic soviet history and soviet/post-soviet literature using postcolonial criticism methodology.

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- <sup>3</sup> Hoffmann G. *From Modernism to Postmodernism. Concepts and Strategies of Postmodern American Fiction*. Amsterdam – New-York: Rodopi, 2005. – p. 188.
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- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> Peiker P. *Legitimacy and Fluidity: Central European Narratives of Personhood*. [http://users.ox.ac.uk/~oaces/conference/papers/Piret\\_Peiker.pdf](http://users.ox.ac.uk/~oaces/conference/papers/Piret_Peiker.pdf) (accessed 2013).
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Ilze Kačāne

## LANDSCAPE OF SELF-IDENTITY IN GUNDEGA REPŠE'S NARRATIVE *OTHER DISCIPLES*

### *Summary*

*Landscape as the subject of academic concern has been important since the 1960 – 1970s. Yet only in the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, having realized that due to the people's destructive powers they are not considered as a part of nature and landscape is not seen as the cultural construct, active polylogue among environmental scientists, geographers, cultural geographers, psychologists, representatives of the Humanities, etc. started. Contrary to the concept of space which is the so called 'where' category within the setting, landscape is mainly associated with outdoor scenery of rural or urban environment.*

*Latvian writer, literary critic and publicist Gundega Repše (born in 1960) represents the 'young and angry' generation of the original literati of the 1980s. Her high-quality artistic works, basically representing women's writing, are significant in the changing process of the literary paradigm in the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s as well as in the recent inconsistent, changeable and dynamic culture situation.*

*In 2009, the publishing house 'Dienas Grāmata' released Repše's collection 'Stories about Disciples' ('Stāsti par mācekļiem') comprising eight works of short prose. The narrative titled 'Other Disciples' ('Citi mācekļi') is outlined against the background of other stories by a striking introduction of colourful American landscape, the Grand Canyon in particular, that can be viewed in the autobiographical context. The journey brings the main characters of the story into the deepness of the real space – the Grand Canyon, as well as into the deepest layers of human's awareness and subconscious as the road down into the Canyon carries through several layers of the self. In the text, the landscape is important not only as one of the spatial structures for revealing the action; it has been deliberately used as the core of the story, i.e., the thematic stronghold and symbolic representation of the literary characters' originality and their search of the self. Landscape operates on the human's sense of the self, on individual (gender) and national identity. Thus, the landscape in Repše's work is both aesthetically idealized, i.e., artful, and functional, i.e., symbolic.*

*Key words: landscape, wilderness, the Grand Canyon, journey, self-identity, feminine, memory*

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[..] one man says, There goes God with an army of banners, and  
 another man, Who is God and why? who am I  
 and why?  
 He told himself, This may be  
 something else than what I  
 see when I look – how do I  
 know? For each man sees him-  
 self in the Grand Canyon –  
 each one makes his own Canyon  
 before he comes, each one brings  
 and carries away his own Canyon –  
 who knows? and how do I know?<sup>1</sup>

From America's earliest discovery it has been viewed as a very concrete reality to be transformed from wilderness and shaped into the land similar to a garden. Till the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the American landscape is of common knowledge uniting professionals, literate and half-literate peasants in modelling the land in particular American way – *one which owes much to Europe but which is crucially inflected by the material reality of the American wilderness and the special form of its social formation.*<sup>2</sup> Alongside with the growth of cities huge territories of America keep maintaining their natural primeval majesty. American wilderness is often considered as a space of purity and pristine beauty to be viewed in awe. Contrary to European restricted areas the vast Western expanses of America with high mountains and rocks, colourful forests, and sandy deserts open up the possibility of individual salvation and opportunity for transcendence.

Nature in American culture and literature has always been understood as the space of wilderness, but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century transcendental writers' works, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882) and Henry David Thoreau (1817 – 1862), it gained the meaning of the perfect space of solitude, in which one delves deep thus obtaining the necessary experience for life. Transcendental meditations and reflections on nature, (including magnificent landscape) and human stimulate the experience of revelation and inspiration.

The concept of the sublime in landscape, introduced in the world culture at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, suggests the idea of wild grandeur with special significance. Landscape, as defined by Annie Proulx, is *what is out there, what was out there, and, for the futurologists, what may be out there one day.*<sup>3</sup> The spectacular North-American natural phenomena like the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls, Trenton Falls, Yellowstone, etc. declare the idea of sublime wilderness where great forces of nature and the hand of God are constantly present.

The Grand Canyon is ideal iconographic landscape to be used in literary works as according to one of the classical but most persistent viewpoints on landscape offered by American landscape essayist John Brinkerhoff Jackson it is *a portion of the earth's surface that can be comprehended at a glance*<sup>4</sup>. Although an expanse of scenery is most often seen in a single view while standing on the rim and looking forward, round, up into the sky, and down to the bottom, the view from the 'outside' takes another deeper dimension when landing into the big hole. The position of the viewer as a passive and



detached observer transforms with merging into the landscape when things are 'seen' from the 'inside'. The vast and immense area with magnificent scene makes a person dwell upon inconceivable questions and opens up the possibility to look deeper into both – the uniqueness, bigness, and grandness of nature and one's own life. Landscape as a meeting point of nature and culture becomes the impulse and device for human's self-analysis.

In *Walden; or, Life in Woods* (1854), Thoreau contemplates upon the importance of solitude and closeness to nature in transcending the 'desperate' existence:

*I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion.*<sup>5</sup>

Thoreau's main message is framed within the line segment by two key-words – woods, i.e., nature and excursion, i.e., life journey. A similar idea as expressed in the American writer's work is found in the Latvian writer Gundega Repše's narrative *Other Disciples* from the collection *Stories about Disciples* (2009).

The Grand Canyon depicted either as a background, space of action, or beautiful landscape is traced in numerous works of American literature, but there are few Latvian authors who not only mention, but also focus on the depiction of the Canyon in detail. One of the contemporary Latvian authors is Repše who dwells upon regaining the lost control over one's life by being on a journey of self-discovery in magnificent American natural landscape – the Grand Canyon.

Among the most vivid American landscape features presented in the literary work one can single out the road, paths, rocks, flora and fauna world, sky, etc., which by patterns of shape and their structure, as well as by formation and their function declare the specific language of the Grand Canyon. The lexeme 'landscape' (in Latvian 'ainava') is used in the literary work several times only; nevertheless it is one of the key-words surrounded by other important notions in physical and human geography.

The road is attributed a double function – a route between two places and the road as the metaphor of life. The main elements of thematization are the search of the basis of feminine subjectivity and introspection in the depth of the self – in one's own thoughts depicted through the travel on horizontal and vertical planes.

The journey comes as inner necessity, a peculiar pilgrimage to find the hope and belief (*We will succeed*).<sup>6</sup> for the spiritual fulfilment, for full-bodied life, for the reunion between man and woman, and people in general, for the renewal of communication as the main characters are two different people, two worlds apart, [...] *two pilots with essentially different aims but having got into one spaceship*<sup>7</sup>. For the spontaneous and instinctive heroine, *the journey is a new stage*<sup>8</sup> as she is a searcher and the process of searching for the essence of life for her is as important as living itself. The human takes up the journey searching for changes, thus the trip allows discovering herself and

the world. For this reason, the journey is also unconsciously necessary for the heroine's exhausted from life partner, literary critic Kēlers – a person guided by the logic and practical mind. Edmunds Valdemārs Bunkše, Latvian born American scientist, indicates:

*Many journeys are transcendental, religious, or philosophical quests. Often the home searched for is not a located, bounded physical entity but something vaster, something ineffable.*

*There are voluntary and involuntary journeys. Voluntary journeys into the world are a search for change, whether for positive or negative reasons.<sup>9</sup>*

Mountain serpentine stand for the movement, as well as symbolize the twisting and winding course of human's complicated life road. Following Walt Whitman's (1819 – 1892) idea expressed in the poem *The Song of the Open Road* from the collection *Leaves of Grass* (1856), travelling and life as a journey are inseparable:

*Allons! to that which is endless as it was beginningless,  
To undergo much, tramps of days, rests of nights,  
To merge all in the travel they tend to, and the days and nights they tend to,  
Again to merge them in the start of superior journeys,  
[...]  
To take your lovers on the road with you, for all that you leave them behind you,  
To know the universe itself as a road, as many roads, as roads for traveling souls.<sup>10</sup>*

The main character Mārica's journey's itinerary, fragmentary diary notes constitute the context to the text, which is life. Disintegrated and episodic world perception is not acceptable for her boyfriend who being a self-centred individualist lonely stands apart from the mainstream and is considered as useless for the life of present days for *attempting to offer resistance against the idea that no being can be explained without referring to something else*<sup>11</sup>. Although being convinced about his own world and truth, he is still a disciple in need to learn listening to himself and the world around him:

*I admit that I really don't live in the context of the majority but I have been given strength to live in the space of my own values. Including living in the text.*

[Pie]auju, ka es tiešām nedzīvoju vairākuma kontekstā, bet man ir dots spēks dzīvot savā dzīves vērtību telpā. Tostarp – tekstā.<sup>12]</sup>

Kēlers' commentaries on Mārica's diary and his memories on the journey to the Grand Canyon constitute a specific indirect dialogue between the masculine and the feminine, between humans, and between people and nature in the age of lack of communication and the deficiency of dialogue. The arrangement of separate fragments reminds of 'the beads of the human's life' although the events might be considered as not following each other, thus the structure is not chronological. The specific form of the text is an important indicator of fragmentary world perception; fragmentation being one of the characteristic features of postmodern literature.

The horizontal transfer is marked by the movement from one country (Latvia) to another (America – Arizona, which is the Grand Canyon State, and Utah) via the neutral third country (Sweden), the space of France is mentioned as well, noting such cities as Riga, Stockholm, Chicago, Phoenix, Sedona, Paris and others, while verticality is emphasized by several constituents marking an upright position or direction, or connecting

the upper space with the lower space – rocks, vertices of rocks, the sky, plants, energy vortexes.

The landscape created by man is an echo of God's made 'architecture'. Contrary to God as soloist's creative involvement, man-made picturesque scenery is *just imperceptible accompaniment of the landscape*<sup>13</sup> created by God the Artist. The comparison of the two types of landscapes in the text has been carried out to emphasize the presence of sacredness: habitations made by men are based on low and solid arches associated with broad shoulders; the rocks, in their turn, are *the procession of cathedrals, temples, fortresses that are standing on eternal guard and have been affected by the Hand of God*<sup>14</sup>, thus they are aligned with the sacral.

In the framework of the binary opposition 'America – Europe', America is viewed as natural space, Europe, in its turn is depicted in the context of art, it is a space where the tie with the upper force has been lost as man is believed to be the Creator himself trying to compete with God the Artist. The landscape created by God does not permit imitation or recreation, *one can stubbornly attempt depicting, describing, for God's sake, photographing, but it will be miserable in regard to the reality*<sup>15</sup>. Being the scientist of art, Repše expresses the same viewpoint as American art historians and critics, among them John Charles Van Dyke, who believe that the Canyon could never be adequately captured on canvas or poeticized as it is too vast and some things are beyond the human.<sup>16</sup>

The tragedy of the heroine emerges from the traumatic state related to the loss of integrity and the idealist's longings for the essence and eternal light in the real space of life:

*I have always instinctively avoided from the dark basements and dreamed of sun-lit terraces, white and soaring cloud sailboats.*

[No tumšiem pagrabien esmu instinktīvi vairījusies un sapņojusi par gaismas aplietām terasēm, baltiem, plandošiem mākoņu burukuģiem.<sup>17</sup>]

The application of the architectural term 'a terrace', which is basically a raised area in front of the monumental structure or a platform one feels relaxed and comfortable, reveals Mārica's way of life till the moment she decides to leave this comfort zone and land in the bottom of the Canyon, into the deepness of herself. The architect Catherine Dee considers the terrace as the most commonly used link between the structure, i.e., monumental building, and landscape<sup>18</sup>, thus, being an extension of living space it is a border between the two states.

The trails down into the Canyon lead into the deep geology of the earth. Simon Schama in his fundamental work *Landscape and Memory* singles out three important landscape elements; rock among water and wood is the most resistant, thus imaginatively the most enduring.<sup>19</sup> Similarly as the layers of rocks are the witnesses of the past, also every event as a fragment of human's life is a deposit in the depths of his subconscious revealing imprints and deformations of definite private happenings and social and culture events thus forming the inner landscape of the human being and humankind. The trip to the bottom of the Grand Canyon is a symbolic journey through the overgrown paths of eternity. It is an attempt to discover specific answers related with the essence of life and existence by trying to listen attentively to sounds from the inside – one's own inner world. The Grand Canyon becomes the mirror of human's self and his memories –

before landscape can ever be a repose for the senses it is *the work of the mind*, the scenery is *built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock*<sup>20</sup>.

According to Peter J. Howard's understanding of landscape, if it is '*a place perceived by people*' then there are two obvious ways to describe it – either describe the places or describe the people doing the perceiving<sup>21</sup>. Repše combines both the strategies not going deep into the chronological and typological structure of the landscape but applying it as a means for self-communion and absorption into oneself. The typology of the landscape is not important for the author as the value of the landscape is determined by the variety of colours and by the coexistence of its separate elements, which is the base of the harmony.

In the depiction of the Grand Canyon, senses play a crucial role. The sensory landscape related to seeing such a colourful grandiose site, hearing the roars of the Colorado River yellow eddy or, vice versa, listening to complete silence, as well as touching the sand, smelling sweet and intoxicant aroma of flowers mingling with mule bitter urine create the surrealistic feeling of infinity – of the sound, smell, taste, and touch of immemorial times. The completeness arouses not only pleasant enjoyment, but also important sense of geography. Therefore leaving a psychological and emotional impact on the human the sensually perceived landscape indicates location, direction, distance and creates awareness of being in a concrete space – physical and spiritual.

The romantic idea of sublimity in nature explains the picturesque landscape through the variety of colour and form. Repše juxtaposes the extravagance of the colours in the Grand Canyon with Latvian modesty. Red is the main character's colour. Although it has not been mentioned at the very beginning of the narrative, its importance in the text is indirectly indicated by the meaning expressed in the sequence *candles, torches, bonfires – that all is mine* [sveces, lāpas, ugunskuri – tas viss ir mans<sup>22</sup>] advancing the concepts 'life', 'being', 'existence', and fire as their symbolic essence denoting the matter of living.

Landscape, the striking element of which is red rocks or gigantic mountain sculptures, is the brightest mediator in the transfer of colours significant in the text. The multi-layered symbolism of rocks in the text is revealed by both the shift of the colours and the emphasis of the conception of time. The alterations of the light when the red rocks transform into *yellow-white with pine cool tarnish*<sup>23</sup> create an illusion of movement at the moment the human is in a stationary state, that is, the change of the pictures as in the motion movie advances the question to be answered whether one lives in reality or simply has a false feeling of moving forward in his life.

Simultaneously the incorporation of different colours in the description of the rocks signifies the complex structure of man as pure colours rarely exist in the real space but are the attributes of the intangible space – the golden sun, platinum white sunlight, white clouds, the sky *continuously blue as the Virgin's garb*<sup>24</sup>.

The rocks are represented symbolically as the golden eagle having red-clayed enflamed wings, in its turn the sky is pigeon blue, the sky-line – violet-pink, the butterflies – yellow-black, and the houses – rust red. The Latvian compound adjectives (*sarkanmālaini, baložzilas, violetsārteni, dzeltenmelnī, rūssarkani*) used in the text accentuate that the discomfort of the human's life can be overcome if the surrounding world, being the metaphor of the person's inner world, is perceived in the diversity of the paint palette.

Unique combinations of geologic colours and forms which have eroded emphasize the diversity of the world. Similarly to distinctively marked rocks, which are *two coexisting nations*<sup>25</sup>, also the inner world of the human is not a monolith moulding but, on the contrary, a structurally complicated fusion comprising multi-dimensional experience since *the shivers breaking off the past sail away into the universe, boil in the darkness and adhere to the solid skin of the rocks* [...] *pagātnes atlūzas aizpeld izplatījumā, savārās tumsā un pielīp klinšu cietajai ādai*<sup>26</sup>. Therefore the linear time does not exist, instead of chronological time there is Time – Eternity.

In order to recapture the sense of 'reality', the author focuses on the portrayal of landscape reality combining it with symbolic imagery and spiritual essence. The allegory 'rocks as a gigantic eagle' used by the author emphasizes the triumph of reality and the world of visions. The eagle as an American symbol reveals bright features of the reality of rocks:

*The eyes were empty yet were watching. The eagle was without feathers, carved in sandstone, but still alive.*

[Acis bija tukšas, bet tās skatījās. Ērglis bija bez spalvām, tēsts smilšakmenī, tomēr dzīvs.<sup>27</sup>]

The landscape facilitates different interactions and communication levels, the interplay between a person and his inner self, a person and God, a person and another person, a person and people, a person – a nation, a nation – another nation, as well as between a person and the landscape itself. Although a part of nature the human is nothing but a tiny grain of sand, insignificant man in front of the grand, for whom the shelter and reaching for the stars is provided through returning to God's created world order and the architecture of nature:

*The eagle of my vision – having opened his rock wings and bent down his head in order to see me, insignificant bug.*

[Mans vīzijas ērglis – atplētis klinšu spārnus, noliecis galvu, lai saredzētu mani, vaboli.<sup>28</sup>]

The Grand Canyon is perceived as purely wild nature – not the result of the work of the mankind, but Time. Sands as the symbol of time and memory are being kissed by Mārica to understand in the end of the journey that Time is the minister of Thought. The landscape becomes the mediator through which the human history is perceived, as William Blake writes:

*To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,  
And eternity in an hour.<sup>29</sup>*

It is important to note that Repše consciously emphasizes the effect of the *landscape* on the mind of the subject. The construction of the human's inner world and psychological processes have been implicitly included in the depiction of landscape thus allotting the landscape a poly-functional meaning – it is a symbol and metaphor, the transformer of awareness with the ability to correct both human's consciousness and sub-consciousness. In the confrontation with nature and the past when the unity of the whole living world

is comprehended and the senses become sharper the heroine naturally performs closer inspection of her inner world – exploration of the history, the present situation and future perspectives of her self-identity. The author suggests returning to the primeval of nature, merging with nature, conceiving the past, which is transposed in the grand landscape.

In the American writer James Paul Kelly's fictional story *Prince Izon: A Romance of the Grand Canyon* (1910), *the Canyon is the synthesis of infernal landscape (It is a chaos of abysses profound and heights tremendous, of titanic labyrinths and untrodden and forbidding fastnesses) and a paradise (behold a blend of vividly stratified colors, gorgeously illumined clouds, and delicately tinted skies; a blend of such unearthly and ineffable radiance)*<sup>30</sup>, thus, a heavenly abyss. Repše uses a similar technique; negative attributes prevail though in the descriptions of physical and mental sufferings. Besides the author's used lexeme 'bottom' of the Canyon, the following words and phrases are used to emphasize the spiritual anguish while landing and especially climbing up from the earth's heart – 'hell', 'underworld', the 'pit of the world', *forbidden zone where nobody is destined to go on a visit free-willingly*<sup>31</sup>. An indirect reference to Dante's *Hell* in *Divine Comedy* is read in the words, *The circles of the hell must be made by everyone alone* [Elles lokus iet katrs viens pats]<sup>32</sup>. The same as death is always perceived as a purely individual act, the essence of life should be revealed by each individual separately. The author consciously uses the idiom 'to get to the bottom of the Grand Canyon' in the meaning of 'to get an understanding of the causes of something', 'to discover the truth about the situation'.

The author plays with the fact that landscape perception is a deeply emotional subject, thus the 'therapeutic' meaning of landscape on human cannot be equal. Landscape perception in the text is determined by the main characters' contrary worldviews – the man's pragmatism and realistic grasp of the world is contrasted by the woman's emotionality, idealism and ability to fuse within her dream and fancy images. The specific feminine vision of the world is very significant as the message of the work is revealed through the synthesis of reality of life and of surreal poetics, that is, the woman's feelings, emotional life and the subconscious are depicted through the mediation of landscape and impressions it has made on the human. Likewise the individualist Kēlers' travel descriptions are *dry, stingy and factual* and for this reason substituted with commentaries on Mārica's diary fragments filled with emotional descriptions of the adventure, also his landscape perception is realistic.

The idea of landscape most often quoted is that *landscape represents a way of seeing*<sup>33</sup>. As Ken Taylor explains, landscape is not simply what we see, but in what manner we see something, [...] *we see it with our eye but interpret it with our mind and ascribe values to landscape for intangible – spiritual – reasons*.<sup>34</sup> For this reason, landscape not always permeates the thinking of all people, in addition, the imprint left on the human differs greatly depending on the world perception and his readiness or willingness to change it, thus change himself. The interpretation of landscape by mind and not mere vision becomes the key factor of Mārica's synthetic conception of the world signifying also the abyss between the masculine and feminine world that might be overpassed having gone deep into one's own self and reconsidering the order of the universe. The visions seen from within inside (climbing up the golden hair to the stars, dead ancestors)



or the moments appearing from the past of the person and nation (deportations to Siberia) fill Mārica's mind regularly, nevertheless they are viewed scornfully by the wordly-minded Kēlers. The pragmatic man offers scientific explanation – *the collection of movies*<sup>35</sup> is a result of autosuggestion.

The magic power of the landscape gradually transforms the human's thoughts and approach to life – the eternal question *why am I* dies away at the moment humans *start spinning in the entirety with nature and universe* [[...] savērpjoties vienā veselumā ar dabu un kosmosu<sup>36</sup>]. Thus, existentialist questions important at the beginning of the journey are substituted by the feeling of all-embracing gratitude and comprehension of all-embracing grace.

Modernist writers let landscape perception through their imagination filter, for instance, the shape of mountainous horizon is often rendered as a line drawn between memory and imagination. Rocks in Repše's narrative are specifically important in the context of memory and initiation of future vision. Being the synthesis of space and its attributes, people, in wider terms also nation, the landscape becomes vital in the formation or comprehension of national identity. When landscape is perceived as *the repository of intangible values and human meanings that nurture our very existence being the nerve centre of our personal and collective memories*<sup>37</sup>, the concepts of subjective and collective memory are introduced. The landscape perception reveals powerful and spiritual ties between people and the place, as well as reminds of the sense of the belonging gone. Being a homeland of American Indian clans (in the narrative, Navajo and Hopi Indians are mentioned), the landscape strikes like the lightning on the person's consciousness – overwhelmed by the waves of emotions the sense of guilt makes the person bend to the earth.

Besides specific landscape flora features emphasizing verticality and revealing specific symbolism, for instance, cypresses striving to the sky and depicting living being's natural trust in the light, and native American evergreen plants – cacti, agaves, junipers, laurels – that symbolize life even in the most unfavourable circumstances, one of the landscape attributes significant for two main cultural spaces mentioned in the text is an oak. Being the national tree of both Latvia and the United States of America, the image of an oak tree is a common attribute of the two national landscapes. For the indigenous people of America oak symbolizes strength of character and courage. In Latvian mythology, an oak is a sacred tree of the God of Thunder (Pērkons), the symbol of masculine power and fundamentality. In Latvian culture since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to National Awakening movements, landscape and its attributes are exploited similarly as in German National Romanticism – as symbols of national revival. The oak is the main attribute of idealized Latvian landscape represented on Latvian national currency – five lats banknote marking Latvian national identity and centuries long yearning for independence and sovereignty.

Repše supplements American and Latvian traditional interpretation of the oak as the symbol of power, strength, might and the representative of the robust male character with the feminine longings after stability, independence, and permanence. The heroine's self-revelation that is also a peculiar epiphany emerges from the feminine system of values and world view where the landscape scene reveals sudden inner necessity related with the maternal gene and the problem of life continuity:

[...] I was affected by rock oaks – one meter high shrubs that only at the age of fifty beget small, similar to green beans acorns. You should still need a child, he [Kēlers] says.

[...] mani aizkustināja klinšu ozoli – metru augsti krūmi, kuri tikai piecdesmit gadu vecumā uzrada mazas, sviesta pupiņām līdzīgas ozolzīles. Tev tomēr būtu vajadzīgs bērns, viņš [Kēlers] saka.<sup>38]</sup>

All the thoughts, pictures, mental images and memories are especially significant for the heroine as they are affinal divine manifestations:

*Epiphanies, those sudden, unbidden illuminations – when one may realize the existence of something sacred, of God; or the intrinsic nature of something small or great; or relationships one has not been aware of – moments when an idea surfaces into consciousness, are hardest to attain, I think, in daily life.*<sup>39</sup>

Among the oak species found in the Grand Canyon National Park territory (*Quercus X pauciloba*, *Quercus grisea*, *Quercus gambelii*, *Quercus turbinella*), the one that the author relates to is most probably *Quercus turbinella*, which contrary to a tree or larger shrub *Quercus gambelii*, often called as scrub oak or oak brush, is a shrub growing two to five meters in height and having small acorns.<sup>40</sup> The writer does not specify the species but speaks of the rock oaks and their fruits focusing on their form, size and colour with the aim to reveal the impression left on the person more than scientific approach to life.

At the end of the story, the phone message Kēlers receives from Mārica after having thought her dead in the plane crash leaves the character in complete confusion as he has lost the context. The heroine's expected homecoming is a symbolic resurrection from the bottom of the deeps; it is a spiritual revival provoked by the magic of landscape and her absence from Kēler's life afterwards, which, called a *long scholarship*, can be perceived as a present granted by God:

*My long scholarship is over; I will have to keep my nose to the grindstone in the homeland. I hope you are also there as that is almost one and the same.*

[Mana garā stipendija ir beigusies, nāksies kalt akmeņus dzimtenē. Ceru, ka Tu arī tur būsi, jo tas ir gandrīz viens un tas pats.<sup>41]</sup>

Having risen from the ashes and acknowledged the willingness to respect not only her own self, but also the self of the other, Mārica is ready to continue her chosen path. The author maintains the emphasis on the individualism reminding that landscape perception depends on the condition of the spirit and every man creates his own meaning and goal in life. Similar ideas are expressed in the quote from Carl Sandburg's poem *Many Hats* that has been chosen as the epigraph of the paper. Being the contrary units of two world's entities, at the same time a woman and a man enrich each other and ensure understanding of the deeper essence of existence. Although at the very end of the story Kēlers experiences sudden epiphany and realizes his being 'blind', as the truth proves to be absolutely different, he stays ambiguously depicted in the context of his mistaken self-reliance and the idea that the essential cannot be seen on surface. Going deep into one's self is not a single act, but a continuous refining process as *Arizona's state motto is 'Ditat Deus' – God enriches*<sup>42</sup>. The presence of several canyons (Boynton

Canyon, Bryce Canyon, different tracks, cities, and states) show the life as a series of experience, constant presence of trials.

Thereby the landscape in Repše's multilayered and multi-staged narrative is the form of the language, a symbolic system, and the means of the heroine's self-identification process that reveals a human being as a complex creature comprising several individual layers or levels. Since landscape is the world and the metaphor of the world all the separate elements and substances are equally important as they construct a coherent whole, so called 'unity of the self'.

The landscape in the work is not perceived as simply aesthetic breathtaking scenery, a beautiful 'picture' to look at, but a part of procedural spiritual process in the formation of human's identity that ensures the comprehension of man's place in the world, his memories, thoughts, strivings, and values becoming cultural landscape. The forms of the landscape represent the subjective notions. According to Pierce Lewis, who focused on the idea of cultural landscape, to understand ourselves *we need to look searchingly at our landscapes for they are a clue to culture*.<sup>43</sup> Physical features of landscape become crucial in the representation of the human's innermost persona, his thoughts of what he has been and what he is. The deep hidden self as an imaginative construction or inner landscape of the human is revealed via mediation of the physical space regarded as the outer landscape. Combining the elements of Romanticism, Modernism and Postmodernism the prose-writer offers a woman's psychological portrayal in the borderline state of self-examination in the context of gender, nation, and universe.

One may conclude that physical geography in Repše's story is important and indispensable basis for approaching human geography. Carl Sauer, one of the first leading founders of the human geography, emphasized that landscapes influenced the development of each individual and culture. This idea is also implied in Repše's work where landscape is crucial in individual and collective representations of the self and the construction of identity; 'the world landscape' suggests not only a personal experience in the Canyon, but also persistently thoughtful depths of the world's soul. The inner world of the person and nation can thus be read as a landscape of the self, the canvas containing different images.

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<sup>1</sup> Sandburg C. Many Hats. *The Complete Poems of Carl Sandburg*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2003. – p. 434.

<sup>2</sup> Cosgrave D. E. America as Landscape. *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998. – pp. 162–163.

<sup>3</sup> Proulx A. Dangerous Ground: Landscape in American Fiction. Mahoney T. R., W. J. Katz (eds.) *Regionalism and the Humanities*. University of Nebraska Press, 2008. – p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Jackson J. B. *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984. – p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Toro D. H. *Voldena jeb Dzīve mežā*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2004. – p. 71. Thoreau H. D. *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*. Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library <http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/ThoWald.html> (accessed 2013). Emphasis mine – I. K.

<sup>6</sup> Repše G. Citi mācekļi. *Stāsti par mācekļiem*. Rīga: Dienas Grāmata, 2009. – p. 153. Here and henceforth all the quotes from Repše's work are translated by me – I. K.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. – p. 150.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. – p. 153.

- <sup>9</sup> Bunkše E. V. *Geography and the Art of Life*. Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. – p. 44–45. Bunkše E. V. *Intīmā bezgalība*. Rīga: Norden AB, 2007. – p. 59.
- <sup>10</sup> Whitman W. *Leaves of Grass*. Vitmens V. *Zāles stiebrī*. Rīga: Neputns, 2011. – p. 180.
- <sup>11</sup> Repše G. Citi mācekļi. *Stāsti par mācekļiem*. Rīga: Dienas Grāmata, 2009. – p. 154.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. – p. 155.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid. – p. 162.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. – p. 163.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. – p. 160.
- <sup>16</sup> Van Dyke J. C. *The Grand Canyon of the Colorado*. Kessinger Publishing, 2005 (1920). – p. 218.
- <sup>17</sup> Repše G. Citi mācekļi. *Stāsti par mācekļiem*. Rīga: Dienas Grāmata, 2009. – p. 157.
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- <sup>23</sup> Ibid. – p. 160.
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Ināra Kudrjavska

## THE PARK IN GRIGORIY KANOVICH'S NOVEL *THE PARK OF THE FORGOTTEN JEWS*

### *Summary*

Grigoriy Kanovich's novel *'The Park of the Forgotten Jews'* published in 1997 recreates the space of a real-existing park in the centre of Vilnius. It is an irregular park with all toponyms significant for the author. The author mentions the park lanes, benches, the pavilion, plants among which lime-trees take the central place. It is significant that the park borders on a river, the image of which is very basic in the conditional landscape that emerges in the main hero's consciousness. The time of the park constitutes a complete calendar cycle.

Bernardian Park is closely related to the category of memory. The novel reveals the inner monologue of Ichak Malkin, the stream of his memories and reflections of what has been and remains most important in his life. The park located in the centre of a big city becomes a sacred place for the keepers of memory, a preaching-house. The park immerses one into a different reality where the dear ones are still alive; the space of the park is closed by that of a Jewish settlement, Malkin's native place, Jewish cemetery and places of burial of Jews who died during World War II.

The space of the park is opposed to the wood and urban sonorous landscape.

Another motif related to the space of Bernardian Park in the novel is that of the end, the tragic awareness of oblivion.

Key-words: landscape, space, park, garden, the category of memory

\*

### **Introduction**

Every artistic text entails a particular structure, all elements whereof bear a notional load on diverse levels. In a work of art space is the main notional element that *represents a model of the world created by the given author expressed in the language of the author's spatial notions*<sup>1</sup>.

The category of space in Grigoriy Kanovich's writing is universal because the system of topoi in his works *demonstrates human as a phenomenon of a particular culture, a definite historical epoch*<sup>2</sup>.

Landscape is one of the most significant devices of depicting space in a work of art. Landscape and its elements are the means of modelling both the human's external and internal space.

Kanovich's novel *The Park of the Forgotten Jews* published in 1997 recreates the space of a real-existing park in the centre of Vilnius. It must be noted that the author uses the lexical units 'park' and 'garden' as synonyms. This may be accounted for by the



fact that Botanic and Bernardian Gardens that had once existed independently of each other were united under a single name of Sereikiškių Park (*Sereikiškių parkas*).

There are no depictions of a united natural space or detailed scenes of nature in Kanovich's novel. The landscape of the park is constructed of small fragments, separate, fragmented allusions to particular signs of landscape. As a rule these elements of Bernardian garden landscape are provided in the perception of the main hero, Ichak Malkin whose memories form the basis of the narrative.

### The Park. The Time and Place of Action

Traditionally park as a green territory for recreation consists of certain elements. Park design is usually based on a system of lanes and alleys; there is often a pavilion or a garden house in the park; water is an important element of park design. Finally, trees have a decisive role in the formation of park landscape.

In the novel *The Park of the Forgotten Jews*, the image of lime-tree recurs many times thus attracting attention. Ichak Malkin and his friends have been gathering in Bernardian garden on all days of a week:

*[...] they gathered under the old majestic lime-trees that were silently and benevolently rustling their leaves like angels' wings [...].*

*[...] они собирались под старыми княжескими липами, бесшумно и благо-  
стно шелестевшими своими листьями, как ангельскими крыльями [...].<sup>3]</sup>*

Throughout the novel, the significance of lime-trees as the central images of the park landscape is growing. This happens owing to additional details that every time accompany the mention of these trees. Ichak waits for his friends *under the shade of the friendly lime-trees*<sup>4</sup>, meaning that the branches of the outgrown trees form a tent, a kind of a curtain, marquee. The old Jew listens to *the lulling sound of lime-trees in Bernardian garden and the carefree tunes of birdsong*<sup>5</sup>, the sound of the old lime-trees lull Gutionov to sleep.

Gradually the park is filled with nature and handmade elements that make up a certain space:

*[...] and the trees and that seedy sparrow jumping in search for a bigger crumble from one bench to another, like Jews from one country to another.*

*[...] и деревья, и этот вот замурзанный воробей, прыгающий в поисках крохи покрупнее от одной скамейки до другой, как евреи из одной страны в другую.<sup>6]</sup>*

Kanovich mentions the entrance to Bernardian garden by which someone's figure is looming, an alley where Ichak is walking up and down, benches under the lime-trees, sandy lanes. The space of the park is saturated with *sunlight spilt over Bernardian garden (солнечный свет, разлитый над Бернардинским садом*<sup>7</sup>). Bernardian Park is located at the bottom of the Prince (Castle) hill and slopes of the hill are visible from the park; the park borders on the river Vileika that runs along the garden and to which one can go down along the slope.

With the coming of autumn, the park changes, the rustle of lime-tree leaves being replaced by the wind that tears them off:

*There were heaps of leaves basted in Bernardian garden overnight – the wind had been playing till the morning. Pani Zofya buries them every day: she is a gravedigger of fallen leaves – she either buries them or burns them in the heath.*

[Листьев за ночь намело в Бернардинском саду уйму – ветер озоровал до утра. Пани Зофья хоронит их каждый день: она – могильщик облетевших листьев, – либо закапывает их, либо сжигает на пустыре.<sup>8]</sup>

The autumnal park landscape is supplemented only by the intentional, similarly fragmented depiction of the closed summer pavilion where Jews seek shelter from rain:

*They rose from the bench and set out to the summer pavilion where a cafe was located. It was raining, heavily and lavishly. [...] an old razor lay down on the table under the dome of the cafe...*

[Они встали со скамейки и направились к летнему павильону, где размещалось кафе. Лил дождь, сумбурный и щедрый. [...] на столик под куполом кафе легла старая бритва [...].<sup>9]</sup>

Autumn rain seems to collect all fragments of the park only once; however neither is it possible to call this landscape united. It rather reminds of a mosaic and not a picturesque landscape that is underlined by the use of equal sentence members without conjunctions in the description:

*The wind gusts were scattering handfuls of raindrops to all sides. God was lavishly watering from His inexhaustible airgun Bernardian garden, the prince castle on the hill, benches under the lime-trees, the canvas roof of the abandoned cafe.*

[Порывы ветра швыряли пригоршнями капли дождя во все стороны. Господь Бог из своего неиссякаемого пульверизатора щедро поливал Бернардинский сад, княжеский замок на горе, скамейки под липами, брезентовую крышу сиротливого кафе.<sup>10]</sup>

Autumn fills Bernardian garden with *ghastly autumn light arousing sadness (сумеречным, навевающим печаль осенним светом<sup>11]</sup>*, the benches under the lime-trees are covered by the wind with *leaves cast into cheap gold (отлитыми в дешевое золото листьями<sup>12]</sup>*.

In winter Malkin seldom comes to the park, therefore the winter landscape is scarce and even more laconic:

*In Bernardian garden it was white and silent. Snowflakes were falling with rustle that made the silence either festive or commemorative.*

[В Бернардинском саду было бело и тихо. Шурша падали снежинки, и их шуршание делало тишину то ли праздничной, то ли поминальной.<sup>13]</sup>

The spring landscape is traditionally related to the rebirth of nature. As soon as the soil had dried up and *the sly changeable March came to the end and the sun was reigning on roofs in a furtive cat-like way and looking into the windows (плутоватого, склонного к изменам марта, и солнце уже по-кошачьи вкрадчиво хозяйничало на крышах, заглядывало в окна<sup>14]</sup>*, Malkin hurried to Bernardian Park. Despite the rejuvenation, the spring park is represented only as a range of images significant for Malkin:

*The first leaves on the bare trees, arrival of the shy rooks shining with glaze, a painter with a huge brush repainting the plain park benches [...].*

[Первая завязь на оголенных деревьях, прилет пугливых, отливавших глазурью грачей, маляр с огромной кистью, перекрашивающий неказистые парковые скамейки [...].<sup>15</sup>

Kanovich's novel recreates the space of a real-existing park in the centre of Vilnius, the author determines the setting with the first lines. Detailed landscape sketchings are replaced by the author with minute landscapes, stingy descriptions, mentioning certain park elements; the fragments of the park, like theatre decorations, seem to emerge one after another and then dissolve. Already on the level of the actual park landscape Kanovich demonstrates gradual disappearance of this space as such, creating the feeling that the park exists only in those small particles (a bench under the lime-trees, the alley, the pavilion, lanes) that keep the memory of the old Jew Malkin, the park becomes *a small model of the nature of the native nook* (*маленькой природой родного уголка*)<sup>16</sup> that is doomed to destruction.

The time of the park is marked by the changing seasons. However, despite the fact that the cycle is completed by spring, it feels that summer will not come, at least for the space of Ichak Malkin.

### The Park and the Category of Memory

Landscape in Kanovich's novel functions to a smaller degree to determine the place and time of action. Every landscape, the image of nature is *an extended metaphor* (*развернутая метафора*)<sup>17</sup>, *exactly in nature does the inner world of human find the most profound correspondences, the most capacious symbols for expressing them and for grasping the supreme worlds*<sup>18</sup>. According to Yuri Lotman, *the macrocosm of landscape is metaphorically related to the microcosm of human personality and human society*<sup>19</sup>.

In the novel *The Park of Forgotten Jews* an inner bond exists between heroes and the surrounding nature. Nature description, any mention of nature images are psychologized. It is landscape that helps reveal the inner state of the hero, reflect the dynamic of the inner processes, tell about his world perception. The space of Bernardian Park in Kanovich's novel is closely related to the category of memory.

It must be noted that in Malkin's understanding the category of memory has nothing to do with the museum that keeps films with recordings, photographs, because *the past events memorisable in an instrumental way make a rather conditional and fruitless landscape. The dull peaks of calendar dates in the formless valley of time are what remain of the previously rich environment that attracted our attention. Memory returns not images and events but only their order and location* [инструментальным образом запоминаемые прошлые события — это весьма условный и бесплодный пейзаж. Унылые пики календарных дат в бесформенной равнине времени — вот, что осталось от некогда богатой среды, привлечшей наше внимание. В памяти воскрешаются не образы и события, а лишь их порядок и местоположение<sup>20</sup>]. In the artistic world of Kanovich's novel, memory assumes a specific function: it not only preserves the information of the past but also immerses heroes into the time where they find what had been dear to them; memory is *love for those who will never return either to the country road or the bench under the lime-tree, or behind the joiner's bench, or the wedding feast table* [любовь к

тем, кто никогда не вернется ни на проселочную дорогу, ни на скамейку под липой, ни за сапожный верстак, ни за свадебный стол<sup>21</sup>].

Park in the centre of a big city has long ago become a sacred place for the keepers of memories, here every tree reminds of shamash – the main candle in khanukal lamp that symbolizes victory of light over darkness:

*Ichak Malkin would always come first to Bernardian garden, to this chapel under the lime-trees and therefore he could peacefully ruminate over his memories for a quarter of an hour...*

[Ицхак Малкин всегда приходил в Бернардинский сад, в эту молельню под липами, первым и потому, что мог какие-нибудь четверть часа спокойно предаваться воспоминаниям [...].<sup>22</sup>]

Malkin and his friends *would for whole days drink under the shade of friendly lime-trees the sweetest and the bitterest drink in the world – memories* [целыми днями под сенью дружелюбных лип пьет самый сладкий и самый горький напиток на свете – воспоминания<sup>23</sup>], lime-trees become the leitmotif image symbolizing the ability and desire to remember. These trees keep under their shade (not incidentally the collocation “under the shade of lime-trees” recurs several times) the events of the past and do not allow the present to completely ruin them.

The past in Kanovich’s novel, mostly owing to the elements of landscape, is no more just a segment in the flow of the irreversible “worldly” time, it is equal to eternity. In this respect memory is overcoming of the finiteness of time, overcoming of death. Events of the past in the space of park do not simply grow into the present called forth by touch, odour, or sound, they expand along with the events of the biographical present of heroes as if in one plane with them.

Birds whose piping Malkin hears in Bernardian garden are birds of youth flying out of his memory. Park sparrows and pigeons fly to the odour of rye bread that comes through years from the synagogue that in 1946 was turned into a bakery. Lea Stavisskaya becomes a salesgirl again in the shop of colonial goods and *from the ordinary Lithuanian lime-tree sweet odour of distant groves and seas incomparable to anything else irradiates over the whole park* (от обыкновенной литовской липы по всему парку струится’ ни с чем не сравнимый сладостный аромат далеких роц и морей), the aroma of cinnamon and raisins from Lea’s memories *can tickle nostrils* (может щекотать ноздри), Jews until now breathe *the air of the colonial shop* [воздухом колониальной лавки<sup>24</sup>].

Waiting for his friends in the park, Ichak *got up from the bench and set off not along the alley of Bernardian garden but that country road that seemed to be running not on the earth but in the sky* [встал со скамейки и зашагал не по аллее Бернардинского сада, а по той проселочной дороге, пролегшей как бы не по земле, а по небу<sup>25</sup>]. The country road gradually changed its form and turned into a paved street along which either the small Icikl or the old Ichak enters the yard of the synagogue of the pre-war Jewish settlement.

The piercing wind and rain play a special role in joining the past and the present. The space of Bernardian Park grows closer and closer to that of the small Jewish settlement, Malkin’s native place:

*The sun appeared, the earth dried up; the clouds dispersed, dishevelled. And the wind playing above Bernardian garden like a pike in quiet back-water drove them away from the Cathedral to the humble church of the settlement, from the pavilion of the empty summer café to the synagogue-bakery.*

[Выглянуло солнце, подсохла земля; тучи расступились, растрепались, И ветер, озоровавший над Бернардинским садом, как щука в тихой заводи, погнал их прочь от Кафедрального собора к скромному местечковому костелу, от павильона пустующего летнего кафе к синагоге-пекарне.<sup>26]</sup>

The rain that is raining in the 1990s washed the young Ichak also in 1946:

*Splashes got mixed with raindrops. The sky was covered with dark clouds. The wind that had driven them from another decade, from Vilnius, from Bernardian garden, here, to the year 1946, clung to the river, dishevelled the smooth water, blew up waves.*

[Брызги смешались с каплями дождя. Небо заволокло тучами. Ветер, пригнавший их из другого десятилетия, из Вильнюса, из Бернардинского сада, сюда, в сорок шестой год, сам прильнул к реке, взъерошил гладь, вздыбил волны.<sup>27]</sup>

Finally, the image of a lime-tree joins not just times and spaces but the actual space with the supra-real, sacred:

*He, Ichak, was missing for two days but when he came, the lime-tree started rustling so that his eyes filled with tears. Malkin was sitting covered by the fallen leaves and did not shake them off. [...] He continued sitting motionless, fearing to lose the benevolence, break a kind of a bond between him and the Supreme that appeared to him for a moment in the form of an old and generous lime-tree.*

[Его, Ицхака, два дня не было, а когда пришел, липа так расшумелась, так зашелестела, что у него слезы на глазах выступили. Малкин сидел, осыпанный листвою, и не стряхивал ее. [...] он продолжал неподвижно сидеть, боясь лишиться благодати, нарушить какую-то связь между ним и Всевышним, явившимся ему на мгновение в виде старой и великодушной липы.<sup>28]</sup>

The landscape created by Kanovich is inseparable from the hero's state of mind, it is highly subjective, yet the landscape element and memory as well as fate are often so closely intertwined that there emerges some kind of a conditional landscape. In this case it is not clear whether the reader faces the description of Bernardian Park or a landscape emerging in Malkin's consciousness that foregrounds particular images important only for him. Landscape element is no longer a fact of the actual park or the settlement; it is made metaphoric:

*[...] there was no one around, only him and leaves, only him and the sky, only him and his life melted in the morning fog, torn to pieces.*

[...] никого из посторонних вокруг не было, только он и листья, только он и небо, только он и растаявшая в утреннем тумане, изорванная в клочья его жизнь.<sup>29]</sup>

It is noteworthy that the conditional landscape by Kanovich is surprisingly multifaceted, it often unites several spaces and time layers. Pigeons that return the hero to the native settlement guard him from oblivion like the lime-trees stretching out like a curtain

are also the pigeons that were fed in the ghetto by the Jew Yacek and the Polish woman Zofya who was in love with him. Ghetto pigeons died on the same day as Yacek whom childless Malkin, who had never seen Zofya's beloved, considered as his son:

*And suddenly above his head, above Bernardian garden, pigeons from his settlement fluttered their wings. The flock was hanging above his grey dishevelled hair, it did not fly away like a cloud, it did not melt and Ichak saw the winged curtain as clearly as the crown of the lime-tree above the bench.*

[И вдруг над его головой, над Бернардинским садом затрепыхали крыль'-ми голуби его местечка. Ста' висела над его седыми взлохмаченными патлами, не уплывала, как облако, не та'ла, и Ицхак видел крылатый полог так же зримо, как крону липы над скамейкой.<sup>30</sup>]

Malkin and his friends' peculiar falling out from the historical present of Lithuania, their turning to the past are generalized in the image of a young horse ridden by Ichak through times and spaces as he has dozed off in Bernardian garden lulled by the shouts of rally participants. The horseman has appeared on Lithuania's coat of arms since the 14<sup>th</sup> century and became the symbol of the independent state at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup>. However, in Ichak's dream, *the further the horse raced the vaguer against the evening sky became the horseman's silhouette, while finally he melted with the sunset haze. Ichak saw the black horse but without the rider [..].* [чем дальше конь летел, тем смутнее проступал на фоне вечеряющего неба силуэт всадника, пока он наконец не слился с закатным маревом. Ицхак видел вороного, но уже без всадника...<sup>31</sup>].

When Malkin recalls the native places, the first to appear are not the parents' home or deceased family members but the signs of landscape related to them. The river and cows grazing on the bank of this conditional river, a symbol of purity and immortality, are the basic nature images forming in Malkin's consciousness a recurring conditional landscape:

*Most often Ichak recalled, he never knew why, [...] a river, full-flowing, swarming with secrets like young fish, its dark green colouring, its curving banks where languid cows with sorrowful eyes of widows were grazing; looking into those eyes one saw, like on the bottom of the Vilnia, weird fish swimming and unusual weeds swaying.*

*Ichak liked watching the cows, following them going down to water, slowly and greedily drinking the immortal water and seemingly assuming immortality themselves. [...] these big-headed, large-eyed animals with the gait of ancient queens will stay forever – till the end of times they would treat the lush riverside grass, turn their heavy heads like crowns adorned with pearls towards the setting sun. And also till the end of the days a small stream warmed by their breath would leak from their moist and inscrutable muzzles.*

[Чаще всего Ицхак почему-то вспоминал [...] реку, полноводную, кишашую тайнами, как мальками, ее томно-зеленый окрас, ее изогнутые берега, на которых паслись ленивые коровы с печальными вдовьими глазами, заглянешь – а в них, словно на дне Вилии, плавают причудливые рыбы и колышутся диковинные водоросли.

Ицхак любил смотреть на коров, следить за тем, как они спускаются к водопою, медленно и жадно пьют бессмертную воду и сами, казалось, обретают бессмертие. [...] эти большеголовые, большеглазые животные с поступисью



древних цариц пребудут вечно — до скончания дней топтать и топтать им сочную прибрежную траву, поворачивать тяжелую голову, как унизанную жемчужом корону, к закатному солнцу. И так же до скончания дней с их влажных и непроницаемых морд будет стекать утепленная дыханием струйка.<sup>32]</sup>

This stream, a part of the river, is flowing into Malkin's soul also at present, he clung to the stream leaking from cows' muzzles also during the war when his eyes were fogged by hopelessness. But some time in his childhood Ichak would drown his own and his granddad's sins in the Vilia-Vileika. It is important that the image of the river unites the Vilia (the present-day Neris) flowing past Malkin's native settlement and Vileika (the present-day Vilnia), the tributary of the Vilia, a border of Bernardian Park. Ichak is able to step from the pavilion of the summer café simultaneously on two banks — those of the Vileika and Vilia, look from his native settlement first to the Vilia and then to the Vileika. In Malkin's consciousness and his memory spaces and time layers are laid over one another, descriptions of actual rivers turn into idyllic landscapes devoid of war, loss, ghetto, Germans and policemen, where is a good and safe place for those who have left this world forever.

Though memory binds the past and the present powerfully enough, it remains the memory of Malkin and his friends, forgotten Jews, as they are nominated by the author. In the end Bernardian Park turns into a scene for a movie about the Jews who are leaving that is shot by an American who has arrived to Vilnius. The image of snowstorm becomes the major one in this set landscape created by Joseph:

*Malkin grinned:*

*— The park is there. But no more Jews.*

*— I don't need anyone else but you, — Joseph admitted. — [...] We will not hold you back for long. I see the first shot like this: you are walking along the alley but snowstorm is covering up your traces. [...]*

*— But if there is no snowstorm? — Malkin opposed.*

*— Oh, there sure will be one, — the American assured him. — There will always be snowstorms in Lithuania. I'm not concerned with them. But we must hurry up with Jews...*

[Малкин усмехнулся:

— Парк-то есть. Евреев нет.

— А мне никто, кроме вас, не нужен, — признался Джозеф. — [...] Долго мы вас не задержим. Так и вижу первый кадр: вы ходите по аллее, а вьюга заметает ваши следы. [...]

— А если вьюги не будет? — воспротивился Малкин.

— Будет, будет, — успокоил его американец. — Вьюги в Литве всегда будут. За них я спокоен. А с евреями надо спешить...<sup>33]</sup>

The American had created the frame according to the cinematographic rules, in which Malkin is first a young provincial Jew against the background of the Eiffel Tower, then an old man whose traces are erased by the snowstorm, accompanied by the sounds of Kadish. Malkin does not have to play, he has lived through the tragedy of the disappearance of the park of Jews long ago. Ichak is walking along the park lanes covered with snow and saying a funeral prayer for himself, he refuses to answer questions about the future of Jews during shooting the movie, because the future of his own and Jews is covered by snowstorm.

After shooting the movie Malkin realizes that the immortal cows were grazing on the snow-covered park lanes beside him, like in a riverside meadow. The conditional space existing only in the hero's memory turns out to be the liveliest and the most actual.

In the finale of the novel, Ichak is riding on the train not so much to the actually existing settlement where he spent his childhood but to the world that he calls memory, the space of which is represented also by the conditional landscape. Comparing Malkin to a conjurer is not incidental. Like a conjurer creates an illusion, so Ichak creates a conditional landscape in his consciousness that finally replaces the actual space of the park and joins Ichak Malkin with his deceased wife Esther who has long existed on the bank where cows graze and bees fly:

*Only the river, only the cows grazing in the riverside meadows, only the bees flying there as if from the Paradise, only the birds covering the trees [...]. Ichak descended on the slope and gazed at the peaceful flow of the Vilia, and in one moment the sense of time and age disappeared [...].*

[Только река, только коровы, пасшиеся на прибрежных лугах, только пчелы, залетевшие сюда словно из рая, только птицы, усыпавшие деревья [...]. Ицхак опустил на косогор и уставился на спокойное течение Вилии, и в один миг исчезло ощущение времени и возраста [...].<sup>34</sup>]

The key category of Kanovich's novel is closely related to landscape – the category of memory that is revealed by the elements of landscape. Nature images are those that let heroes travel over time and space, become the pledge of preserving memory of the past, demonstrate the significance of the category of memory for Malkin and his friends. However, in the finale of the novel Bernardian Park is abandoned by almost all the forgotten Jews. The landscape of the actual park is replaced by a conditional one that is filled with images actual only for Malkin who predicted that his last trip would be from the park to the graveyard.

### Park and Other Spaces

The space of park in Kanovich's novel does not exist in isolation. It enters interrelations with other spaces that become important for the artistic world of the novel.

The novel foregrounds the space of the birch grove where Jews from Malkin's native settlement were shot dead. The grove is described very briefly (it is more often just mentioned), yet the landscape images used for this approximate it to the space of the park. Malkin recalls his relatives, *shot dead in the light, clear as a wedding gown morning, at the very entrance to the settlement, in the birch grove running down the hill straight to the river, to the rapid mysterious Vilia* [расстрелянных в светлое, прозрачное, как подвенечное платье, утро, при самом въезде в местечко, в березовой рощице, сбегавшей с пригорка прямо к реке, к быстротечной таинственной Вилии<sup>35</sup>]. Like the Vileika is the border of Bernardian garden, so the Vilia borders on the birch grove, and both rivers can be reached by going down the hill slope. In Malkin's consciousness these rivers are united that makes the space of the park and the grove synonymic: in the grove the Jews of the settlement were killed, while the park is abandoned by the forgotten Jews of Vilnius.

The grove and Ponari, the place of burial of the massacred Jews of Vilnius, are related in the novel not so much on the level of images but on that of motifs. Birch-trees had been planted in memory of Russia and to commemorate the sisters who perished in the revolution by the Russian nobleman; in a similar way Olenev-Pomerants has now planted and is looking after oak-trees in Ponari. Representing the oak grove, Malkin's friend creates a memorial landscape that is both a description of trees and a portrait of his relatives:

*I will attach a copper tablet to every tree indicating the name and family name. Let my sisters and brothers grow, let the hair of my mother Zlata fly in the wind, let the wind fan like leaves the black wisps of my father Aaron's beard not torn out by the rascals.*

[Я к каждому деревцу приколочу медную табличку и укажу на ней имя и фамилию. Пусть растут мои сестры и братья, пусть на ветру развеваются волосы моей матери Златы, и пусть ветер обвеваает, как листья, не вырванные негодяями ключья черной бороды моего отца Арона.<sup>36</sup>]

A similar device of uniting the natural and the human is used by Kanovich to describe the town cemetery where Malkin's wife is buried:

*Each time when Malkin came to this shade, under these guarding pine-trees and lime-trees, the roots of which have interlaced so that they could not be distinguished from one another, he recalled the graveyard in his native settlement with rock dominating. Plain, unremarkable [...].*

[Всякий раз, когда Малкин приходил под эту сень, под эти сторожевые сосны и липы, корни которых сплелись с костями так, что, пожалуй, их и не отличишь друг от друга, он вспоминал погост в родном местечке, где преобладал полевой камень. Неказистый, неприметный [...].<sup>37</sup>]

The images of young oak-trees, like those of lime-trees, birch-trees, pine-trees cover the fates of the perished people, trees are bound with the category of memory, nature images are closely intertwined with humans – all that makes the spaces of the park, the grove, the town and the settlement graveyards synonymic. These spaces are also approximated by lexical units significant for the description of Bernardian Park; the park seems to grow into every space close to it: the grove borders on *the river*, in Ponari the wind fans *the leaves*, the graveyard is located *under the shade* of trees. The park seems to expand, open up, however all the spaces related to it are those of departure.

Wood and the urban space are opposed to Bernardian garden in Kanovich's novel.

Malkin's wife Esther spent four wartime years in the wood. In 1946 the Malkins decided to visit those people who rescued a Jewish woman from death hiding her in the forester's house. The wood that, like the park, is a natural space, is most often called in the novel thicket or backwoods, it is thickly overgrown, difficult to traverse. Moreover, if Bernardian garden reveals secrets and reconciles with the past, the sounds of the wood (rustle, squeaks) hide numerous secrets. Instead of a park alley or sandy lane, in the wood there is a *beaten rut, with grooves and spasmodic roots protruding from the soil* [выбитая, в рытвинах и торчащих из-под земли судорожных корнях колей<sup>38</sup>]. The wood landscape, even if it bears a positive connotation, exists apart from the human; this is underlined on the level of paragraph composition:

*It was quiet and cool in the wood. Under the feet fallen twigs were cracking and these sounds were calming and peaceful, promising warmth and peace... Everyone was walking in silence, in a file, looking under their feet, not to fall in some pit.*

[В лесу было тихо и прохладно. Под ногами похрустывал валежник, и хруст его был домовитым и миротворным, предвещавшим как бы тепло и покой... Все шли молча, цепочкой, глядя себе под ноги, чтобы не провалиться в какую-нибудь яму.<sup>39]</sup>

If the description of a tree is merged with the hero's portrait, his state of mind, this peculiar 'landscape' is based not on a lime-tree or a growing oak-tree but a decaying tree:

*Keeping silent turned him into a tree with a numb bark instead of skin, with a rotten hollow instead of the heart, with a crown abandoned by birds instead of the head, from which all thoughts have flown away.*

[Молчание превращало его в дерево с бесчувственной корой вместо кожи, с гниловатым дуплом вместо сердца, с оставленной птицами кроной вместо головы, из которой выпорхнули все мысли.<sup>40]</sup>

The signs of the wood landscape include a burnt pine-tree, burrows and caves, a deadly ring of trees instead of a guarding shade. One is saved from the power of this space and people with rifles living here by the river where Malkin as a child used to drown his sins and that is the basic component part of the conditional idyllic landscape of the old Jew.

Finally the wood landscape is joined with the urban one:

*[...] inaccessible like a house and unrelenting like fate, building on Stalin Avenue that, though it was rising in the very centre of Vilnius, with its basement caves, its room burrows, its blinds, velvet hanging from walls and windows reminded of that impenetrable thicket with its wind-fallen trees [...].*

[...] неприступное, как дот, и неумолимое, как рок, здание на проспекте Сталина, которое, хоть и возвышалось в самом центре Вильнюса, своими подвалами-норами, своими кабинетами-берлогами, своими шторами, плющом свисавшими со стен и окон, напоминало ту непроходимую чашу с ее буреломом [...]<sup>41]</sup>

Kanovich equally values the space of a bearded man with a rifle killing in the name of the independence of his homeland and a major of state security bodies trying to establish the soviet power in Lithuania.

The park is located at the foot of Prince castle, next to Gediminas Square that becomes the sign of the present, movement for Lithuania's independence. Malkin is not interested in this present, he does not go to watch the starving eighty years old Lithuanian, does not read leaflets on the walls. The cityscape remains exclusively sonorous for Malkin. The sounds of axes, voices, music reach the park, through the fuss one can hear the festive sounding of Lithuanian anthem that had been banned so recently. The noise of the cityscape – the hum of the rally, speeches of orators, exultant cries – destroys the silence in the park, the holiness of the chapel located under the lime-trees. The elements of cityscape are not the rustle of leaves or the sacred silence or the babble of the river but annoying unnatural sounds that interfere with recollection.

Wood and the central square of Vilnius are those spaces that are related in the novel first and foremost with historical changes, with the final historical time. They are opposed to the park, the grove, the space of the graveyard that are associated with the eternal in Kanovich's novel.

## Conclusion

The landscape of the park in Kanovich's novel *The Park of the Forgotten Jews* consists of small fragments, discontinuous allusions to certain signs of landscape. However, landscape, despite its fragmented character, plays a significant role. It not only indicates the place and time of the described events but is also psychologized.

Memory as the key category of the novel is closely related to landscape. Elements of landscape move heroes from one space and time to another, help guarding a person from oblivion, understanding the significance of the category of memory for Malkin and his friends.

Quite often in landscape sketches these are not descriptions as such that matter but thoughts and feelings caused by them. Involvement of the human in the context of nature landscape becomes the indicator of morality, his psychological and emotional state. Hence, in the finale of the novel Bernardian Park is abandoned (by dying or departing) by almost all the forgotten Jews. The landscape of the actual park is replaced by a conditional one that is gradually formed throughout the novel and is filled with images important only for Malkin. This landscape demonstrates the value and simultaneously the vulnerability of the category of memory, as it disappears with the departure of the last of the forgotten Jews from Bernardian Park.

Kanovich's novel sets an opposition of the park landscape and the space of wood, cityscape that are related to the historical and the finite.

The birch grove, the city and settlement graveyards, Ponari – the place of burial of the massacred Jews in wartime are synonymous of the park. These spaces form landscape elements related to memory, eternity, harmonious coexistence of human and nature. However, despite that the space of the park remains the guardian of the past, of personal memory. On the level of landscape Kanovich foregrounds the idea that, with the departure of those who do not accept oblivion, the space of Bernardian Park in the novel *The Park of the Forgotten Jews* will become the space of exodus.

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<sup>1</sup> Lotman Ju. M. *V shkole poeticheskogo slova: Pushkin. Lermontov. Gogol'*. Moskva: Prosveschenie, 1988. – pp. 252–253.

<sup>2</sup> Fjodorov F. P. *Romanticheskij hudozhestvennij mir: prostranstvo i vremja*. Rīga: Zinātne, 1988. – p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Kanovich G. Park zabytyh evreev. *Oktjabr'* No 4, 1997. – p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. – p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. – p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. – p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. – p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. – p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. – p. 21.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. – p. 24.

- <sup>11</sup> Ibid. – p. 49.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. – p. 50.
- <sup>13</sup> Kanovich G. Park zabytyh evreev. *Oktjabr'* No 5, 1997. – p. 109.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. – p. 132.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. – p. 133.
- <sup>16</sup> Bahtin M. M. Formy vremeni i hronotopa v romane. *Voprosy literatury i estetiki. Issledovaniya raznykh let*. Moskva: Hudozhestvennaja literatura, 1975. – p. 382.
- <sup>17</sup> Epshtein M. N. “*Priroda, mir, tajnik Vselejnoj...*”: *Sistema pejzaznykh obrazov v russkoj poezii*. Moskva: Vysshaja shkola, 1990. – p. 129.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid. – p. 200.
- <sup>19</sup> Lotman Ju. M. *O poetah i poezii*. Spb: Iskustvo-Spb., 1999. – p. 478.
- <sup>20</sup> Louental' D. *Proshloe – chuzhaja strana*. Per. s angl. Govorunova A. V. Spb: Vladimir Dal, 2004. – p. 319.
- <sup>21</sup> Kanovich G. Park zabytyh evreev. *Oktjabr'* No 4, 1997. – p. 5.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid. – p. 3.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid. – p. 4.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid. – p. 22.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid. – p. 7.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid. – p. 27.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid. – p. 28.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid. – pp. 48–49.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid. – p. 3.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid. – p. 10.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid. – p. 48.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid. – p. 4.
- <sup>33</sup> Kanovich G. Park zabytyh evreev. *Oktjabr'* No 5, 1997. – p. 104.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid. – p. 145.
- <sup>35</sup> Kanovich G. Park zabytyh evreev. *Oktjabr'* No 4, 1997. – p. 3.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid. – p. 49.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid. – p. 30.
- <sup>38</sup> Kanovich G. Park zabytyh evreev. *Oktjabr'* No 5, 1997. – p. 98.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid. – p. 99.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid. – p. 100.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid. – p. 102.

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Žans Badins

## DAUGAVPILS IN THE NOVEL THE TOWN THAT WENT INSANE BY BORIS JUDIN

### *Summary*

*The Russian writing author Boris Judin's (born in Latvian city Daugavpils, living in America) novel 'The Town that Went Insane' was first published in 2005 in the German magazine for the Russian speaking community 'Foreign Notes' ('Зарубежные записки'). The novel goes back to the tradition of depicting a provincial town that had been exploited by Leonid Dobychin – the author of the most famous and striking text about Dvinsk-Daugavpils called 'The Town of N'.*

*Following his predecessors Judin creates a novel about a native town after he has left it. The author constructs a model of the urban cultural landscape characteristic of the soviet period at the time of decline of Brezhnev's epoch. Judin defines the genre of his work as a novel-farce. During several days spent in the town the consciousness of the personage smoothly changes from normal to insane. He ceases to understand what is happening, loses an ability to differentiate the reality from the products of imagination, his will to resist and even to save himself is paralysed. At the same time the cultural landscape of Daugavpils turns out to be accurate and well-recognizable. The character lives out his days not in the real town, but in his nostalgia. Breaking free from his nostalgia he disentangles himself from the power of the Town.*

*Key words: cultural landscape, city landscape, Boris Judin, Daugavpils, town, farce*

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### **Introduction**

The problem of preserving cultural landscape as one of the most significant heritage objects is an important issue of modern humanities and other sciences.

The analysis of the literary texts appealing to one and the same toponym but having been created in different time and historico-cultural periods allows describing the phenomenon of the cultural landscape as a component of an extremely valuable historico-cultural and natural environment, and revealing its typological diversity.

Nikolay Antsiferov in his book *The Soul of St. Petersburg*<sup>1</sup> compares studying of urban space to cognizing its soul, its poetics, reconstructing its image. The urban look is created by various factors, for example, its appearance – architecture, places of sight-seeing, natural peculiarities, location, cleanliness, and illumination of streets.

At the same time the image of the town is formed by stereotypes about the region and mythology; the emotional bond with the region (feelings, expectations, hopes, and attitude towards it) and memory about the cultural landscape are especially important for the culture of emigration.

Each modern city represents a historically developed model of the industrial cultural landscape. The author's consistency in portraying the image of a city can be regarded as an algorithm that helps understanding the systematic organization of this rather complicated phenomenon.

The present article continues the discussion started some time ago by Alexander Belousov in his article *Dinaburg-Dvinsk-Daugavpils in the Russian Literature* (*Динабург-Двинск-Даугавпилс в русской литературе*)<sup>2</sup>. It will deal with a novel by Judin, *The Town That Went Insane* (*Город, который сошел с ума*)<sup>3</sup>. Judin, a Russian-American poet and prose writer, was born in Daugavpils, 7 February 1949, studied in the Faculty of Philology of Daugavpils Pedagogical Institute. In 1995, he emigrated to the USA, now he lives in the state of New Jersey. He actively cooperates with American, German, and Russian periodicals; his works are published on the Internet. In the period of time from 2003 till 2011, seven books by Judin were published in Kiev, Moscow, and two the most recent ones – in Taganrog.

The novel was first published in a German magazine of Russian literature *Notes from Abroad* (*Зарубежные записки*) in 2005, and two years later it was published by a Moscow publishing house *Zhuk* (*Жук*).

The present novel goes back to the tradition of depicting a provincial town that had also been used by Dobychin, the author of the most famous and outstanding text on Daugavpils-Dvinsk – the novel *The Town of N* (*Город ЭН*)<sup>4</sup>. In fact, the majority of texts on Daugavpils that have drawn the attention of literary scholars (besides Dobychin, one should name Vladimir Krinov, Pyotr Pilsky, Yuriy Galich, Leonard Korol-Purashevich, Arseniy Formakov) refer to the Dinaburg-Dvinsk period. Though already since the 1920 – 1930s the town had been given the official name of Daugavpils, still in the Russian-speaking Latvian and émigré environment the town retained its previous name for some time. The novel by Judin is interesting in the sense that the author chooses his hometown Daugavpils to create a pattern of the cultural landscape characteristic of a soviet town of the decline of the Brezhnev era. An issue of the newspaper *Krasnoje Znamja* (*Красное знамя*) from April 29, 1981, serves as a particular chronological marker in the novel; a pre-holiday issue devoted to the upcoming May Day celebration from which the detained protagonist is trying to make roll-ups.

The novel *The Town That Went Insane* is a farce novel; this genre definition is provided by the author. The collision of the novel in many ways reminds of a situation where the protagonist of the movie *Zero City* (*Город Zero* – produced by Karen Shakhnazarov in 1988) got himself into. Both the movie and the novel show how in a few days it is possible to drive a normal and rational person into a condition when he completely stops understanding any ongoing events, loses his ability to distinguish between reality and imagination, how his will to resistance and even to escape is paralyzed inside of him. And, what is characteristic, all this happens without violence, only by affecting his consciousness and feelings. If the movie character goes for a business trip to an unknown town, the protagonist of the novel who lives in New York and is detached from the realia of his former homeland, returns to the town where he has spent the main part of his live in order to visit the graves of his parents. It should be noted that in the novel the TOWN (it is always capitalized) has no name, though it is not difficult to notice the traits of Daugavpils in it. The town is situated on a railway branch line Leningrad-Riga,

Riga Black Balsam and Riga schnitzel are mentioned as well as the newspaper *Krasnoje Znamja*, many of characters have prototypes, but, first and foremost, this is the town topography. It is possible to say that for Judin the very Town becomes the central figure of the novel. It seems that one of the main tasks the author faced was to show the town not only as an entity, but as a process.

*The Town is a complex body*, writes Judin, and develops this idea further:

*A labyrinthine sewage intestines, nerves of electrical wires and cables, heating and water supply systems. An incomprehensible scheme of catering. And an indistinct net of streets. You can look at the map until everything turns green, but if the town wants you to get lost – you will get lost without doubt. Even in a place where you were born and have lived your whole life.*<sup>5</sup>

*A town – it is a living body. There is no doubt about it and there cannot be. From way back, as Neanderthal men – or what's the name of them? – enclosed their ten earth houses with a pale fence, a town was born, and, as any newborn, it started to grow and develop.*

*– I am Town –, said the town to itself, – as I have walls. Not like any village...*

*And the town knows perfectly well that it has to set up at least one stone building, otherwise it will lose its status and will turn into a village.*<sup>6</sup>

*The opinion that houses in towns are set by architects and house-builders – it is a mere misperception. Towns themselves select their architecture, engage builders, chose tenants and set exploitation and maintenance bodies.*<sup>7</sup>

As soon as the protagonist walks down the station stairs to the main street of the town (Lenin street during the Soviet period), he gets under the Town's influence. He becomes a hostage of the Town's space; with every minute of his stay, feeling of alarm and horror grows inside the protagonist with the realization of the fact that he will never be able to leave the Town's borders. The first manoeuvre – an attempt to leave the Town on his own *Zaporozhec* – is suppressed by the representatives of the state security service. He is stopped near the *Gull* (it is called a *Puffin* in the novel) marking the Town's borders, and is once again detained for clarification of the escape circumstances.

*Towns are rational. It cannot be doubted. This must be taken for granted. Collective little minds of diverse social groups are merged together in the town and form the town's intellect.*

*And do agree with me – any rational being can go insane one day...*<sup>8</sup>

Insanity is manifested on different levels, but it starts with a chronological failure. When in the Town, the protagonist immediately grows twenty years younger. From a sixty-year old man he turns into a forty-year old mature man. Vasilyev clearly remembers that he came to the Town in August, but it is the May Day tomorrow and he is given the honorary role to run a live broadcast on the May Day demonstration from the Lenin Square. Tomorrow is the May Day, but the day after tomorrow – the New Year. The end of one festive occasion is immediately marked by the beginning of the ideological preparation for the organization of the celebration of another no less significant occasion, whether it is the birth of the one hundred thousandth townsperson or celebration of Pushkin's 144<sup>th</sup> death anniversary. In the renewed cultural and social space a new correlation of a holiday and the everyday life (the mundane) appears that is characterized by

erosion of boundaries between the conviviality and the everydayness, by interpenetration of the holiday into the mundane, and vice versa.

Clocks in the Town's space do not show time, but the absurd and farcical state of events is strengthened by the fact that the protagonist receives a severe reproof for being late for a rehearsal. Absence of the timeline linearity allows the author to slightly alter the all-in-all utterly precise cultural landscape of the town. Thus, an episode with a monument to Stalin and Gorky is introduced into the texture of the novel.

*In a small square opposite the theatre there stood a monument. Vasilyev immediately saw himself as a little boy there, in the entirely forgotten fifties, respectfully passing by this chef d'oeuvre. On a concrete bench there was sitting a concrete Iosif Vissarionovich. In his right hand he was holding a pipe while holding his left arm around the shoulders of Maxim Gorky wearing a tubeteika. Moreover, Gorky was barely reaching up to Vozhd's shoulder.<sup>9</sup>*

Judin reconstructs a particular memory myth through the chronotope. As a result, a collision takes place. Objective information testifies to one thing, while the memory myth – to the straight opposite. And the memory myth proves to be the most persistent and resilient. *You will not leave*, says Igor Nikolaevich Dobezhlov, the principal director of the town's theatre, to Vasilyev at the very beginning of the novel:

- *Why is that? – Vasilyev became defensive.*
- *'Cause the Town is not on the outside. The Town – it rests within you.<sup>10</sup>*

The image of the town is always interlaced with a particular historical context and social situation:

*The Town's image has its own fate. Every epoch gives rise to its particular perception; the change of eras creates a constantly changing and fluctuating image of the town and at the same time altogether unique one in something essential, making up its essence as an organic entity.<sup>11</sup>*

The choice of the town's topoi when creating the artistic world of the novel is extremely intriguing. In the novel there are no topoi indicative of the world of Dvinsk – the Prison castle, the mention of which actually introduces the novel by Dobychin, numerous churches testifying to the multi-religious character of the real Daugavpils, there is no place even for the Dinaburg Fortress that was written about or at least mentioned by everyone who had visited Dinaburg or Dvinsk.

Absence of these topoi in the novel *The Town That Went Insane* is quite explicable. The demonstration of the ideology-driven space of the Soviet Town is paramount for Judin, by definition there can be no Church Hill or any detailed description of any other religious or sacral space. The author deliberately escapes any historical signs that could introduce other eras into the texture of the work. The only solid sign of the 'past' mentioned is the embankment, but it is introduced in the context of the modern age: the symbol of the post-war Daugavpils – the city tram – moves past the embankment.

Due to this reason the accent in the novel is placed on the solid signs of the Soviet era. At the beginning of the novel, the vector of the movement leads from the train station down Lenin Street to the Lenin Square where a monument to Lenin and a hotel block are situated.

*Rather than taking a taxi, should I take a walk till the hotel? I shall combine a walk with memories, decided Vasilyev, while having a look at the queue near the taxi stand. And he set a foot on the old-time stone paving. The Town was lying beneath his feet. Because the train station was standing on a hill while the town was spreading down. Street lamps were already on, and one could see shadows of occasional passers-by.<sup>12</sup>*

Since the action takes place on the eve of the May Day celebration, the whole Town centre is decorated with posters and slogans. The apartment of the misfortunate 'returnee' is also situated at 74, Lenin Street. In the same place, in a gastronomy store over there, he meets a saleswoman Valya who not only helps him to get items in short supply, but also dreams of getting married to Vasilyev.

*Vasilyev rolled open the bigger parcel. There was a 0.3 litter bottle of Riga balsam, a tin of sprats, a tin of sauries, a can of Bulgarian cucumber pickles, a piece of sausage, and a pack of buckwheat. In brief, everything required for a decent celebration.<sup>13</sup>*

The novel mentions the building of the music school where characters rehearse for the concert dedicated to Pushkin's death anniversary, and Daugavpils Pedagogical Institute. After the protagonist attempts to leave the Town, he is accused of treason and sentenced to execution by shooting that is supported not only by the administration, but also by rank and file people who in fact are honorary citizens of the town. The sentence was immediately executed by placing Vasilyev to the wall of the Daugavpils Pedagogical Institute, *gunfire rounds tick-tacked and Vasilyev felt that something odd drummed on his body, just like rain on a roof*<sup>14</sup>. However the wall turned out to be a football one, while the role of the volley of automatic gunfire was taken over by shots of champagne corks. The fake death sentence execution is typologically going back to the finale of the novel *Invitation to a Beheading*<sup>15</sup> by Vladimir Nabokov.

The Theatre turns out to be one of the most significant town topoi in the novel: Vasilyev introduces himself as an artist to the saleswoman Valentina, the majority of acquaintances of the protagonist are linked to the theatre in one way or other, and the attitude towards the theatre greatly determines the essence of the town's existence.

*The Town, as is right and proper, treated every intellectual with suspicion, not to mention creative ones, and didn't like theatre. Didn't like, yet endured it. Endured in the way as a lady endures a pimple in an intimate spot – it both troubles and is painful to squeeze out.*

*Yet the Town did squeeze its theatres out of its borders for several times. But as soon as it seemed to have got rid of them, maturing girls immediately set up something that looked like theatre and started playing heart-piercing scenes to their parents and future fiancés.*

*And now, – I don't know whether it's good or bad, – the Town let it pass. And it took up another theatre company.<sup>16</sup>*

Everything that happens to the protagonist in the novel reminds either of a nightmare or a farcical theatre production – it is no coincidence that the genre of the novel is determined as a farce novel. Practically all segments of the novel undergo carnivalization of a varying degree. The carnivalization concept, as it is well-known, is based on the idea of the *inversion of binary oppositions*, i.e., reversal of the meaning of binary oppositions,

and, what is equally important, the very oppositions of life and death are switching their places. In the artistic world of the novel, the difference between the world of the living and the world of the dead is quite relative. At one point the protagonist begins to think about the infernality of all the events:

*– Everything's clear, said Vasilyev to himself [...] I am dead and got to hell. That all makes sense. Most probably terrorists have blown up the airplane I took. And everything happened so quickly that nobody noticed anything. And everyone immediately got every which way. Me, for instance, to hell. There is no doubt in it. My whole life I plumed myself upon my ability to find a way out of any situation and now – of all things! Got to it. And I will never get out of here. Never.<sup>17</sup>*

The Town is inhabited by the living and the dead, in addition, the dead and gone turn out to be more alive than the ones in good health. The protagonist who after all visits the communal cemetery, meets his mother there, whereas many characters are not only deprived of pulse – a factor proving a physical belonging to the world of the living, but they are also dead spiritually.

*– Natashka! [...] How lucky you are after all! An apartment, a car, a summer house – it is all yours! And on top of it, the trade union has paid for the funeral<sup>18</sup>,* one of the townswomen does not conceal her delight. In this aspect the depiction of a sculpture in the Town's space is highly intriguing. The sculpture is not only a part of the city landscape as, for instance, the sculpture park with three meters high concrete figures next to the building of children's hospital, or another park next to the drapery with a distinctive figure of Don Quixote, but it is also a part of an ideological code. The author uses a quite widespread technique of an awakening statue that controls every townsman. At the entrance of the factory of reinforced concrete structures,

*The Vozhd of the world's proletariat, clutching a cap in his right hand, was showing way to Vasilyev with his left one. [...] Vasilyev took a smoke pause and thought – why Vladimir Ilyich is holding his cap in the right hand and showing way with his left one. And only he decided that Lenin most probably was left-handed as the statue moved and Vladimir Ilyich, taking his cap in the left hand, knuckled his right one and waggled his fist at Vasilyev.<sup>19</sup>*

While wandering the town streets, the protagonist cannot decide yet whether it is inhabited by living people, or by the dead. The very space of the Town is carnivalized. Numerous manifestations of carnivalization reflect the instability (transitivity, criticality) of the current state of culture. Masking acquires particular semantics.

One and the same architectural building tries on one or another historico-cultural mask in different historical periods that carry out different functions in the artistic world of the novel. Thus, one and the same building of the Town has been occupied, first, by NKVD, then by Gestapo, and NKVD again, and, more recently, it is a female dormitory of the Pedagogical Institute; memories of the last one calm the protagonist down as he will definitely not be tortured in a female dormitory. Masking becomes the main form of existence; all masks are made according to modern, yet strict templates and 'adhere' to faces. It is no coincidence that Vasilyev, when going to the May Day celebration with no enthusiasm or delight, is stopped by a militiaman who gives him a paper mask on elastic band. It is characteristic that the mask has no openings for eyes. When hearing a bewildered question from the protagonist, the militiaman answers according to instruc-



tions: *But you must go where you are directed to! [...] Moreover, if you do it in serried ranks [...]!*<sup>20</sup>.

The closest beings of the protagonist – a bogie Konstantin and a cat Milka – at one point turn into a junior lieutenant Konstantinov and a sergeant Milashkina who are assigned to watch after the suspicious returnee. The overdone facial expressions and speech, masking all the characters without exception intensify the feeling of a theatrical action, enhance its dramatic effect. However, unlike a carnival that represents a ceremonial temporary release of the spontaneity of the unconscious, a complete limitless control of the carnival power over all fields of life and the inner world of a personality is observed in the novel by Judin. In addition, all this is put in well-known ideological and common shapes from a yet-so-recent Soviet past, be it marching in column or standing in a queue to buy some sour cream.

*So, what am I not satisfied with? – wonders the protagonist. – With the fact that people exhausted with everyday life do not think of freedom of speech or other shucks? Interesting, what would I be thinking about after standing such a line?*<sup>21</sup>

Another quite important aspect is the removal of the opposition of the capital – province that is crucial for the artistic world of the novel; more precisely – provincial topoi are attributed a metropolitan status. Since the Town is managed, organized, and executive – it is regulatory, and in virtue of these factors it matches the role of an ideological centre. The Town is self-sufficient, that is actually why it should not be left. During the staging of Anton Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* on the scene of the town's theatre, Irina, instead of the well-known phrase: *To Moscow, to Moscow, to Moscow*, voices *To the Town, to the Town, to the Town*. Actors, gathered to celebrate a birthday of one of the colleagues, lead off a song *Ah, Arbat, my Arbat* (*Ах Арбат, мой Арбат*) by Bulat Okudzhava, yet persistently replacing the word *Arbat* by the word *Town*. The well-known greenish label of the Moskovskaya vodka is proudly showing a lettering of *Town's Special* (*Городская особая*). Not by accident the protagonist having taken advantage of this particular drink has dreamt of the Mausoleum, Red Square and Victory Parade that he accepts while sitting on a white horse.

At the end of this fairy activity the protagonist starts to understand that he and the town are one and the same and that the Town's insanity is inflicted by himself or, to put it more precisely, in his own mind.

The protagonist lives not in a real town, but in his nostalgia. And, having broken free from his nostalgia, he frees himself from the control of the Town. The dead nomenclature apparatus, holding everyone in fear, turns out to be just stage-properties:

*Windows of the city committee shattered on a sidewalk like glittering grain, while officers of the apparatus were flowing out of window openings like balloons. They were going up to the clouds either in pods or one by one and were bursting there in cheerful fireworks.*<sup>22</sup>

In the meantime, on the Central Square, in the place of the vanished monument to Lenin, an immense sand-box appeared with a little boy sitting in it making sand cakes.

At some point Galich, a writer of the first-wave Russian emigration, having visited Daugavpils in the beginning of the 1920s, in one of his essays gave the town a murderous characteristic:

*This is a town of whom someone has said that one will not long for it, lose hart for it, or call it to mind*<sup>23</sup>.

A similar positioning is characteristic also of Judin's work; at the end of the novel the protagonist realizes that everything that happens is only his obsessive vision, a nightmare and shreds his airplane ticket from New York so as not to live through the experience once again. He clearly understands that not only cannot one step in the same river twice, but one should not even undertake such an attempt.

Furthermore, the conclusion of the writer is quite evident – the understanding of modernity is often favoured by the analysis of past events and traditions. In this case the protagonist is engaged in a dialogue with the Soviet traditions. The essence of a culture dialogue lies in the fact that understanding one's own culture and its place in the space of a new culture can be realized only through cognition and comprehension of the preceding culture. Conceptual inconsistencies give rise to a conflict with the past, in the present case the past is perceived as an anti-normative insane world, while parody and carnivalization become a way of overcoming it.

## Conclusions

The following characteristics of the cultural landscape stand out as the most essential in Yudin's novel: 1) immobility – the image of the Town is static and remains outside time; 2) historicity – the cultural landscape of the Town is interwoven with the historical context and the social situation of the Soviet period. But at the same time the cultural landscape has its own fate. Each epoch gives rise to its own peculiar perception of space; the shift of epochs creates both a constantly changing image of the territory that is indivisible in its basic forms, thus constructing an integral whole; 3) integrality – all components of the cultural landscape are interconnected; the change of one feature causes redefining of others.

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<sup>1</sup> Anciferov N. *Dusha Peterburga*. Petrograd, 1922.

<sup>2</sup> Belousov A. *Dinaburg-Dvinsk-Daugavpils v russoj literature*. <http://www.openstarts.units.it/dspace/bitstream/10077/2371/1/17.pdf> (accessed 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Judin B. *Gorod, kotoryj soshel s uma*. <http://magazines.russ.ru/zz/2005/4/iudin9.html> (23.11.2013)

<sup>4</sup> Dobychin L. *Gorod En*. Daugavpils: Daugavpils Universitātes Akadēmiskais apgāds "Saulē", 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Judin B. *Gorod, kotoryj soshel s uma*. <http://magazines.russ.ru/zz/2005/4/iudin9.html> (accessed 2013).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Dmitrievskaja N. *Obraz goroda kak social'nyj fenomen*. Sankt-Peterburg: Iz-vo SPbGUER, 1999. – p. 113.

<sup>12</sup> Judin B. *Gorod, kotoryj soshel s uma*. <http://magazines.russ.ru/zz/2005/4/iudin9.html> (accessed 2013).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Nabokov V. *Priglasenie na kazn'; Lolita: romany*. Moskva: Pressa, 1994.

<sup>16</sup> Judin B. *Gorod, kotoryj soshel s uma*. <http://magazines.russ.ru/zz/2005/4/iudin9.html> (accessed 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Galich Ju. *Zelenyj maj. Latvijskije novelly*. Riga: Didkovskij, 1929. – p. 111.

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LANDSCAPE POETICS





Jeļena Brakovska

## NATURAL LANDSCAPE AND ITS TRANSFORMATION IN CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN'S AND JOSEPH SHERIDAN LE FANU'S PROSE

### *Summary*

*Natural landscapes play an important role in Gothic literature, although their significance varies according to the social-historical contexts. Anglo-Irish Protestant writers, Charles Robert Maturin and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, the twin towers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Irish Gothic, penetrated the images of nature into the Gothic world of their literary works. The writers are the product of 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain with its struggles and difficulties; therefore, it is not possible to separate the writers from the violence and conflicts, which they witnessed during their lifetime. Ireland's unique colonial relationship with England provides the background for the development of a special Anglo-Irish Gothicism.*

*According to Gothic conventions, natural landscape serves the key in decoding the protagonist's inner world. Traditionally used to reflect the human's feelings and mood, Gothic natural landscape serves to underscore the action of the story. The ruins and sublime landscape in Maturin's 'Melmoth the Wanderer' function as a genuine marker of the clash between the artificial contracts of civilization and the purity of nature, one of Maturin's favourite themes. This idea was then supported and enlarged by Le Fanu. The author seems to have equated the images of nature with the guilt layers of a man's mind, where the supernatural phenomena could be rationally explained by natural theories. Thus, the elements of nature artistically create the gloomy and portentous landscape of Gothic fiction as well as serve as the realm of psyche.*

*Key words: Gothic fiction, nature, Late Romanticism, Victorianism, domesticity*

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### **Introduction**

Gothic fiction reached the height of its popularity in the 1790s and in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Typical Gothic tropes include mystery, horror, madness and doubles. Among the best-known Gothic novels were Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1764), Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797), Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818).

In many ways, Gothic had its most creative period in Victorian era. Interest in mediums and spiritualistic séances became an important factor which contributed greatly to the development of various forms of Gothic. In the early Victorian literature, Gothic thrived in the works of George W. M. Reynolds, Edward Bulwer Lytton, George P. R. James popular in the 1830s and 1840s. Gothic chills and thrills are also an integral part

of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and Charlotte's Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), as well as in many of Charles Dickens's novels.

These tales of the fantastic and supernatural are usually set in haunted castles or houses, ruins, and graveyards. Another outstanding feature of Gothic fiction is a description of violent natural landscapes and nasty weather. But in Gothic fiction nature means something more complicated. As Amy Reed asserts, *sunsets and moonshine, as well as rain and storms, can either refer to the transcendental order of the universe or serve as a sign system to reflect the psychology of the characters.*<sup>1</sup>

In this case, Gothic fiction follows the traditions of Romanticism. The Romantics shared the values of unspoiled natural state. Nature, in their view, was opposed to the artificial industrial and materialistic world of the city. According to Diarmuid O'Giollain, it represented *purity, authenticity, simplicity, and lack of affectation.*<sup>2</sup> The idea that natural phenomena can be interpreted as signs of something beyond the visible world is also found in Romantic poetry.<sup>3</sup>

An outstanding contribution to the Gothic tradition was made by two Anglo-Irish Protestant writers: Charles Robert Maturin (1780 – 1824) and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu (1814 – 1873). Unfortunately, these authors and their literary works are not commonly known, so they deserve a thorough critical analysis.

### Maturin, Le Fanu and Anglo-Irish Literature

Although Gothic fiction was created and popularized by English authors, it finds its most significant use in Ireland. In order to clear up the problem of defining Anglo-Irish literature, we should briefly discuss the position of Ireland in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Ireland was just one of many colonial holdings of England: the inhabitants of Ireland had been British subjects since Elizabeth the First's reign. The English colonists assimilated into the Irish culture, becoming the Anglo-Irish in the succeeding generations. There are many possible definitions for the term of 'Anglo-Irish literature'. The focus here is Irish writing in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that was composed in English by Protestant writers for audiences in English.

The biographical similarities between Maturin and Le Fanu are plentiful. Both came from families of French-Huguenot descent. Both were born in the families of the ruling Anglo-Irish social class, were educated at Trinity College in Dublin, and had an extensive background regarding the Church of Ireland. Both resided in the Irish countryside, but spent the majority of their lives in Dublin. Both struggled to support their families and felt an irresistible attraction to the effects of terror and horror, which came from Irish mythology and folklore. Both wrote Gothic novels after it had been fashionable, and became key authors in the development of Anglo-Irish Gothic.

### Natural Landscape in Maturin's Novel *Melmoth the Wanderer*

Maturin is best remembered as the author of a remarkable Gothic novel *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820). The main character, Melmoth the Wanderer, is a villain who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for 100 extra years of life and searches for a victim to take over the pact for him. The novel is revealed through several stories, which work backwards through time.

As Gothic fiction is closely connected with horror and anxiety, the weather plays an important role there. In his case, Maturin's landscapes in the novel are mostly gloomy and portentous and mirror the feelings of his characters.

There is a passage from the first part of *Melmoth the Wanderer* which serves as an example of the description of dark and disorderly nature. After old Melmoth's death, his nephew, young John Melmoth, finds a mysterious manuscript which he has to read in accordance with his uncle's testament. The weather echoes the character's mental state:

*The remainder of the day was passed in gloomy and anxious deliberation, – in traversing his uncle's room, – approaching the door of the closet, and then retreating from it, – in watching the clouds, and listening to the wind, as if the gloom of the one, or the murmurs of the other, relieved instead of increasing the weight that pressed on his mind.*<sup>4</sup>

As we see, both the clouds and Melmoth's thoughts are 'gloomy'. Thus, the reader gets a constant idea of something terrific, which might influence John Melmoth's mind. In Thomas Kullmann's opinion, such parallelism of mind and nature can be explained through the concept of affinity: *characters feel at home in natural scenes, which provide analogies for their physical plight.*<sup>5</sup> Moreover, bad weather is associated with the supernatural and helps to create the appropriate imagination.

Storms also frequently accompany characters and important events in Gothic fiction. Traditionally, they are perceived as *harbingers of evil and present both a reflection and refraction of the inner self of the protagonist, an externalization of internal fears and conflict.*<sup>6</sup>

According to Michail Bakhtin, natural landscapes play the role of chronotope and concentrate in themselves *historic time in its external appearance, as well as in the novel which covers it.*<sup>7</sup> In the artistic world of the novel *Melmoth the Wanderer* the sea and storms take an extremely important place: they are described in the beginning and the end of the novel, so they are constantly proclaimed as extremely significant spaces, and the participants of the narrative.

Maturin draws a particularly violent storm in the sea in the beginning of the novel:

*The evening came on, prematurely darkened by clouds that seemed surcharged with a deluge. Loud and sudden squalls of wind shook the house from time to time, and then as suddenly ceased. Towards night the storm came on in all its strength. Melmoth's bed was shaken so as to render it impossible to sleep. He liked the rocking of the battlements, but by no means liked the expected falloff the chimneys, the crashing in of the roof, and the splinters of the broken windows that were already scattered about his room. He rose and went down to the kitchen, where he knew a fire was burning, and there the terrified servants were all assembled, all agreeing, as the blast came roaring down the chimney, they never had witnessed such a storm, and between the gusts, breathing shuddering prayers for the house who were out of sea that night.*<sup>8</sup>

This terrible storm introduces the readers to Melmoth the Wanderer, the immortal title character of the novel. Kullmann states that this *doomed, demonic anti-hero could hardly arrive any other way, washed up on the shore after a shipwreck.*<sup>9</sup> While clashing with supernatural, colourless setting changes at once as the forces of evil capture the peaceful space:

*At this moment, the racking clouds flying rapidly across the sky, like the scattered fugitives of a routed army, the moon burst forth with the sudden and appalling effulgence of lightning.*<sup>10</sup>

Traditionally for early Gothic texts, protagonists take journeys to far-off, exotic lands. In the *Tale of the Indians*, Melmoth's victim is a young woman called Immalee, who has been grown up on an 'exotic' island close to the Indian coast. This exotic landscape is described in Edenic terms, a place remarkably similar to the Eden of Genesis of Milton's *Paradise Lost* before the fall. In this case, Maturin contrasts the island's only inhabitant with Melmoth the Wanderer, who appears on the island in order to tempt an innocent girl.

Immalee appreciates nature and considers it to be full of joy and harmony until she meets Melmoth:

*The sun and the shade – the flowers and foliage – the tamarinds and figs that prolonged her delightful existence – the water that she drank, wondering at the beautiful being seemed to drink whenever she did – the peacocks, who spread out their rich and radiant plumage the moment they behold her – and the loxia, who perched on her shoulder and hand as she walked, and answered her sweet voice with imitative chirpings – all these were her friends, and she knew none but these.*<sup>11</sup>

Firstly, Immalee is identified with the plants and animals of the island. Nevertheless, when she falls in love with Melmoth, her attitude to nature changes:

*[...] she no longer loved all that is beautiful in nature; she seemed, by an anticipation of her destiny, to make alliance with all that is awful and ominous. She had begun to love the rocks and the ocean, the thunder of the wave, and the sterility of the sand, – awful objects, the incessant recurrence of whose very sounds seems intended to remind us of grief and eternity. Their restless monotony of repetition corresponds with the beatings of a heart which asks its destiny from the phenomena of nature, and feels the answer is – 'Misery'. Those who love may seek the luxuries of the garden, and inhale added intoxication from its perfumes, which seem the offerings of nature on that altar which is already erected and burning in the heart of the worshipper; – but let those who have loved seek the shores of the ocean, and they shall have their answer too.*<sup>12</sup>

As nature provides analogies with the characters' physical state, sets of natural phenomena correspond, to a greater extent, to states of mind such as happiness and unhappiness, hope and despair. When Immalee and Melmoth look at the ocean, they perceive it completely differently:

*The ocean, that lay calm and bright before them as a sea of jasper, never reflected two more different countenances, or sent more opposite feelings to two hearts. Over Immalee's, it breathed that deep and delicious reverie, which those forms of nature that unite tranquillity and profundity diffuse over souls whose innocence gives them a right to an unmingled and exclusive enjoyment of nature. None but crimeless and unimpassioned minds ever truly enjoyed earth, ocean, and heaven. At our first transgression, nature expels us, as it did our first parents, from her paradise forever. To the stranger, the view was fraught with far different visions. He viewed it as a tiger views a forest abounding with prey; there might be the storm and the wreck; or, if the elements were obstinately calm, there might be the gaudy and gilded pleasure barge, in which a Rajah and the beautiful women of his harem were inhaling the sea breeze under canopies of silk and gold, overturned by the*

*unskillfulness of their rowers, and their plunge, and struggle, and dying agony, and the smile and beauty of the calm ocean, produce one of those contrasts in which his fierce spirit delighted.*<sup>13</sup>

As we see, this function of the description of nature becomes particularly obvious when the same set of natural phenomena means different things to different people.

Alternate nature in *Melmoth the Wanderer* has some more relation to the 19<sup>th</sup> century Romanticism. According to Robert Salomon, as material and traditional aspects of society were treated as artificial, *appreciation of nature was viewed as a return to the basic elements of human's existence.*<sup>14</sup> Innocent and pure Immalee on her beautiful and isolated island presents Maturin's idea of experience without fear or pain. Comparing the image of Immalee on the isolated island and in Spain, in the rich house of her parents, the author describes the surrounded vegetation in the following way:

*She could not be conscious of fear, for nothing of this world she lived could ever bear a hostile appearance to her.*<sup>15</sup>

On the contrary:

*Such was the scene above, but what a contrast to the scene below! The glorious and unbounded light fell on an enclosure of stiff parterres, cropped myrtles and orange-trees in tubs, and quadrangular ponds, and bowers of trellis-work, and nature tortured a thousand ways, and indignant and repulsive under the tortures every way.*<sup>16</sup>

The contrast is tremendous: geometric plantings and trimmed hedges are opposed to *the wild landscape which obtains its charm from a chaotic surge of dangerous impulses.*<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, nature in Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* is described as a refuge from the artificial contracts of civilization. Throughout the whole novel Maturin sustains *a thematic contrast between the internal repentance of true faith and the external observances of false superstition; a contrast which is often reduced further to the opposition between Nature and Artifice. The moral and spiritual implications of life in artifice are categorically negative; pain and insanity, the sufferings of hell and annihilation.*<sup>18</sup> Moreover, Maturin uses the theme of wild landscapes as means for creating the atmosphere of tense expectations and performing simultaneously the function of a plot.

David Punter writes that *Maturin's principle is a significant marker in the developing Gothic trend towards the psychological.*<sup>19</sup> This process was expanded by later Gothic writers, most notably Le Fanu.

### Natural Landscape in Le Fanu's Prose

In the Victorian era Gothic horror introduces several modifications and additions to the field. The rapid development of science in the Victorian epoch started to exclude religion from people's minds, as well as the fast growth of periodicals and literary magazines caused a splash of interest in the Anglo-Irish society to rational and irrational terrifying phenomena. Contrary to Gothic novels, including Maturin's, which are often set in exotic, far-away places in the point of view of the reader, Victorian Gothic adapts the fantastic to the bourgeois and replaces the haunted castles and violent natural landscapes by modern houses and gardens.

Several theorists ascribe this to a combination of social-historical factors; the rise of domesticity is one of the contributing elements most widely discussed:

*Victorian Gothic is marked primarily by domestication of Gothic figures, spaces and themes; horrors became explicitly located within the world of the contemporary reader.*<sup>20</sup>

The conflict between nature and civilization was a problematic concept for the Victorians. The conditions of the intellectual and economic development that dominated in the nineteenth century changed the general relationships of man with nature. As a true Victorian, Le Fanu reflected the basic tendencies of the epoch in his works.

It is primarily Le Fanu's use of setting and atmosphere that provide a mental landscape in which sin, guilt, and supernatural retribution play prominent roles. Writing at the same time that Charles Darwin postulated his theories about evolution,<sup>21</sup> Le Fanu was sensitive to the Victorian society which struggled to maintain order in the era of industrialization and the consequent breakdown of traditional society.<sup>22</sup>

As William McCormack assumes, as an extension of the country house or suburban villa, *the garden was an integral part of the domestic living place*.<sup>23</sup> In this case, in the Victorian Gothic the garden becomes the place of intense haunting. Firstly, it is a continuation of the house; secondly, the grounds are an area which acts as a buffer between the hermetic home and the outside world, constantly considered to be dangerous.

Le Fanu's novel *The House by the Churchyard* (1861 – 1863) is a matter of fact there. The novel presents a complicated story of suspense, intrigue, and violence involving multiple characters and various plots, punctuated by murder, blackmail, and suicide. A sense of unease is introduced in the pastoral narrative when the mysterious Mr. Mervyn takes up residence in the Tiled House, a house that is rumoured to be haunted. In this case, Le Fanu develops the atmosphere and mystery of the Tiled House by inserting the story of a spectral hand as a subplot into the narrative.

The hand is first seen by the lady of the house reaching over the garden wall. She thinks it might be the hand of someone preparing to climb over into the garden and cries out in alarm. At that point the hand is withdrawn. The servants see it as well and hear strange knocking sounds on the window. Eventually the hand appears inside the house. It is finally seen reaching for the family's eldest child in his bed. The quiet and steady intrusion of the hand from outside the garden into the house and finally to the baby's crib, increases the sense of horror of its uncanny appearance. Thus, the Gothic climax of the story reaches its height in the garden, which becomes the ideal place for haunting to occur. The appearance of a supernatural hand symbolized the past history of the Mervyn family and serves to signal evil.<sup>24</sup>

It should be mentioned that the motif of the return of the dead 'in power' becomes a leitmotif in Le Fanu's fiction. The author comes to a conclusion that traces and consequences of the past are felt in the present. That is why the domestic garden in the novel seems haunted to the present as it has been a witness of the crime in the past.

Victor Pritchett observes that it is *the art of the ghost-story writer by the use of the common, prosaic details of every day, to convince us of the concrete reality of some horror outside common experience*.<sup>25</sup> The writer artistically proves that it is much more terrifying when the supernatural obtrudes into prosaic, everyday life. In other words, Le Fanu's novel managed to unite the domestic place, its background and atmosphere together in perfect harmony.



The fusion of a pastoral landscape and Gothic elements adds horror and ability to interact with the protagonists. For example, the park in the story *The Room in the Dragon Volant* (collection *In a Glass Darkly*, 1872) becomes a place of a secret date of an innocent traveller Richard and the female villain, Countess. This Gothic setting may be classified as an example of the evil space in the story and tells much about the villain's nature and intentions. The description of the park is not neutral or sentimental. The atmosphere that reigns there is full of fear and suspense as it is dark and cold in the park. Only the moon sheds some light:

*I [Richard] turned about, and glanced sharply down the road, that looked as white as hoar-frost under the moon.*<sup>26</sup>

*[...] the jet of water glimmered like a shower of diamonds in the broken moon-light; The lady stood upon the open space, and the moonlight fell unbroken upon her.*<sup>27</sup>

*The moonlight was broken by clouds, and the view of the park in this desultory light acquired a melancholy and fantastic character.*<sup>28</sup>

However, the presence of the moon adds even more tension and mystery to the atmosphere because any object in the moonlight seems different from its real look: black seems lighter, white seems darker, big seems huge and infinite, edges of the objects are insensible and deceptive. Therefore, the night and the moonlight in the park act as an accomplice of the countess and a saboteur for Richard. In this case, the park as a place which leads away from the safety of domesticity is also sheltered from view, creating an ideal place for 'secret meetings', and, moreover, conspiracies.

As we see, the Gothic natural landscape has its own conventions in connection to Gothic fiction. It is not simply a setting; it emphasizes the primary themes and conventions of the story. Le Fanu's style of description is intensely pictorial in his ghost stories from the collection *Madam Cowl's Ghost and Other Tales of Mystery*:

*A wide avenue, now overgrown like a churchyard with grass and weeds, and flanked by double rows of the same dark trees, old and gigantic, with here and there a gap in their solemn files, and sometimes a fallen tree lying across on the avenue, leads to the hall door...The grand melancholy [...] lonely as an enchanted forest.*<sup>29</sup>

Or:

*I have myself seen the old farm-house, with its orchards of huge moss grown apple trees. I have looked round on the peculiar landscape; the roofless ivied tower [...] with a line of grey rock and clump of dwarf oak or birch.*<sup>30</sup>

Another illustration runs as follows:

*The road, as it approached the house, skirted the edge of a precipitous glen, clothed with hazel, dwarf oak, and thorn, and the silent house stood with its wide-open hall-door facing this dark ravine, further edge of which was crowned with towering forest; and great trees stood about the house and its deserted court-yard.*<sup>31</sup>

As we see, the circle of vegetation replaces the original borders and provides a 'darkening shelter', which does not allow for recognizing what lies behind, creating, in this case, feelings of anxiety. At the same time, the artistic space of Le Fanu's works incorporates a vast botanical list: oaks, birches, apple trees, hazels, ash-trees, poplars,

yew-trees, ivy, etc. Contrary to Maturin, whose landscapes include exotic palms and tamarinds, the exposition of Le Fanu's ghost stories is based on familiar Victorian landscapes. We can suppose that it can be connected with a great development in the science of plant selection; moreover, it was during the Victorian times that gardening magazines acquired tremendous popularity: *Gardener's Magazine* (1826 – 1844), *Horticulture Week*, *The Ladies' Companion to the Flower Garden* (1840), etc.

## Conclusions

Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* is the reflection of Late Romanticist worldview. Therefore, nature in the novel is opposed to the artificial industrial and materialistic world of the city. Moreover, Maturin depicts natural landscapes as a refuge from the artificial contracts of civilization. On the other hand, Gothic fiction is closely connected to horror and anxiety; therefore, Maturin's natural landscape in the novel demonstrates the evil sides of nature's workings.

As a true Victorian, Le Fanu proves that it is much more terrifying when the supernatural obtrudes into the everyday life. The Victorian garden is an integral part of the house, and it can become a place of intense haunting. Therefore, nature seems haunted and unpredictable in the present as it was a witness of the crime in the past; this is the author's favourite idea. Natural landscape in Le Fanu's prose obviously underlines the sense of decay, conflict, isolation, and estrangement. Despite the tremendous development of science and natural theories, it stands opposed to the Victorian civilization.

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<sup>1</sup> Reed A. L. *The Background of Gray's Elegy: A Study in the Taste of Melancholy Poetry 1700 – 1761*. New York: New York University Press, 1965. – p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> O'Giollain D. *Locating Irish Folklore: Tradition, Modernity, Identity*. Cork University Press, 2000. – p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> A similar approach to nature is found in the works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and in James Thomson's *The Seasons*. In Thomson's poem, all varieties of the natural scene are interpreted as signs of the harmony of creation. Its importance is also stressed in a variety of Gothic contexts, e.g., the violation of an innocent bird in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798).

<sup>4</sup> Maturin C. R. *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. – p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Kullmann T. Nature and Psychology in 'Melmoth the Wanderer' and 'Wuthering Heights'. Tinkler-Villani V., P. Davison, A. Stevenson (eds.) *Exhibited by Candlelight: Sources and Developments in the Gothic Tradition*. Amsterdam-Atlanta, GA, 1995. – p. 68.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. – p. 70.

<sup>7</sup> Bahtin M. Formy vremeni i hronotopa. Ocherki po istoricheskoy poetike. *Voprosy literatury i estetiki. Issledovanija raznih let*. Moskva, 1975. – p. 197.

<sup>8</sup> Maturin C. R. *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. – p. 52.

<sup>9</sup> Kullmann T. Nature and Psychology in 'Melmoth the Wanderer' and 'Wuthering Heights'. Tinkler-Villani V., P. Davison, A. Stevenson (eds.) *Exhibited by Candlelight: Sources and Developments in the Gothic Tradition*. Amsterdam-Atlanta, GA, 1995. – p. 69.

<sup>10</sup> Maturin C. R. *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. – p. 64.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. – p. 280.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. – p. 312.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. – pp. 299–300.

- <sup>14</sup> Salomon R. *Mazes of the Serpent: An Anatomy of Horror Narrative*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002. – p. 61.
- <sup>15</sup> Maturin C. R. *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. – p. 280.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid. – p. 342.
- <sup>17</sup> Snodgrass M. *Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature*. Infobase Publishing, 2009. – p. 248.
- <sup>18</sup> Salomon R. *Mazes of the Serpent: An Anatomy of Horror Narration*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002. – p. 14.
- <sup>19</sup> Punter D. *The Literature of Terror*. London: Peter Nevill, 1996. – p. 175.
- <sup>20</sup> Punter D., Byron G. *The Gothic*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. – p. 26.
- <sup>21</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (1859).
- <sup>22</sup> Schweitzer D. *Discovering Classic Horror Fiction I*. Wildside Press LLC., 1992. – p. 94.
- <sup>23</sup> McCormack W. J. *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991. – p. 223.
- <sup>24</sup> Custred G. Sheridan Le Fanu, Irish Writer and Innovator in the Gothic Literary Tradition. *Interlitteraria*. Vol. 1, No 14. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2009. – p. 89.
- <sup>25</sup> Pritchett, V. S. *Early Victorian Novelists*. London: John Lehman, 1947. – p. 93.
- <sup>26</sup> Le Fanu J. S. The Room in the Dragon Volant. *Best Ghost Stories of J. S. Le Fanu*. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1964. – p. 67.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid. – p. 69.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid. – p. 78.
- <sup>29</sup> Le Fanu J. S. Squire Toby's Will. *Best Ghost Stories of J. S. Le Fanu*. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1964. – p. 1.
- <sup>30</sup> Le Fanu J. S. The White Cat of Drumgunniol. *Best Ghost Stories of J. S. Le Fanu*. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1964. – p. 409.
- <sup>31</sup> Le Fanu J. S. Sir Dominick's Bargain. *Best Ghost Stories of J. S. Le Fanu*. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1964. – p. 432.

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## LANDSCAPE PORTRAYALS IN THE STORIES BY ADALBERT STIFTER

### *Summary*

*Landscape is one of the most important constituents of the artistic space to depict the world of the creative writing. These depictions can be both of natural and artificial nature and are revealed with the help of sight, hearing and feeling. The portrayed landscape is a reflected image of the external world, which cannot be neutral in its essence. The changes shown have resulted from the mutual interaction between man and nature. The produced image of the portrayed landscape is endowed with depth and intensity of the real world.*

*Adalbert Stifter (1805 – 1868) has emphasized natural world and landscape as such. The portrayed area is not used as an element of secondary importance, describing main characters or presenting the development of action. The significance of perception of landscape and nature on the whole plays an important role in Stifter's stories. Landscape depictions present the natural entourage, its variability and the changes caused to the natural surroundings that affect the man.*

*Key-words: landscape, nature, depiction, representation*

\*

Landscape is the notion that includes everything the eye can see, both that of the natural origin, the sun- or the moonlight, trees, rivers, gardens, lakes, mountains, plains, and of artificial – houses, castles, roads, cities, vehicles, etc. It reflects the world. This depiction of landscape as reflection of material world cannot be neutral either from the point of view of the author or the reader. Landscape can show the changes, which have resulted from the interaction between man and nature; still, to depict the depth and intensity of the real world, not simply as a picture, Adalbert Stifter places the obvious objects and topics in the foreground of the described situations.

Stifter relies on the idea that there is a law of nature that rules the world and the existence, but there is also a law of tradition, that holds together the humanity and the interpersonal relations. His idea considers the existence of the supreme power that rules over nature, which is also true for a man. It can be explained with a special attitude towards nature that is one of the most important topics in Stifter's works. It is specifically modified, so it possesses the necessary flexibility to display the environment and interact with people simultaneously. Stifter wanted to interpret people with and via nature, as a part of it. He offers an interpretation of a man in the world of nature, as well as a personal view of it.

The depiction of natural landscapes seems to be important for him. Stifter has emphasized human being in the natural world. He uses nature and landscape not only

as a secondary element while describing action and main characters, but also as the element that is of major importance by making up the opinion of both conception and perception of the natural world, which plays an important role in the development of action or character description in Stifter's stories. Stephen Siddall writes that *the artist does not supply a direct imitation because the view is filtered and adapted by a discerning eye. We should call it presentation rather than a representation, because paint as a medium both gives freedom and imposes constraints: artists are free to express their feelings but have to accept that their artefacts are not the same as the view in front of them. Thus artists are bound to modify and re-express what they see.*<sup>1</sup>

In Stifter's stories nature does not deal with the everyday external world only but also with the internal world. He describes allegedly unimportant setting, particularly while describing nature and landscapes of natural origin his language gets more expressive. These images have both the necessary modality for depicting the outside world and, at the same time, for affecting the characters, that has to be regarded as a part of nature, according to Adalbert Stifter.

The landscape portrayals are important situational markers that sometimes induce the affective portraying of the acting characters in the stories. Frithjof Benjamin Schenk points out in his article on mental maps an idea of Wolf Singer that *cognitive processes as such do not present an objective evaluation of the reality*<sup>2</sup>. Considering a personal approach to description and to stress the significance of the constructions of the depicted outward entourage, landscapes distinguish between the outward natural world and human's location in it. This depiction cannot be impersonal or neutral. The constructor of these depictions is the author of the narration and he always gives a personal look on what is seen.

The landscape does not include only its natural essence, it considers also the changes that have happened to the wild nature and natural surroundings. These changes consider mainly the interference of the man into it, its transfiguration into a regulated world and conversion of its wild nature as subjected by man, when the cities emerge.

Although nature portrayals and landscape images are secondary to the plot, they remain important to the progress and development of characters. But Stifter's stories are not limited only to the theme of nature as such, although he moves nature to the foreground, the writer shows a special interest in natural processes. The landscape depiction of the world is an important topic in the story *The Solar Eclipse on 8 July 1842* (*Die Sonnenfinsternis am 8. Juli 1842*, 1844) where the blue serene and the celestial body movement is introduced, elaborating not only on the religious characteristics, but also on their influence and connection with nature. The story presents a distinct natural phenomenon – a solar eclipse, when the divine vertical affects the urban horizontal space. It is significant for Stifter's narration because of the scientific way of documenting. *This is a sign for an attempt to portray reality without subjective intervention or stylization, where an accurate description of nature is brought to an aesthetic principle*<sup>3</sup>.

There is affection for invincible power that can create peace in life and should set a goal in it, but it is considered by Stifter as an opposition to the human world. Stifter considers that man cannot exist without God, and wants to prove the existence and influence of God on human life. Maria Luisa Roli writes:

*When visual perception ceases in the darkness of the total eclipse, the narrative brings in acoustic perception and ad hoc quotations from literature (e.g., Darkness by Byron) and Bible passages evoking the similar darkening of the sky at the moment when Christ died.<sup>4</sup>*

The apocalyptic lack of the sunlight makes the life stop, which is considered to be the end. The natural light-related phenomena emphasize it even more, because the sun was considered the embodiment of clean and safe light<sup>5</sup> and vanishing from the sky is an extreme. However, *Plato considered the sun as an expression of good that can be perceived with eyes but the total solar eclipse is a rare phenomenon. It has terrified people and caused evil premonition and disaster prophecies. [...]*<sup>6</sup> *The advent of the celestial bodies after the eclipse is often perceived as a new cycle or the era of life.*<sup>7</sup> Stifter does not attribute a different interpretation to the meaning of the phenomena of natural origin in a common context. He rather suggests more metaphorical meaning and they are mostly used to characterize people through this context.

The visual method of space perspective used by Stifter proposes the significance of the message receiver's and the omniscient author's placement for the perception of portrayals as such and the portrayals of landscapes in particular, when the background is only hinted and yet there are linking elements. The obvious objects and subjects are placed in the foreground to portray the depth of the space studied and to seize the moment of action. Siddall continues:

*As with the visual arts, so with the literature. Words are like paint: they can approximate to what the scene is like, but they can't reproduce it. Therefore good writers don't claim to deliver a likeness: they offer a version of the scene that may have a stimulus from real life, but it is better understood as being something newly created. When the land becomes landscape it is, so to speak, consumed. Like the farmer who makes the land productive, the tourist and the artist are using and adjusting the land they see for their purposes. None is receiving or delivering nature as it is. All are controlling their environment by their toil, their eye or their skill. This rearranging of nature may perhaps provide a setting for a myth, or idealise a lost world. It may demonstrate nature's power or delicacy, or create shock or wonder. It may give contextual meaning to the characters in the foreground of the story.<sup>8</sup>*

Landscape in Stifter's stories does not only correspond to the major usage notion, but is also connected to the related fields. The example is the story *Abdias* when viewing the diverse landscape and regarding it as such a physical background that differs from the Middle East to European landscape that here and there correlates with the biblical motifs. Usually the depicted natural scenery is the main background of a definite event. The biblical events are no exception; they happen in the nature's lap, this is the example of the Garden of Eden, baptizing Jesus Christ in the Jordan River, not always directly mentioned, yet implying the Middle East scenery. These landscape portrayals are beautiful in the wild and primeval essence, considering nature as God's creation, regarding presentations created by the author.

The composition of Stifter story *The Heathy Village* (*Das Heidedorf*, 1840) entails a subdivision into the chapters. These four subchapters have their own titles, where the landscape description, following construction, takes the leading role and is to be observed in the first subchapter, *The Heath* (*Die Heide*). It is essential to mention that the rest of



the subchapters also include the counterpart of the heath – *Das Heidehaus*, *Das Heidedorf*, *Der Heidebewohner*, which suggests Stifter's presupposition that a man should be viewed through the prism of nature and its contraries – man-made, artificial constructions and other acting characters. The first chapter of the story *The Heathy Village* (*Das Heidedorf*, 1840) concerns a man amid nature. The main character is considered to be the ruler of the heath, compared with and likened to the ancient events. This likeness and comparison are possible only with the help of interaction between the landscape and a man:

*Amid all this splendour he stood, or walked, or jumped, or he sat – a splendid son of the heath: [...] Or he built the Babylon, a terrible and widespread city – he built it from the small stones of Roßberg, and told the grasshoppers and beetles, that when a powerful kingdom arises, no one can overcome it, [...]. Or he dug from the Jordan, that is the stream which flowed from the source, and headed it the other way – or he did not do it all [...].*

[Inmitten all dieser Herrlichkeiten stand er, oder ging, oder sprang, oder saß er – ein herrlicher Sohn der Heide: [...] Oder er baute Babylon, eine furchtbare und weitläufige Stadt – er baute sie aus den kleinen Steinen des Roßberges, und verkündete den Heuschrecken und Käfern, daß hier ein gewaltiges Reich entstehe, das niemand überwinden kann [...]. Oder er grub den Jordan ab, das ist den Bach, der von der Quelle floß, und leitete ihn anderer Wege – oder er tat das alles nicht [...].<sup>9</sup>]

The story *Abdias* is created and shown in the scenery of the Middle East and only further the action moves, along with the main character, to the familiar European landscape. This is done on purpose, to make the main character Abdias clearer and more comprehensible. Having shifted the attention to the breaking point of Abdias's life, the emphasis is reflected as the division of spatial locations opposing the Middle East to Europe, which are significant for the plot development. The main character Abdias is suffering from arduous trials in his life, Stifter mentioning that he was born and grown up in the Middle East makes him a part of an ancient tale, which has no relation to Europe and in this way he becomes less real:

*Deep in the deserts within the atlas there stands an old, lost in the history Roman town. It has collapsed little by little, has no name for centuries, for how long it has no inhabitants, no one knows it anymore, the European did not map it up to the recent time, because he did not surmise at all that it was there, and the Berber [...] either did not think at all of it and of its purpose or he cleared the sinister mind with a few superstitious thoughts, until the last piece of ruins of the wall had disappeared from his sight and the last howl of the jackals, who inhabited it, from his ear. Then he rode happily further and he was surrounded by nothing but lonesome, known, nice, lovely picture of the desert. Nevertheless, for the rest of the world unknown and except for the jackals, there lived other inhabitants in the ruins.*

[Tief in den Wüsten innerhalb des Atlases steht eine alte, aus der Geschichte verlorene Römerstadt. Sie ist nach und nach zusammengefallen, hat seit Jahrhunderten keinen Namen mehr, wie lange sie schon keine Bewohner hat, weiß man nicht mehr, der Europäer zeichnete sie bis auf die neueste Zeit nicht auf seine Karten, weil er von ihr nichts ahnete, und der Berber [...] dachte entweder gar nicht an dasselbe und an dessen Zweck, oder er fertigte die Unheimlichkeit seines Gemüthes

mit ein paar abergläubischen Gedanken ab, bis das letzte Mauerstück aus seinem Gesichte, und der letzte Ton der Schakale, die darin hausten, aus seinem Ohre entschwunden war. Dann ritt er fröhlich weiter, und es umgab ihn nichts, als das einsame, bekannte, schöne, lieb gewordene Bild der Wüste. Dennoch lebten außer den Schakalen, der ganzen übrigen Welt unbekannt, auch noch andere Bewohner in den Ruinen.<sup>10]</sup>

On the one hand, to make Abdias more vivid and real, Stifter has shifted the action to the spacious land of Europe, in this way making it more adequate and true to life, on the other hand it is of significance for the author to create the main character's image that differs from the common European. The scenery shown to the reader is vivid and among the plotline of the story has an intense meaning of the background for different characters. The presence of almighty God becomes obvious through the abundant variety of His creations from the flatland full of sand and the sun to the blue sky above the head of the main character, which means awareness of the presence of goodness. Here a special accent is put on the perception of light, which binds two areas distant in space:

*Now the sun, which had been earlier a dull, red glowing point, was not visible at all, but a veiled, grey, hot sky lay over the area. Such air we would call very hot in our lands, but there it had become considerably chillier in comparison with days, when the sun is shining incessant low. Abdias breathed it like refreshment and stroked himself with the palms a few times. He looked at the silent ruins which lay under him and then descended. When he was next to the tattered aloe, small drops started to fall and what is a rarity in this area, a grey, gentle rain hung low over all the quiet plain; since this is rare, too, that the rain season approaches so still and without violent storms.*

[Die Sonne, welche früher ein trüber, roter Glutpunkt gewesen war, war nun gar nicht mehr sichtbar, sondern ein verschleierter, grauer, heißer Himmel stand über der Gegend. Wir würden in unsern Ländern eine solche Luft sehr heiß nennen, aber dort war sie im Vergleiche mit Tagen, wo die Sonne unausgesetzt nieder scheint, bedeutend kühler geworden. Abdias atmete sie wie eine Labung, und strich sich mit der flachen Hand ein paarmal über die Seiten seines Körpers herab. Er schaute durch das schweigende Getrümmer, das unter ihm lag, und stieg dann hinab. Als er bei der zerrissenen Aloe war, begannen kleine Tropfen zu fallen, und was in diesem Erdstriche eine Seltenheit ist, ein grauer, sanfter Landregen hing nach und nach über der ganzen ruhigen Ebene; denn auch das ist selten, daß die Regenzeit so stille und ohne den heftigen Stürmen herannaht.<sup>11]</sup>

In his stories, Stifter offers a variety of literary beautified space of landscape and organisation of spatial structures are realised according to the present flow of the narration to help to depict the described area in the middle of things, which it refers to and then using various flashbacks to reveal the previous action.

Stifter suggests the spatial organisation of his narrations that demonstrates the whole world at its midpoint to the reader, dividing it into small pictures with a lot of peculiar details. These picturesque descriptions include hills, plains, rivers, villages and even cities that reconcile these contraries into one complete and integrated landscape. In this case the role of an author is close to the role of God in creating the world.

An important function of a landscape is to describe the area where the action takes place, because it not only the background as such, sometimes it is a definite indication

of the forthcoming action, event or the development of the narrative. The description of the area that has been involved in the action is to be produced with the intention of revealing specific features that are characteristic only of this region, though sometimes, without the narrative author's interference, it is not always possible to state where the action takes place, especially when two or more loci are chosen for the action. For example, *on the left distant blue mountain heads climbed up in the sky – I held them for the Carpathian Mountains*<sup>12</sup>. For Stifter's stories it is important to state that they have the dimensional depth when the light shines, when sometimes even trivial objects illuminated with the sunlight are put in the foreground as the action is developed:

*Already in the first spring when Ditha saw, a nice green wood of grain surged up at a place, where earlier only short pale green grass had grown and grey stones had looked out of the ground. [...] Abdias walked around it all and often when the moderate morning wind mixed silver waves of the maturing ears, his figure stood in the cane field, he had tied the white turban round his black forehead, the dark caftan stirred in the winds and the big beard which went down the face was whiter than the turban.*

*A piece of field was made ready and sowed with flax immediately first summer. When it blossomed, Ditha was taken out and Abdias told her the whole sky, which sounds there on the tips of these green standing threads, belongs to her. Now Ditha stood rather often in front of the blue cloth of the field and looked at it.*

[Schon in dem ersten Frühlinge, an welchem Ditha sah, wogte ein schöner grüner Kornwald an einer Stelle, an welcher früher nur kurzes fahlgrünes Gras gewesen war, und graue Steine aus dem Boden hervor gesehen hatten. [...] Abdias ging unter all dem herum, und oft wenn der mäßige Vormittagswind die reifenden Aehren zu silbernen Wogen mischte, stand seine Gestalt aus dem Rohrfeld hervorragend da, wie er den weißen Turban um seine schwarze Stirne geschlungen hatte, der dunkle Kaftan im Winde sich regte, und der große Bart, der vom Antlitze nieder hing, noch weißer war, als der Turban.

Gleich im ersten Sommer wurde ein Stück Feld hergerichtet, und mit Flachs besäet. Als er blühte, wurde Ditha hinausgeführt, und Abdias sagte ihr, der ganze Himmel, der da auf den Spitzen dieser grünen stehenden Fäden klinge, gehöre ihr. Ditha stand nun recht oft vor dem blauen Tuche des Feldes und sah es an.<sup>13</sup>]

It must be mentioned that the narratives have a circular structure. The object that gives the starting impulse and puts in action the development of the story is the starting and the ending point. The descriptions are subordinate to each other and have clear cut boundaries, which have a strict system of appearance and thus weave a plot.

The urban landscape is a specific category of portraying the available area. When the author of the narrative is presenting his view on the streets of a city, so the city can be both recognized according to the peculiarities of streets, buildings, marketplaces and remain made-up, assumed and yet unknown. This can be an assumption of Stifter when the clear and familiar place turns to be unknown via the changed viewpoint. This is presented in the stories *Vienna* (*Wien*, 1844) and *The Solar Eclipse on 8 July 1842*. The main character climbs up the tower or goes down under the city to explore it. The horizontal space is divided, the exploration continues both above and below the surface of the city:

*In Stifter's representation of his journey through the catacombs under the Vienna cathedral's territory, we immediately face the burning problem of nascent industrialization and we cannot avoid drawing the parallels with Thoreau. Science, industry and art have advanced amazingly, notes Stifter, thus humanity has gained very little. [...] And in the macabre underworld between decayed and withered remains of corpses and at the height of the Stephan's tower Stifter thinks of the horror of war and hopes that some day the human spirit will eliminate the degeneration and unreason.<sup>14</sup>*

[Auch in Stifters Darstellung seiner Wanderung durch die Katakomben unter dem Wiener Domgelände werden wir unverzüglich dem brennenden Zeitproblem der damals anlaufenden Industrialisierung gegenübergestellt, und auch da können wir die Parallele zu Thoreau kaum ausweichen. Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst sind erstaunlich weit vorgedrungen, stellt Stifter fest, aber die Menschlichkeit hat dabei nur sehr wenig gewonnen. [...] Und auch in der makabren Unterwelt zwischen verwesten und verdorrten Leichenresten ebenso wie auf der Höhe des Stephansturms denkt Stifter an die Schrecken der Kriege und hofft, der Menschengestalt werde sie doch irgendwann als Ausartung der Unvernunft abschaffen.]

The opposition between the city and the countryside is obvious. The countryside is more connected with delight and pleasure, while the city has its strict hierarchical division into streets and buildings opposing directly the rural organisation as such. The urban landscape has its own metre and rhythm, which differs from the rural. Stifter depicts city in his story *Vienna* as a never-ending action with a clear perspective. The streets were well illuminated by the sunlight and the buildings surrounded the citizens that were leading their decent, honest and stable life. Suddenly the nature bursts upon the view of the regulated world. The start of a new day appears to be an admiration:

*[...] a flash of light flies to our tower: the sun is up!! [...] Now it burns there, now there, now in the whole city, its haze rises and surges like golden fumes in the morning forward. All the streets shimmer in the morning light, golden light cover all windows – tower's crosses and domes sparkle – [...] black dots become visible and move and rush through each other, they become more and more, single fresh sounds whirl up, rolling, rattling and crackling becomes more dense, the confused sounds seize all parts of the city, as if the streets and the houses stirred each other until one dense, dull, continuous roar moved through the whole city. It has awoken. Meanwhile, the sun soars victoriously and smiling like a pure silver plate even higher over the tangled Babylon.*

[...] ein Blitz fliegt an unsern Turm: die Sonne ist herauf!! [...] Jetzt brennt's auch dort, jetzt dort, jetzt in der ganzen Stadt, ihr rauch vermehret sich und wallt wie ein goldner trüber Brodem in die Morgenglut hinein. Ganze Gassen schimmern im Morgenglanze, ganze fensterreihen belegen sich mit Gold – Turmkreuze und Kuppeln funken – [...] schwarze Punkte werden sichtbar und bewegen sich und schießen durcheinander, sie werden immer mehr, einzelne frische Schalle schlagen herauf, das Rollen, Rasseln und Prasseln wird immer dichter, das verworrene Tönen ergreift alle Stadtteile, als ob sich Gassen und Häuser durcheinander rührten bis ein einziges dichtes, dumpfes, fortgehendes Brausen unausgesetzt durch die ganze Stadt geht. Sie ist erwacht. Indes schwingt sich die Sonne siegend und lächelnd wie ein silbern reines Schild immer höher über das wirre Babel empor.<sup>15]</sup>

The story *Brigitta* presents a plot with the subdivision into chapters which have defining titles: namely, the first subchapter is named *Steppe Journey* (*Steppenwanderung*), which explicitly concentrates on the great space of the steppe. Landscape representations, moreover, create an image of great space:

*I had gone more than a hundred little brooks, brooks and rivers, I had often slept with shepherds and their shaggy dogs, I had drunk from those lonely moor wells that watch the sky from the frightfully high angle [...] on the left distant blue mountain heads climbed up in the sky – I held them for the Carpathian Mountains – on the right there lay torn land with that peculiar reddish colour, that gives so often the subtle shade of the steppe: however, both did not unite and the endless picture of the plain stretched between both of them.*

[Ich war über hundert Bächlein, Bäche und Flüsse gegangen, ich hatte oft bei Hirten und ihren zottigen Hunden geschlafen, ich hatte aus jenen einsamen Heidebrunnen getrunken, die mit dem furchtbar hohen Stangenwinkel zum Himmel sehen [...] links stiegen fernblaue Berghäupter am Himmel auf – ich hielt sie für die Karpaten – rechts stand zerrissenes Land mit jener eigentümlich rötlichen Färbung, wie sie so oft der Hauch der Steppe gibt: beide aber vereinigten sich nicht, und zwischen beiden ging das endlose Bild der Ebenen fort.<sup>16]</sup>

The stories consider also thrilling forces of nature such as seasons like summer, spring, autumn, weather for example, thunder and lightning, which gave rise to reverent inevitability:

*It was spring now [...]. Initially, my whole soul was caught by the size of the picture: how the endless air fluttered around me, how the plain scented and radiance of solitude stretched everywhere and everywhere beyond [...].*

[Da es nun ein Frühling war [...]. Anfangs war meine ganze Seele von der Größe des Bildes gefasst: wie die endlose Luft um mich schmeichelte, wie die Steppe duftete, und ein Glanz der Einsamkeit überall und allüberall hinaus webte [...].<sup>17]</sup>

*It was already very late autumn, one could say, one day before the beginning of winter, a thick fog lay on the already frozen moor [...] as we suddenly heard two vague shots through the fog.*

[Es war schon sehr spät im Herbst, man könnte sagen, zu Anfang Winters, ein dichter Nebel lag eines Tages auf der bereits festgefrorenen Heide [...] als wir plötzlich durch den Nebel herüber zwei dumpfe Schüsse fallen hörten.<sup>18]</sup>

Though landscape is depicted as a constituent of the artistic space, the prevalent object of depiction is nature in its primeval essence. Generally speaking, a lot of Stifter's stories contain various intensity of the notion of landscape, its irresistible grace and its insuperable forces, luminosity, glow and vividness of light, due to this fact, it is quite clear that all the events, which take place in the stories, are more or less subordinate to the landscape descriptions.

Stifter offered different simple landscape descriptions that can be found within the same space, but, at the same time, this is not the only spatial arrangement of the background of the action. In most of the cases, he creates a locus that is mostly connected with the main character's transformation experience. Thus the importance of the man's (main character's) transformation is stated by Stifter that there is nature modifying

man and a man modifying nature, while creating an image of the surrounding space. It can be interpreted and presented as follows: one of the most often used constructions is when a specifically described locus is the identifying and distinguishing factor. Since the action is set in the natural landscape, this place is described clearly, in detail. On the one hand, the author produces an image of a man and, on the other hand, Stifter shapes a magnificent natural space.

Stifter divides the space of the story into segments, which have a clear function of characterizing. In most of the cases of spatial description, it is possible to identify the author's preference to something of the natural origin. The aim is to determine how much the novel, i.e. personal approach of the author can contribute to the further development of the mutual relations between the structural elements, i.e., characters, symbols that produce semantics of a story and create a structure. These structures and the most characteristic features can be replicable in other Stifter's stories. The structures represent the specifically designed metre which shows the rhythm of a story that depicts not only characters and their relationships, which are important, but also the role of nature in human life and situations of crisis.

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<sup>1</sup> Siddall S. *Landscape and Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2009. – p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Shenk F. B. Mental'nye karty: konstruivovanie geograficheskogo prostranstva v Evrope ot jepohi prosveshhenija do nashih dnei. *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* No 52 (6), 2001. – p. 42. Here and further translated by I. Antonova.

<sup>3</sup> Schweikle G., Schweikle I. (Hrsg.) *Metzler Literatur Lexikon. Begriffe und Definitionen*. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung und Carl Ernst Poeschl Verlag GmbH, 1990. – p. 320.

<sup>4</sup> Roli M. L. The Gaze and Optical Devices in Goethe's and Stifter's Works. Agazzi E., Gian-netto E., Giudice F. (eds.) *Representing Light across Arts and Sciences: Theories and Practices*. V&R Unipress, 2010. – p. 163.

<sup>5</sup> Sengle F. *Biedermeierzeit. Deutsche Literatur im Spannungsfeld zwischen Restauration und Revolution 1815 – 1848, Band 1*. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1971. – pp. 36–37.

<sup>6</sup> *Herdera vārdnīca. Simboli. Mākslas, mitoloģijas, reliģijas, arheoloģijas un literatūras simboli*. Rīga: "Pētergaiļa" bibliotēka, 1994. – p. 126.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. – p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Siddall S. *Landscape and Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2009. – p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Stifter A. *Der Kondor*. Das Heidedorf. Stuttgart: Philip Reclam jun. Verlag, 1966. – pp. 36–38.

<sup>10</sup> Stifter A. *Abdias*. <http://www.zeno.org/Literatur/M/Stifter,+Adalbert/Erz%C3%A4hlungen/Studien/Abdias/2.+Deborah> (accessed 01. 08.2013).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Stifter A. *Brigitta*. Stuttgart: Philip Reclam jun. Verlag, 1970. – p. 8.

<sup>13</sup> Stifter A. *Abdias*. <http://www.zeno.org/Literatur/M/Stifter,+Adalbert/Erz%C3%A4hlungen/Studien/Abdias/2.+Deborah> (accessed 01.08.2013).

<sup>14</sup> Urzidil J. Nachwort. Stifter A. *Wien. Die Sonnenfinsternis*. Stuttgart: Philip Reclam jun. Verlag, 1963. – p. 87.

<sup>15</sup> Stifter A. *Wien. Die Sonnenfinsternis*. Stuttgart: Philip Reclam jun. Verlag, 1963. – p. 8.

<sup>16</sup> Stifter A. *Brigitta*. Stuttgart: Philip Reclam jun. Verlag, 1970. – pp. 8–9.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. – pp. 4–5.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. – p. 57.



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Sergejs Poļanskis

## DESERT AS ALBERT CAMUS' ABSURD LANDSCAPE

### *Summary*

*The article analyses the presence of the desert in Camus' writing. Albert Camus was born in 1913 in Mondovi, Algeria and passed his early years on the North African coast of the Mediterranean sea. Like his characters Camus felt the hostile emptiness of the desert, a place where 'man feels an alien, a stranger' (Camus 'The Myth of Sisyphus') and this landscape seemed perfectly fit for 'the feeling of absurdity' (ibid.) and therefore was used in the absurd drama as a vision of life of man trapped in a hostile universe, without any chance of happiness and hope for the future. Most of researchers agree that the desert is so often mentioned in Camus' texts because it was one of the most well known landscapes to the writer since his childhood. At the same time the desert evolves together with the author's reflection about the absurd. The literary heritage of Camus is strongly marked by two factors: colonialism and his country of birth – Algeria. But this context does not restrict the importance of his texts. Camus' heroes tend to understand the absurd of their actions thus to realize their existence. Only the revolt allows them to gain the freedom of conscience. The desert seems to be the ideal place where a human being meets what Martin Esslin calls the feeling of the absurd: the fear and loneliness in an alien and hostile universe (Esslin 'Absurd Drama'). In the following study we demonstrate the use of the concept 'desert' in Camus' writing, beginning with the early 'Nuptials in Tipasa' (1938) where he called the whole chapter 'The Desert', and ending with the incomplete 'The First Man' published only in 1995.*

*Key words: Camus, desert, landscape, the absurd*

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*Le désert de l'imagination appelle l'imagination du désert*

Albert Camus marked a new stage in the development of the modern literature. Roland Barthes demonstrated Camus' style of writing in *The Stranger* as a perfect sample of his own 'Writing Degree Zero'. Professor of French and Comparative Literature at Yale and director of the Whitney Humanities Center, Peter Brooks writes:

*Consecrated as a classic in France by the publication of his complete works in the Pleiade series, he has nonetheless been passed over in embarrassed silence by most critics and younger writers there. In the United States his name is famous, but one suspects that his readers are mainly college freshmen. Camus's humanism – the message of revolt and fraternity that made him the most famous and emblematic intellectual figure to emerge from the Resistance movement of World War II and the political ferment that followed the Liberation – seemed even before his death to have become a trap: Camus' 'le juste', the conscience of post-war Europe, became*

*more and more an imitation of himself, caught in a noble but rather hollow moral rhetoric as he tried to hold his course between the totalistic thought of both right and left. Jean-Paul Sartre accused Camus (during their notorious feud following publication of 'The Rebel') of always carrying with him a 'portable pedestal'. There was some truth in the jibe.<sup>1</sup>*

This specific world that Camus creates for his characters often resembles some desert and in some texts it is a real desert which surrounds the absurd hero and dictates the choice of his actions.

In order to study the concept of desert in Camus' writing it is necessary to understand the meaning of the word desert itself. The Webster's dictionary provides the following definition of the word 'desert':

1. *A barren or desolate area, especially:*
  - a. *A dry, often sandy region of little rainfall, extreme temperatures, and sparse vegetation.*
  - b. *A region of permanent cold that is largely or entirely devoid of life.*
  - c. *An apparently lifeless area.*
2. *An empty or forsaken place; a wasteland: a cultural desert.*
3. *Archaic: A wild, uncultivated, and uninhabited region.<sup>2</sup>*

The etymology of the word comes from the Middle English 'desert' – 'barren land' from early French 'desert' (same meaning), derived from Latin 'deserere' – 'to desert, abandon', where 'de-' – 'from, away' and 'serere' – 'to join together'.

Thus, desert means some empty and abandoned place both real and metaphysical. Let us consider what desert means for Camus. At the beginning of the chapter *The Desert in Nuptials in Tipasa* he writes that *according to the great Tuscan masters to live is to testify three times – in silence, in flame and in immobility*<sup>3</sup>.

If flame is the light and immobility is the stone, silence is the desert. The desert silence is an important theme of Camus' thought:

*There are no more deserts. There are no more islands. Its need is felt nevertheless. To understand the world you need to turn away sometimes; to serve people better you need to keep them on distance for some moments.<sup>4</sup>*

What does the desert represent for Camus? How to define it? What symbol does it convey? At the first glance it looks like we need to separate two types of deserts: the natural and the metaphysical one. The latter term challenges Camus, *The desert itself got some sense we have overfilled it with poetry. It is dedicated to all the pains of the world*<sup>5</sup>.

Camus refuses this definition of the desert, this is the desert where Alceste wants to take refuge at the end of the *Misanthrope* going, to cite his words, *into my desert where I vowed to live*<sup>6</sup>. The real desert, the one, which attracts Camus, is a place deprived of poetry. It is not a place where one goes to escape from the world, but *a place without soul where the sun is the only king*<sup>7</sup>. The first temptation for Camus is actually to be nothing: *Be nothing! For thousands of years this big call raised millions of humans to revolt against the desire and pain*<sup>8</sup>. The desert is the place where the man feels that he is nothing anymore and where he merges with the cosmos. In mythical imagery of Camus the desert has parallels with the stone:

*Plunged into the beauty the wisdom is enriched with nothingness. In front of these landscapes, the grandeur whereof tightens the throat any of these thoughts is a deletion of the man. And soon, denied, covered, recovered and obscured by so many overwhelming convictions, he is nothing to the world any longer but just an instructed spot who knows only a passive truth, or his colour, or his sun. So pure landscapes are too drying for the soul and their beauty is unbearable. It is said that in these gospels of stone, heaven and water nothing resurrects. Henceforth deep in this magnificent desert, in its heart, the temptation begins for the people of these countries.<sup>9</sup>*

Thus the desert is also an important element which contributes *to the admission of the man to the celebrations of the earth and the beauty*<sup>10</sup>. The desert represents the drying beauty, it has *something merciless*<sup>11</sup>.

In the mineral world the desert is situated just where the temptation of nothingness and the love of nature can meet each other. On the one hand, the desert in the mineral sky of Oran *contributes to create this dense and impassive universe where the heart and the spirit are never distracted from each other, or from their only object which is the man*<sup>12</sup>. *An on the other hand it is "the frozen memory of the world"*<sup>13</sup>. It means that the desert has something to teach the human beings, *the very dry and impassive place, the perfect symbol of nature's indifference teaches the man*:

*On these strange lands life takes a sudden nobility of danger and poverty. A dry soul is the best one, says Heraclites. In this respect the soul consumed by the desert is the supreme god of the world [...].<sup>14</sup>*

From this perspective the opposition noted by Pierre-Henri Simon between 'the dry existentialism of Sartre' and 'the wet existentialism of Camus' seems not reflecting the total reality. Actually in the reflection of Camus two sides exist: attractiveness of the dryness and indifference on the one hand – here the desert and the stone interfere, emotion and sensibility on the other hand – these roles are played by the sea, the tears, the poetry:

*This landscape assured me that without my love and this beautiful cry of stone all was useless. The world is beautiful and out of it there is no salvation. The great truth which it taught me patiently was that the spirit is nothing, neither was the heart. And that the stone heated by the sun and the cypress which grows under the sky limit the only universe where "to be right" has the only sense – the nature without men. And this world annihilates me. It takes me to the end. It denies me without anger. In this evening which came to the country of Florence I approached the wisdom where everything was already conquered if tears were not coming to my eyes and if a big sob of poetry which filled me wouldn't make me forget the world's truth.<sup>15</sup>*

The desert interprets the world's truth: it invites the man to find his relation with the universe in the cosmos. According to Jean Sarocchi, for Camus *to petrify means to concentrate in a grain of sleep the most powerful blossoming of possible life. A provisional ataraxia of Epicurean or Buddhist style predisposes to the spiritual conquest*.<sup>16</sup> Camus actually refers to Buddha showing a typical example of this indifference:

*Let's think about Cakia-Mouni in desert. He stayed there for several long years squatting, immobile, his eyes turned to the sky. Even Gods envied him this wisdom and this destiny of a stone. In his tense and stiffened hands swallows made their*

*nest. But one day they flew away at the call of distant lands. And the one who killed in him the desire and will, glory and pain began to cry. Thus appears that flowers grow on rocks. Yes, let's consent to the stone when necessary. This secret can be explained to us by his wisdom*<sup>17</sup>.

The desert reveals the secret of the universe to Camus: it is on a different level than the stone, it is a springboard from which the intimacy with the world is possible. Even if the desert is *planned to bones land, reduced to its skeleton schistose, crushed by the sun and the light where no one can remain standing*, despite everything, *inside dry roots, between some monstrous plants and thorny tanks of cacti, every day, against any expectation, life obstinately continues in the desert in a beautiful and cruel innocence*<sup>18</sup>.

The *beautiful and cruel innocence* of the desert leads us once again to the hero of *The Stranger*. Meursault in his effort of *cosmisation* and in his attempt *to be nothing* seems to have already given in to the temptation evoked by Camus:

*What a temptation to identify oneself with these stones, to merge with this burning and impassive universe which challenges history and its agitations! It is futile with no doubts. But there exist in each man a profound instinct which is neither the one of destruction nor the one of creation. It is just to resemble to nothing.*<sup>19</sup>

This profound instinct characterizes Meursault well. He does not want either to destroy or to create, he is satisfied just to be. When Camus says that one of the finals of the absurd reflection is *indifference and total renouncement – the one of the stone*<sup>20</sup>, he is quite close to define the destiny of Meursault. But better than the stone, the renouncement of the desert crucially expresses the adventures of the hero in *The Stranger*. This is the desert where the *Stranger* lives, and the one where Clamence, an everyman of Camus' *The Fall*, screams in vain.

Now let us relate the concept 'desert' to the absurd thought. In the preface to the Amercian edition of *The Myth of Sisyphus and other essays* in 1955 Camus states:

*For me 'The Myth of Sisyphus' marks the beginning of an idea which I was to pursue in 'The Rebel'. It attempts to resolve the problem of suicide, as 'The Rebel' attempts to resolve that of murder, in both cases without the aid of eternal values which, temporarily perhaps, are absent or distorted in contemporary Europe. The fundamental subject of 'The Myth of Sisyphus' is this: it is legitimate and necessary to wonder whether life has a meaning; therefore it is legitimate to meet the problem of suicide face to face. The answer, underlying and appearing through the paradoxes which cover it, is this: even if one does not believe in God, suicide is not legitimate. Written [...] in 1940, amid the French and European disaster, this book declares that even within the limits of nihilism it is possible to find the means to proceed beyond nihilism. In all the books I have written since, I have attempted to pursue this direction. Although 'The Myth of Sisyphus' poses mortal problems, it sums itself up for me as a lucid invitation to live and to create, in the very midst of the desert.*<sup>21</sup>

Obviously Camus defines the nature of the absurd as a desert where he invites the reader to live and to create. The author of an over four hundred pages long book *Albert Camus ou l'Imagination du désert*, Laurent Mailhot emphasizes:

*The absurd with its corollary is the first and the last word of Camus: the revolt and its image: the desert. As in Oran in Sabara's South, as in Scythie in Caucasus*

*the myth of the desert encloses and supports all the others in Camus writings: the strangeness and the plague, exile and the kingdom, the wrong side and the right side, Sisyphus, the revolted absurd, and Prometheus, the absurd revolt.*<sup>22</sup>

Mailhot explains his choice of the concept for the book as follows:

*One term simultaneously concrete and abstract, clear and complex which doesn't match to any concept and illuminates them all. An image which refers to a centre and to a circumference, an image present everywhere in different figures, in different contexts. A theme which explains the imagination of the matter and of forms, which rejoins the characters and the writing? The sensibility and the ideas, the observation and the dreams: we have chosen the desert.*<sup>23</sup>

Many other scholars mentioned the importance of the desert in Camus' works, some of them explained this fact with the biography of the writer. David Simpson writes:

*Albert Camus was born [...] in [...] a small village near the seaport city of Bonz (present-day Annaba) in the northeast region of French Algeria. [...] After his father's death, Camus, his mother, and older brother moved to Algiers where they lived with his maternal uncle and grandmother in her cramped second-floor apartment in the working-class district of Belcourt. Camus' mother Catherine, who was illiterate, partially deaf, and afflicted with a speech pathology, worked in an ammunition factory and cleaned homes to help support the family. In his posthumously published autobiographical novel 'The First Man', Camus recalls this period of his life with a mixture of pain and affection as he describes conditions of harsh poverty (the three-room apartment had no bathroom, no electricity, and no running water) relieved by hunting trips, family outings, childhood games, and scenic flashes of sun, seashore, mountain, and desert.*<sup>24</sup>

Dr. James Hebron Tarpley made a detailed research on the importance of the Algerian landscape for the oeuvre of Albert Camus. Dr. Tarpley analyses the works of researchers who pointed out the role of the Algerian landscape in Camus' works. Thus, David Carroll, shows that some of Camus' later works, notably the short stories in *Exile and the Kingdom* as well as the posthumously published and apparently largely autobiographical *The First Man*, show an ambiguity on the position of the 'French Algerian' vis-à-vis the Algerian people and space. Carroll argues that throughout these later works by Camus one finds that the author seems to be dominated by the Algerian desert, by the very 'terre' that his supposed mother country had been dominating for the past one hundred years. Carroll points to a 'cult of the land'<sup>25</sup> that wields an extremely heavy influence on Camus' characters and on the author himself. Carroll shows that Camus' image of French Algerians describes them by *their simultaneous rootedness and exile from their birth land*<sup>26</sup>, and points to various descriptions of the Algerian landscape to confirm this hypothesis. Carroll confirms through his examination of the Algerian land that, like in Camus's fiction, it is an *imaginary place*<sup>27</sup>, though strongly rooted in the physical Algeria in which Camus was born and always attached by family bonds and concern throughout his career. Because the Algeria in question has an imagined side, Carroll argues, [...] *Camus presents the problems associated with the multiple and most often contradictory, confused 'identities' of French Algerians*<sup>28</sup>. The suggestion that in Camus' fiction his descriptions of political realities are most clearly expressed is echoed



by Wayne Hayes when he states that [...] *Camus mapped the frontier between individuals and the state, or, more specifically, between the individual and power.*<sup>29</sup> Indeed, we will find in examinations of Camus' fictional works that the soil of Algeria, as well as its beaches, rocks, desert, and even architecture, all have a great impact on the manner in which Camus' French Algerian characters interact with the space they inhabit and those with whom they share that space.

While we agree with Carroll's reasoning behind the link between textual descriptions of the Algerian desert and its effect on various 'French Algerian' characters, it could be claimed that his conclusion that, for Camus, Algeria was *an Algeria of infinite horizons and possibilities and intense sensations which is the site of a freedom more basic than any political or social principle or right*<sup>30</sup>, might be doubtful. Carroll supports this idea with a citation from *The Adulterous Woman* in the scene in which Janine is confronted by the desert landscape which seduces her. However, this very citation can be easily read against Carroll's understanding of a limitless Algerian space, for in fact Janine is shown to be isolated in the middle of a featureless plain, and the *infinite possibilities* to which Carroll refers are actually situated, by Camus, *at the place where the sky and land meet in a pure line*, that is, on the horizon which delineates the end of the supposedly limitless, but in fact clearly circumscribed, Algerian space. It seems that Janine's hopes reside in a starkly limited area consisting of an Algerian desert space, the boundaries whereof she can see with the naked eye from the lofty perch of the ruined fort in which she is standing. In short, Janine finds herself in a deserted, isolated space of quite limited expanse, and as in many other descriptions of Algeria that we find in the fiction of Camus, it seems clear that she actually inhabits a sort of desert island space, and is therefore subject to an enormous weight of earlier island narratives which will inevitably colour the interpretation of her experience.

Carroll helpfully cites Daru, from *The Guest*, as his next example of French Algerian isolation, and in the very lines he cites we find reference to a space in which *bare rock covered three quarters of the region*, far more evocative of a desert space than of one with infinite richness of possibility. Carroll's conclusion regarding Daru is that his *solitude [...] is presented as both a punishment and a reward*<sup>31</sup> once again seems to throw this tale into the context of a literature of desert spaces used as prisons but which frequently prove to be the savoir of their unwilling inhabitants. It should be noted that Camus referred to Algeria as an island specifically upon multiple occasions in his fiction, usually justifying this metaphor by evocation of the sea to the north and the sea of sand to the south. Therefore, when Carroll states that *the most extreme hostility and the most open, total hospitality thus coexist and constitute the contradictory dominant traits of the Algeria of first men*<sup>32</sup>, we can only concur and then point to the fact that this statement is equally true of the island space defined through over a century of robinsonnade texts.

Raymond Gay-Crosier, in an insightful study of Camus' marginality in light of his Algerian birth and upbringing, shows that Camus lived and worked on the margins, leading to what he calls the author's *optique de séparé*<sup>33</sup>. We argue that Camus' work is particularly fascinating and useful for examining the worldview of the 'pied-noir' because the main characters of Camus' novels, apparently in parallel to the author himself, are neither wholly French nor wholly Algerian, but seemingly caught somewhere in the middle. Camus' detachment from absolute identification with any of the traditional

identities associated with France and its overseas possessions, what Gay-Crosier here dubs his *optique de séparé*, lends Camus' prose its apparently flat affect, leading to characters accepting calmly, in a detached manner, fates and outcomes that the reader might expect them to vociferously protest. This unusual point of view, exhibited by Camus in his novels and here remarked by Gay-Crosier in letters from Camus' correspondence with Jean Grenier, is important for the study of Camus' relationship with Algeria as it sets up the idea that Algeria was central to the development of Camus' fixation on boundaries and separation. Gay-Crosier posits that Camus' physical and emotional marginalization, both in childhood and in adulthood, the results of political realities such as colonialism and physical factors such as tuberculosis, led to the major themes of Camus' works, namely the absurd, indifference, revolt, 'étrangeté'<sup>34</sup>, and exile. While we prefer not to draw one-to-one correlations between biographical details and literary output, it seems quite defensible here to accept that growing up in Algiers in the particular socio-economic situation that we know was the case for Camus seems to have impacted at least what he would later choose as subject matter for his novels, all but one of which will be set in Algeria, frequently featuring prominently the less affluent of the 'pieds-noirs'. Gay-Crosier points out that Camus must have realized, through reflection on his situation as a perpetual outsider that *once placed in margins you never get out of it*<sup>35</sup>. This idea is applicable not only to Camus, but perhaps to French-Algerians in general. Importantly for our understanding of Camus and the cultures he describes in his novels, Gay-Crosier reminds us that one aspect of the marginality he is studying in Camus is that of the *Algerian French quartered in their world of colonies*<sup>36</sup>, which in addition to its clear reference to the pseudo-military nature of the colonial presence also reminds us how insulated the French Algerians were from the majority they dominated in Algeria, and how limited was any communication between the (at least) two groups of 'Algerians'. Indeed, Gay-Crosier notes the ignorance of the language and culture of the colonized on the part of the colonials, calling ironically into question the effectiveness of the so-called 'civilizing mission'.

Delving more specifically into Camus' use of the Algerian desert in his works, Gay-Crosier points out that Camus projected a spiritual and sentimental geography onto Algeria's physical features. He quotes Camus as finding a lesson on *poverty* and *bitterness* in *his desolate and dry landscapes*<sup>37</sup>. It is interesting to note that the landscapes here serving as the basis for Camus' lyrical lesson are shown to be blasted and empty wastelands, which nonetheless are a rich source of poetic inspiration. Gay-Crosier ties this reverence for the outlands to Camus' own marginality. The oxymoronic participatory solitude here evoked will be shown to be central to Camus' descriptions of Algeria and the various communities calling it home in his novels, as the actions of members of these communities, and even the very landscapes themselves will actively push the characters into isolation. The isolation, or solitude, actively sought out by Camus' characters and landscapes, will drive some of the most disturbing scenes in his fiction, perhaps most notably with the shooting of an Arab on the beach.

Gay-Crosier examines the various places making up the Algeria of Camus' experience, and he notes that Camus was, above all else, an Algérois, whose principal Algerian space was that largest of cities. Nevertheless, he reminds us that Camus had strong impressions of Oran, namely that he felt it was a desert without an oasis, and

finally he points out that Tipasa, with its ruins and its proximity to the ocean, seems to have been a privileged space for Camus. Camus brags about being born *on the hills of Tipasa*<sup>38</sup>, and seems to have chosen this place as the central, emblematic marginal space in Algeria. Gay-Crosier concludes that there is no separating the centrality of marginalization in Camus' work from the author's experiences in Algiers and Algeria.<sup>39</sup> He also points out that Camus' style reflects the marginalization of Camus' background and geographical underpinnings, citing the 'remoteness' from stylistic affectations in Camus' prose. Finally, Gay-Crosier sums up his argument in the following manner:

*Albert Camus, an Algerian French, had to and found in the tension between the exile of culture and the kingdom of nature a difficult personal and public margin which was also his main creative source.*<sup>40</sup>

At the same time the desert becomes a moral standard when we read the speech of the Prosecutor in *The Stranger*:

*We cannot blame a man for lacking what it was never in his power to acquire. But in a criminal court the wholly passive ideal of tolerance must give place to a sterner, loftier ideal, that of justice. Especially when this desert of heart is such as that of the man before you is a menace to society.*<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, according to Svetlana, *the prosecutor is right – there is a desert in Meursault's soul which threatens to the existence of the world of the immutable values for most of the people. And when sentencing the death penalty to Meursault the judges seem to protect themselves from the terrible insight and from the loss of meaning of their own life.*<sup>42</sup>

Numerous works on the importance of desert in Camus' writing proves that this concept is omnipresent in the writer's works. Absurd reasoning is clearly explained by Camus himself:

*When Karl Jaspers, revealing the impossibility of constituting the world as a unity, exclaims: 'This limitation leads me to myself, where I can no longer withdraw behind an objective point of view that I am merely representing, where neither I myself nor the existence of others can any longer become an object for me,' he is evoking after many others those waterless deserts where thought reaches its confines.*<sup>43</sup>

Finally, to quote Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *I have always loved the desert. One sits down on a desert sand dune, sees nothing, hears nothing. Yet through the silence something throbs, and gleams...*<sup>44</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/1982/09/12/books/from-albert-camus-to-roland-barthes.html> (accessed 2013).

<sup>2</sup> The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Merriam Webster Mass Market; Revised edition, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Camus A. *NOCES suivi de L'ÉTÉ*. Paris: Les Éditions Gallimard, 1959. – p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. – p. 75.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. – p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.toutmoliere.net/acte-5,405473.html/12.08.13/> (accessed 2013)

<sup>7</sup> Camus A. *NOCES suivi de L'ÉTÉ*. Paris: Les Éditions Gallimard, 1959. – p. 78.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. – p. 107.

- <sup>9</sup> Ibid. – p. 64.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid. – p. 66.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid. – p. 87.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. – p. 95.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. – pp. 67–68.
- <sup>16</sup> Sarocchi J. *Camus*. Paris: Presses Universitaires De Paris, 1968. – p. 43.
- <sup>17</sup> Camus A. *NOCES suivi de L'ÉTÉ*. Paris: Les Éditions Gallimard, 1959. – p. 107.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid. – p. 68.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. – p. 106.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid. – p. 65.
- <sup>21</sup> Camus A. *The Myth of Sisyphus, and Other Essays*. Transl. J. O'Brien. London: Vintage Books, 1955. – p. 3.
- <sup>22</sup> Mailhot L. *Albert Camus: ou l'imagination du désert*. Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1973. – p. 90.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid. – p. 10.
- <sup>24</sup> <http://www.iep.utm.edu/camus/> (accessed 2013).
- <sup>25</sup> Carroll D. *Camus's Algeria: Birthrights, Colonial Injustice, and the Fiction of a French-Algerian People*. MLN, 1997. – p. 529.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid. – p. 531.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid. – p. 517.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid. – p. 531.
- <sup>29</sup> Hayes W. R. *After Albert Camus's Fall: Reframing Post-colonial Criticism*. Wisconsin-Madison, 1999. – p. 4.
- <sup>30</sup> Carroll D. *Camus's Algeria: Birthrights, Colonial Injustice, and the Fiction of a French-Algerian People*. *Modern Language Notes*, "Camus 2000", V. 112, No. 4, 1997. – p. 533.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid. – p. 543.
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- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid. – p. 285.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid. – p. 283.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid. – p. 288.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid. – p. 289.
- <sup>41</sup> Camus A. *L'étranger*. Paris: Les Éditions Gallimard, 1942. – p. 63.
- <sup>42</sup> <http://noblit.ru/node/1006> (accessed 2013).
- <sup>43</sup> Camus A. *The Myth of Sisyphus, and Other Essays*. Transl. J. O'Brien. London: Vintage Books, 1955. – p. 4.
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Ilona Ļaha

## NATURE LANDSCAPE IN THE NOVEL WIND-WATCHER BY AGNETA PLEIJEL

### *Summary*

*Landscape in literature is regarded as one of the most efficient means of depicting the virtual world. The present article analyzes nature landscape in the novel 'Wind-Watcher' ('Vindspejare', 1987) by the Swedish writer Agneta Pleijel. This novel provides abundant depiction of nature landscapes and the writer has admitted her close bond with nature in several interviews.*

*Two landscapes stand out among others in the novel, i.e., that of Lake Mälaren that is painted by the main heroes – father Soult and son Abel as well as volcanic landscapes that appear in the son's memories of the time spent abroad.*

*An essential place in the novel is attributed to sensation landscapes. Main heroes enjoy nature visually and paint seascapes and those of Lake Mälaren. There are landscapes in the novel that are perceived with hearing. Abel perceives native and foreign landscapes with all senses. As beautiful as Indonesian landscapes may be, those of his native land seem more beautiful and familiar because he has experienced the most exciting and wonderful moments in them in his childhood and youth.*

*Key-words: landscape, nature, Agneta Pleijel, landscape of Lake Mälaren, volcanic landscape, sensation landscapes*

\*

### **Introduction**

By the end of the 1990s a vast body of Swedish literature entered the culture space of Latvia, with various topics and stories that are urgent in Latvia as well, besides Swedish literature is marked by novel and unusual plots and character interpretations.

Swedish writers in the 1980 – 1990s mostly addressed urban subjects, and the urban province that had been so significant in the Swedish literature of the preceding epoch receded to the background in their works. Wide depictions of nature were more seldom in Swedish literature while the urban space was depicted in a quite detailed and careful manner.

Despite the fact that at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Swedish literature was labelled as urban, there appeared works that emphasized rural naturalness as the highest ethical value. Besides, northern nations possess a specific feeling of nature. Like Latvia, Sweden was Christianized rather late and, according to the Swedish writer Agneta Pleijel, *in the deep of the soul Swedish people's relations with nature seem to have preserved a heathen character*<sup>1</sup>. Anita Rožkalne points out that *the attitude towards nature in Latvian perception borders on the feeling of the supreme laws, God, religion*<sup>2</sup>. This is also testified to by the fact that in Latvian fine arts landscape



painting has always been popular and in the works by numerous Latvian writers a specific place is attributed to the depiction of nature and rural environment. Swedish national identity is marked by patriotism in relation to their native nature and landscape, feeling close to nature, also to waters and the sea.

The translator of Swedish literature to Latvian, Solveiga Elsberga has replied to the question why she has chosen to translate Swedish literature as follows, [...] *Maybe it is the feeling and love of nature. [...] And the translated Swedish literature with its bright depiction of nature [...]*<sup>3</sup>.

The translator of Nordic literature Rute Lediņa told in an interview what attracts her to Nordic writers, [...] *almost physiological kindness that animals possess as well, who will not tread even on a mouse. [...] And the main thing – the way they account for the happenings in the world, as if arranging them in themselves, putting them in order. Quietly, without chaos but not in a dull punctuality either. Maybe just in order to help themselves and others find their way in this world*<sup>4</sup>.

The miraculous qualities of nature and landscapes in Sweden have been noticed also by Swedish Latvians who, according to the literary scholar Inguna Daukste-Silapšroge, *have often marked their subjective and national experience in Swedish landscapes, there is a presence of the surrounding nature – cliffs, waters and mountains typical of this land; in the poetry by Swedish Latvians there is something of the Nordic savour rustling*<sup>5</sup>.

Many Swedish writers still pay great attention to descriptions of nature, verbally painting detailed nature and urban landscapes.

Rural and urban landscapes have been the subject matter of certain research conferences and scholarly articles, thus emphasizing human life environment with differences within it. Swedish literary scholars more and more often use the new methodology of studying nature – ecocriticism – borrowed from the USA.<sup>6</sup> During recent five years, several research works in Swedish have been published concerning the significance and essence of ecocriticism<sup>7</sup> and doctoral theses have been defended based on the above-mentioned methodological principles.

Humans most often perceive nature as a resource in meeting their human needs and desires. Ecological problems appeared when natural scientists and philosophers started valuing culture above nature.

Issues studied by ecocriticism are as follows: how nature and the surrounding world are depicted in literature, how ecological problems are depicted in literature and how human and culture are opposed respectively to the surrounding environment and nature. Ecocriticism produces analysis of the place of human in nature and the significance of literature in the development of society, focusing on the way we depict and see nature depends on the ideology dominant in the society.

### Pleijel's *Wind-Watcher* and Landscape

The present article provides the analysis of nature landscape in the Swedish writer Pleijel's novel *Wind-Watcher* (1987). The novel has been selected for the analysis because in the 1990s many autobiographical texts appeared in Swedish literature that were also abundantly translated into Latvian. Memory narratives by Swedish writers are focused on remembering an individual's psychological experience and feelings. Such narratives

emphasize the psychological, personality, and family code. Autobiographical narratives have become a major thematic parallel of Swedish and Latvian literature. It is noteworthy that the novel depicts many nature landscapes and the writer has indicated her close bond with nature.

The novel *Wind-Watcher* is a family saga about four generations of a family within a century written in the form of a diary and is the author's confession of love for her grandfather Abel, mother Si and those people – *wind fortune-tellers who have never been able to sow to their heart's desire and therefore have not been able to reap the desired harvest*.<sup>8</sup>

The novel attributes an important place to art and music that are the uniting elements of the work and also to nature landscape. The main character Abel can accept absence from home, only resuming painting, though he realizes that his decision to leave abroad has been a mistake, as a result he becomes a stranger to himself.

*Painting, his passion from young days, captured him anew. He said that his life had become a mistake because he had dared to abandon his true calling.*<sup>9</sup>

Abel's father – the deaf-mute mariner Soult and also the image of the forgotten artist – unites the essence of art and the audial scene in the novel. Sons wish to return to their homeland that they associate with a space of quiet and peace, where even nature is united with human in silence. Nature landscape is closely related to art in the novel. The main characters of the novel, Abel and his father Soult are artists who mostly paint landscapes. The word 'landscape' is mentioned eighteen times in the novel, which undoubtedly proves the topicality of this notion in the novel.

Landscape in literature is regarded as one of the most influential means for depicting the virtual world as well as for depicting space and time. Landscapes are often described in the novels by the main hero, thus marking his inner energy and justifying the dynamic of his inner state of being. Images of nature and human are opposed but also constantly related.

The notion 'landscape' in some cases is explained differently. It is an object of study of nature, social sciences, humanities and art studies and therefore its interpretation in the world is very different and depends on the contextual perspective of the respective moment and the aim of the research.

*European Landscape (Florence) convention defines landscape as a territory that has been formed as a result of nature and (or) human action and interaction.*<sup>10</sup>

Culture geographer Edmunds Valdemārs Bunkše points out that landscapes are formed from ordinary sense organs and accepting uncritically public opinion.<sup>11</sup>

The notion 'landscape' is used in scholarship in different contexts:

- ecological context, paying attention to eco-systems and their combinations,
- geographical context where landscape is a unit of particular geographical space as well as the world construction and composition created by human in his/her imagination,
- aesthetic context (landscape perception, landscape design),
- historico-cultural context where landscape is treated as a witness of the historical development of the society.<sup>12</sup>

The present article regards landscape in the geographical and aesthetic contexts, focusing on the way landscape, place and environment may affect the world of human thoughts and feelings as well as the way characters perceive landscapes.

## Landscape of Lake Mälaren and Volcanic Landscape

One of the main and simplest functions of landscape in a work of fiction is depicting the setting of the work. The function of aesthetic impact on the reader cannot be slighted, as in most cases the space where the action is set is significant for a particular work of fiction. Landscapes help get a deeper insight into the character's inner world and experience and better understand the writer's conception. Landscape is a kind of a mirror of the human soul, depiction of human emotions and thoughts by means of nature elements.

The landscape of the vicinity of Lake Mälaren is very important in Pleijel's novel. The writer often returns to this essential setting of the novel and depicts it in a detailed way. Waters of Lake Mälaren are painted by Abel after thirty years of absence. This is the real landscape that Abel lived in before leaving abroad:

*It could be the landscape of Lake Mälaren. These could also be memories of youth in skerries. Anyway, this motif came from him. He painted slowly, extremely slowly. He set the brushes aside, left and came back.*

*It was a landscape without borders. Between the sky and water there is a hardly visible line of division. All is yellow and white. The light yellow contour of the group of trees binds the colour of water. The colour thickens, disperses, melts away... The painting depicts reflections, the sounding of transition.*

*It is impossible to tell whether it is night or day, dawn or twilight. None of the details stands out. Yet it becomes clear that it is a landscape, water, capes, trees. It could be best compared to music – it is created by sounds, chords, the eternal, a dream. This could be the sound of modern jazz music or the gamelan music with its sliding, flowing sensation.*

*Rivulets, flowing water, shining light.*<sup>13</sup>

The landscape of Lake Mälaren represents memories of childhood, youth, and the unfulfilled dreams. It is a *flowing landscape changing in form and delineation while they were in deep peace amid it*.<sup>14</sup> Landscape gets fused with the feeling of home, representing Sweden, peace, and security.

Quite often the landscape of Lake Mälaren is perceived through the window. The open windows manifest the character's inclusion in the surrounding environment:

*Windows and doors directly point to the idea of the transparency of entrance, relatedness to the external world. [...] doors make it possible to hear what happens outside but windows – not only to hear but also to see.*<sup>15</sup>

Window seems to provide the visual connection of the character with the surrounding of the environment. Window is one of the main channels of visual contact, it provides not only the opportunity to join the acoustic and visual images but also the human's understanding of the events beyond the accustomed space<sup>16</sup>. Observing nature and events through the window, the main character perceives and structures the world and its functioning.

Abel's father, the deaf-mute mariner Soult paints landscapes with water:

*[...] shores, islands, and the sea, nothing else. [...] He called himself a mariner. [...] His motif was water – waves, ships. [...] I see him sitting on a cliff at the very edge of water on an island of skerries where he used to paint. Because he painted all the waters around Stockholm, from Öregrund to Nynäshamn [...] He had dedicated his life for capturing the movements of water.*<sup>17</sup>

Water for him is the most important landscape element. In communication with nature he feels opening up deeper and more beautifully than among people.

Soult paints waters of the place he comes from that express his existence. In landscape he mostly depicts sea waves and clouds in the sky and water in relation to light, thus wishing to relate the essence of force and the basis of light. In landscapes Soult never includes people, also his children. *He was full of arrogance that drew a dividing line between him and others including even his wife and boys.*<sup>18</sup>

At all times the sea has been one of the most important spatial categories in European culture. The sea never disappears from the consciousness of Europeans as it is indirectly related to life.<sup>19</sup> The sea and sea-faring for northern peoples have always been of great importance, therefore quite often writers depict seascapes in their fiction. According to Pleijel, *Swedish, the same as other northern nations, are great sea-farers.*<sup>20</sup>

The sea performs the function of life creativity; it may rejuvenate the human soul. The sea belongs to the element of freedom, therefore, being without borders, the sea makes human the never-ending beginning.<sup>21</sup> According to Bachelard, water can express fate – not just that of evanescent image, senseless dream but that of significant and constantly transforming substance.<sup>22</sup>

Soult, like his son Abel is searching for his place and sense of life. Philosopher Andris Rubenis points out that *human has a certain place in the structure of the Universe but this place is not given to him but is suggested and this means that he must find it every time anew.*<sup>23</sup> Both main characters are artists, their way of searching is especially hard:

*From the initial closeness with one's local world to finding oneself and creating relations in the great world – this is the way that, with greater or lesser awareness must be followed by each individual human. But it is especially hard and complicated for an artist who must place oneself not in the routine environment of everyday life but in humanity and the Universe.*<sup>24</sup>

Striving of Abel and Soult for freedom is manifested in their landscape paintings.

Another motif painted by Abel is volcanic landscapes. Indonesia where he lived for thirty years opened to him motifs that none of the painters had witnessed before. He kept the strange landscape in memory and having returned to his native land put it on canvas. *They lived in him, they knocked and beat in order to be fulfilled.*<sup>25</sup>

Abel went to Indonesia in search for new motifs and money to start living with his girl-friend. He returned to Sweden only after thirty years with his wife and children. His dream of becoming a painter never came true. *When he gave up art, he gave up life. He gave up the only life he had always wished for.*<sup>26</sup>

Only after his return to homeland, to the native Lake Mälaren, he started painting the motifs *because of which he, attracted by the descriptions of his brother Java, had left Sweden. He painted the huge Semer which he had mounted. He did not have to look through the veranda window to find motifs. They were deep inside him and were breaking out. [...]*

*He painted volcanoes in watercolour so subtly, so carefully and in a reserved manner as if he was afraid of something in himself. He chose the bright colours of tropics but blurred them in a white, dim light.. [...]*

*Therefore his volcano paintings are so peculiar – weight that is floating, force that is vanishing. He painted volcanoes again and again. Memory was his only source of inspiration and the wasted life of a painter was his bet.*<sup>27</sup>

Indonesian landscapes hold memories of the time spent abroad. His life had proved to be an error as he had dared to abandon his true calling. According to Bunkše, *involuntary journeys, journeys of flight or expulsion from one's home ground, are invariably fraught with hardship and pain. However, any major departure from home, even for the most positive and optimistic reasons, will involve some pain or nostalgia for what was.*<sup>28</sup>

The trip of search for exotic motifs had been different than he had imagined. Landscapes of Lake Mälaren and volcanoes are closely related to Abel's state of mind, his feelings and desires.

The writer in the novel actualizes the topic of emigration. The author describes in a detailed way the borderline between two worlds – the white (Sweden) and brown (Indonesia) and reveals the nuances of family and human sensations when crossing the border from one world to another. The author points out the fusion of both worlds: *opposite me a girl with dark complexion and soft and expressive eyes was reading with ardour, must be Swedish*<sup>29</sup>. [bold type mine – I. L.] She activates the issue of the presence of various culture and religion traditions and lifestyles in Sweden as well as the problem of "aliens" and hardship of integration. *I realize with surprise that it is a shame to be indigenous*<sup>30</sup>. Pleijel admits that Sweden is *colder and more matter of fact*<sup>31</sup> than Indonesia – the old culture nation that is located both in the periphery and still between the West and the East.

It is noteworthy that in the novel the writer accentuates human's belonging to a particular group, nation, place, landscape. *We speak that the surrounding nature is being destroyed. But, in my opinion, the same is happening to the human soul. Human is characterized by an extreme need for belonging*<sup>32</sup>. The main characters, being both in the homeland and abroad, search for belonging a particular group and space all their lives.

People always desire both belonging and freedom that is a contradiction. *For a running time I was trying to realize their belonging to this part of the world, this land of mine. And for a running time I clearly grasped – I do not belong here. But where then? Nowhere. Neither in a geographical place nor the homeland – it does not exist any longer – or in a social group or layer.*<sup>33</sup> The writer actualizes the idea in the novel that Sweden is not the monolith state it used to be but a multinational symbiosis of several cultures.

## Garden Landscape

In addition to landscapes of Lake Mälaren and the volcanic landscapes garden must be noted that Abel built with his own hands. In the course of designing the garden, Abel expressed his relation to nature:

*The huge rocks lay upon one another. Weird monuments to the sun were naturally incorporated into the landscape carefully planned by granddad. Like peculiar exclamation marks they rose above the beauty of Lake Mälaren valley.*

*They emphasized the surrounding landscape. They accumulated the irradiation of the dusk and twilight. They participated in the game of celestial bodies.*

*They were like a daring and still humble reminder that there exist forces that are mightier than us, the worms of the earth.<sup>34</sup>*

In his garden landscape Abel uses seemingly routine objects – rocks that harmonize the landscape and are perceived as the guardians of landscape.<sup>35</sup> In myths of various nations the world has been created from water. The centre of water and ordered world is marked by stone in myths. Abel in the novel after a long absence tries to arrange his world and intentionally creates his own space – the garden landscape. Also after dividing the orchard in segments and tearing out apple-trees stones performed their function of the landscape guards.

### Sensation Landscapes

In the interpretation and evaluation of the aesthetic aspects of landscape great significance is attributed to the peculiarities of human perception. Perception is each human's individual impression and cognition of the surrounding environment and it involves the visual, sensory, and cognitive perception that interpret what is seen and felt in human's consciousness in interaction.<sup>36</sup> Visual perception is the major one among human senses as visual information is the first to reach us. Seeing is a kind of reading. The rest of human senses – hearing, taste, odour, touch – create the sensory perception. Plato and Aristotle pointed out that the main sense organs are those that make it possible to distance subject from object (seeing and hearing).<sup>37</sup>

The aesthetic aspect of landscape can be fully interpreted only if there are both visual and sensory perception because they complement each other. Cognitive perception is characterized as unconscious because it is related to the individual's prior experience and the level of education and to the way human can analyze and make sense of what is happening.<sup>38</sup>

Bunkše points out the expressive devices of landscape that are perceived not only with eye but all senses and feelings making it possible to include into landscape the whole range of sensations. He develops the idea of perceiving landscape much wider than just visually. According to Bunkše, landscape is a united whole perceived by every person with all senses. Bunkše writes:

*Human has five, in fact, six senses. I don't mean by the sixth one something esoteric but the whole body moving through landscape. [...] Landscape emerges when human, by using all his senses, contributes meaning to a set of elements in an environment. [...]<sup>39</sup>*

The issue of sensation landscapes has become topical in two recent decades. Researchers more and more often study sensation landscapes in literary works. In the novel *Wind-Watcher* landscapes are perceived visually, they are basically panoramic. Main heroes feast their eyes on nature and paint sea and Lake Mälaren landscapes. Yet other senses are added to the visual aspect in inner landscapes. In the novel there are also landscapes perceived audially. Both the interior and exterior spaces are filled with sounds. Diane Ackerman calls hearing *the geographic sence because sounds give us direction and distance and thus create acute awareness of being in space.*<sup>40</sup> In the novel *Wind-*



*Watcher* the writer often mentions sounds of the sea, *The sea sounded from nothing. [...] In the numerous voices of the sea. In game of colour.*<sup>41</sup>

The versatility of nature descriptions in the novel may be accounted for by the writer's wish to reveal significant details of the inner world of human. This function in the novel is performed by the sea and the wind that are attributes of freedom and movement. Often landscape is a background for the action of the novel and it marks the state of mind of the heroes depicting their feelings and sensations.

Abel's state of inescapability and his loneliness are depicted by means of sensation landscapes:

*Then the first dry rumble of thunder sounded followed by another. And then the rumble rolled over the mountains creating echo, like rocks thrown by giants. And thousands of thirsty mouths opened in darkness waiting for the rain. Sounds that roll, slide, rise and fall. Tropic rain. The opening sky.*

*His rage, his longing for love, all of his dreams were in this music.*<sup>42</sup>

The main hero Abel, being a stranger in a foreign land, *a land with some familiar emblems in an unfamiliar landscape*<sup>43</sup>, cannot get accustomed to the sounds, odours, and tastes of the foreign land.

*Their voices reach him when he is fidgeting under the mosquito-net, tortured by the thoughts about the sounds. Sounds of bodies in darkness. Sounds of gamelan music. Their sudden and evanescent laughter. Women – they smell of strange flowers, pungently and excitingly.*<sup>44</sup> But his girlfriend Astrid who was waiting for him in his homeland smelled of soil, shamrock, young grass. *He could not tell the taste of her from that of the wood – humus, polypody, and green dock.*<sup>45</sup>

Abel perceives home and foreign landscapes with all of his senses. Beautiful as Indonesian landscapes may be, those of his native land are more beautiful and closer because of the exciting and nice moments experienced in them in his childhood and youth.

## Conclusion

In conclusion it must be stated that many Swedish writers in their works pay much attention to landscape descriptions. In scholarly circles there are often debates about rural and urban landscapes, thus emphasizing human living environment with all differences within it.

Pleijel's novel *Vindspejare* is a bright example how nature landscape is depicted in literature. Two landscapes are emphasized in the novel: that of Lake Mälaren that is the real landscape encountered by Abel every day before going abroad and that is closely related to his state of mind, dreams, feelings and experience. Another is the volcanic landscapes of Indonesia that contain memories of the time spent abroad and a reminder that life has turned into an error as he abandoned his true calling.

Great significance in the novel is attributed to sensation landscapes. Landscapes of Lake Mälaren, the sea, and Indonesia are perceived as a united whole not only visually but with all senses.

Landscape in the novel is one of the factors that creates the sense of belonging to a particular place that is treated by the main hero as his own place. Main heroes prefer native landscape considering it attractive and especially close.

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- <sup>10</sup> Pleijele A. *Vēja zīlnieks*. Rīga: Norden, 1995. – p. 28.
- <sup>11</sup> Kļavinš M. *Vides zinātne*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2008. – p. 455.
- <sup>12</sup> Bunkše E. V. Vēl joprojām auga bērzu birztales. Latvijas ainavas man. *Akadēmiskā dzīve* Nr. 46, 2009. – pp. 3–4.
- <sup>13</sup> Kļavinš M. *Vides zinātne*. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2008. – p. 455.
- <sup>14</sup> Pleijele A. *Vēja zīlnieks*. Rīga: Norden, 1995. – pp. 30–31.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. – p. 221.
- <sup>16</sup> Baiburin A. K. Okno v zvukovom prostranstve. *Jevrazijskoe prostranstvo – Zvuk, slovo, obraz. Jazyki slavjanskoj kul'tury*. Moskva, 2003. – p. 120.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid. – p. 131.
- <sup>18</sup> Pleijele A. *Vēja zīlnieks*. Rīga: Norden, 1995. – pp. 53–54.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. – p. 71.
- <sup>20</sup> Fjodorov F. P. More v russkoj lirike 1820 – 1830-tih godov. *Slavjanskije chtenija III*. Latgal'jskij kul'ĵturnij centr: Daugavpils – Rezekne, 2003. – p. 35.
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- <sup>26</sup> Pleijele A. *Vēja zīlnieks*. Rīga: Norden, 1995. – p. 214.
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- <sup>28</sup> Pleijele A. *Vēja zīlnieks*. Rīga: Norden, 1995. – pp. 28–29.
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- <sup>30</sup> Pleijele A. *Vēja zīlnieks*. Rīga: Norden, 1995. – p. 13.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid. – p. 8.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup> Cited by: Krasovska D. Cilvēki raksta, lai tvertu mirkli. *Karogs* Nr. 8. 1995. – p. 232.
- <sup>34</sup> Pleijele A. *Vēja zīlnieks*. Rīga: Norden, 1995. – p. 11.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid. – p. 7.
- <sup>36</sup> Hofmanis, Reinis. *Akmeņi*. Jelgavas tipogrāfija: Jelgava, 2012. – p. 11.
- <sup>37</sup> Melluma A., Leinerte M. *Ainava un cilvēks*. Rīga: Avots, 1992.
- <sup>38</sup> Plath U. Sinneslandschaften. Die Bedeutung der Sinne bei der Beschreibung baltischer Landschaften und Kulturen (1750 – 1850). *Collegium litterarum* 24. *Umwelphilosophie und Landschaftsdenken im baltischen Kulturraum*. Tallin: OÜ Greif, 2011. – p. 76.
- <sup>39</sup> Cf. Kundziņš M. *Dabas formu estētika. Bionika un māksla*. Rīga: Madris, 2004.
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<sup>40</sup> Cited by: Bunkše E. V. *Geography and the Art o Life*. The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and London, 2004. – p. 31.

<sup>41</sup> Pleijele A. *Vēja zilnieks*. Rīga: Norden, 1995. – p. 100.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid – p. 113.

<sup>43</sup> Bunkše E. V. *Geography and the Art o Life*. The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and London, 2004. – p. 54.

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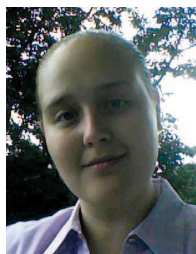
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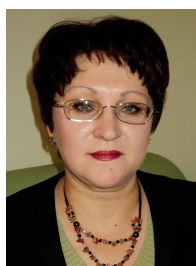
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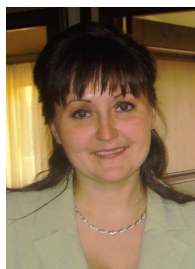
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