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## DEVELOPMENT OF IMAGOGY IN RUSSIA AND IMAGOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS IN LITERARY DISCOURSE

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### Abstract

Imagology has initially emerged as a sub-branch of comparative literature and then has become an independent discipline by creating its own unique methodology thanks to subsequent studies, and it examines the perception of a nation, country, culture or community formed in the mind of a foreigner. In this context, imagology is referred to as "the science of the alien" by many researchers and it requires not only to study the cultural, sociological and historical characteristics of the alien, but also to investigate its own intrinsic values.

When the imagology's developmental stages are examined, it is seen that imagology is shaped from comparative literature which has a wide history since the second half of the 19th century as in West. It becomes an independent discipline and reveals national values through dealing with foreign nations in various aspects thanks to following researches. In this study, we are going to evaluate the historical development of imagology in Russia through literary works.

**Keywords:** Image, Imagology, Russian Literature.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Imagology is known as a sub-branch of comparative literature until recently, and gained a foothold in human sciences in more recent times and it consists of a combination of the words "imago" in Latin, which means appearance, image, reflection, and "logia", which means science. Imagology is a scientific discipline which focus on the working principles of "foreign" nations, countries and cultures which are "alien" from the perspective of the perceiving subject. The image of the alien is examined as a pattern of the permanent and generalized national consciousness which occurs in a particular socio-historical setting in imagological studies. Moreover, such studies not only reveal the image of alien in all branches of science, but also allow to reflect the national identity and intrinsic values by consubstantiating the perceiving subject with the alien (Болдова, 2006, 114).

The interdisciplinary structure of imagology creates a wide variety of imagological definitions. N. E. Yatsenko, one of the important Russian imagologists who have conducted studies in this field, defines imagology as "learning of images" considering imagology as a

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theoretical or historical literary discipline. I. Noynman describes imagology as a sub-branch of culturalology or sociology, which investigates the phenomenon in which parties of the culture-based dialogue introduce themselves to each other whereas I. Sevel describes imagology as the current branch of modern comparativism, which systematically examines the expression of one society to another. S. A. Mezin, on the other hand, describes imagology as a branch of historical science, which examines the images of alien society or country formed in public's memory in a particular historical period. Generally, imagology, as a branch of science, is based on the need to examine also the depiction of native/self-culture after examining the depiction of alien to master intercultural exchange and mutual perception of each other studying dynamic and natural depiction of alien culture shaped throughout the course of the history (Мишда, 2017).

When the development stages of imagology in Russia is studied, it is shaped as a scientific method within the framework of comparative literature, which has a well-established history since the second half of the 19th century, just like in the West. The traditions of national science in this field of science, also particularly known as comparative literature, relied upon researchers such as A. N. Veselovski, V. M. Zhirmunski, M. P. Alekseev, N. I. Konrad. A. N. Veselovski, V. M. Zhirmunski, M. P. Alekseev, N. I. Konrad. Over time, the research fields of comparative literature expands and results in emergence of new thematic fields such as constantology which means the study of the constants of contact relations, typological similarity, national culture. L. V. Chernets, a literary scientist, includes imagology into these branches and describes it as "the study of the spiritual image of a community from the perspective of a different national conscience". Moreover, Chernets expresses how imagological elements of comparative literature provides him with vigor: *"The antithesis which emerged at the dawn of civilization is in the form of we / they, ours / alien's, it evolves and gets mitigated thanks to comparative studies. In other words, the components of imagology are primarily the national originality of literature and then the characteristics of the national mentality"* (Полякова, 2016, 37).

In the literary dimension of imagological researches, many scientists such as V. B. Zemskov, S. B. Korolyova, V. A. Lukov, N. P. Mihalskaya, A. R. Osepkov, A. V. Pavlovskaya, E. V. Papilova, O. Y. Polyakov, O. A. Polyakova V. P. Trikov, , Y. S. Stepanov, L. F. Habibullina, V. A. Horev take an active role. However, there is no single, generally accepted definition in the local science community since the history of imagology is still very recent. For this reason, in the glossary of social sciences terms, imagology is described as "the science of representation" and "as part of the comparative historical method in literary criticism". However, Russian scientists clarify this rather broad definition by drawing attention to more partial perspectives. For example, A. R. Osepkov explains imagery as a research field of various humanities that examines the foreign image of the other country in social, cultural and literary consciousness, while V. A. Horev points out that imagination studies the image of other societies not only in the field of literature but also in other texts, but still its main object is literature. According to N. P. Mihalskaya, imagology examines the perception and embodiment the literary studies of the thoughts about the alien country, the people of the country, the characteristics of its national character. For E. V. Papilov, imagology is a scientific discipline which makes a research object out of the images which are alien to the one who perceives the alien, alien nation, country or culture (Рябчикова, 2018, 47).

In Russia, imagological approaches are firstly adopted in research conducted by L. A. Zak on prejudices in foreign policy. Analyzing the basic theoretical approaches of Western imagology, the author emphasize, in his studies, particularly the the effect of prejudice in creating an image of a state and in foreign policy on the international relations between states, the construction of such images and their application in diplomacy facultatively (Поршнева, 2014, 126).

## **2. EXAMPLES OF RUSSIAN IMAGODOLOGY IN LITERATURE**

First impressions about a society or nation are embedded in the language they speak. For example, even in the 19th century, Eastern Slavic peoples called those who did not speak in their



own language are called "dumb / tongueless / speechless" (немой). The word "немой" and "немец", which means "German" today, are of the same etymology. Both of these words are referred to as "нѣмьсь" (nems), which means "foreign", "foreigner", in the sources from which the old Slavic lexicon takes its roots and the root of this word is "нѣмъ" (nem), which means who cannot speak understandably. A. S. Griboyedov gets cynical about this situation in his four-comedy act titled "Woe from Wit" wording "Oh our dear people, at east you do not consider us alien/tongueless/ German in terms of language". At those times when the said comedy is written, the preferred language among the elite is French, and thereafter a specific people in the form of a dumb/alien (German) is defined (ИВАНОВА, 2012, 217).

Stereotypes which label ethnic groups undoubtedly contribute to the construction of fixed properties about the "alien". The objections to ethnology and ethnopsychology during the imagological discourse allow to penetrate into the subtleties of national characteristics. As an example, many Russian proverbs on alien nations provide valuable material for the structuring of ethnic stereotypes used to identify foreigners. These words reflect the acceptance characteristics of the "alien" nation by the Russian, and also the characteristics of the different types of national conscious. The proverb "What pleases the Russian kills the German", a famous proverb, can be given as an example of this idea (Любарец, 2018, 234).

The imagological view is also discussed in the early works of Russian literature such as "Travel to Island of Love" by V. K Trediakovsky and "Marfa Posadnitsa" by N. M. Karamzin. Later in the 19th century, images of the "alien" space, such as the Caucasus, were created by Pushkin and Lermontov. In a broader sense, the image of the Caucasus in Russian literature develops in connection with aesthetic thought movement which occurs when these two great writers step from romanticism to realism in their artistic lives. Initially, the Caucasus is perceived as a distant exotic region which became part of the contradictions of the age, or as a romantic symbol of "sacred freedom". The analysis of social relations and the emergence of realism along with the concept of "dialectic of the soul" opposes the generic naming of all mountain peoples known as "Circassians" in the Caucasus. However, it draws attention to the differentiation of countless nations, the infiltration of it into each life, into "alien" soul (Еропова, 2007, 33).

In the period of romanticism, it increases interest in the national awareness, language and folklore of society, the originality of culture and literature, the way of thinking and character of alien communities, and what is "exotic". The literature of romanticism such as Pushkin's Caucasian, Crimean, gypsy, Moldovan topics, Pushkin and Gogol's Malorossiya (Little Russia) topics, Lermontov and Tolstoy's Caucasian subjects, observing local concerns, creating character representations / images of other societies, concretize the ethnic stereotypes which are formed in Russian minds. However, in addition to aesthetic conditions, the subject under study changes with a new trend in Russian-Caucasian relations. The consolidation of economic and cultural bonds through the Caucasian war allows writers and literary experts alike to present the Caucasus in a versatile and voluminous way. Not only Caucasus, Crimea, but also Ukraine, the Baltic States, Moldova, Volga Region, Bashkortostan, Northern Siberia now constitute a subject of the artistic quest of the Russian authors. The works of many Russian authors such as P. I. Melnikov-Pecersky, V. Korolenko, V. Siskov, M. Prishvin constitute the reference materials for the reader to learn about the lives of the Bashkirs, Chuvash people, Udmurts, Mari people, Tungusic people, Yakuts (Sakha), Nenets and many other ethnic groups (Еропова, 2007, 35).

In literary works, alien characters, as they may be referred to as the carriers of alien mentality and culture in a broader sense, play a fundamental role in creating the image of a country and above all in presenting an alien national character. For example, Lermontov's Circassian girl - Bela, Pushkin's Gypsy girl Zemfira and Polish girl Maria, Ukrainian Taras Bulba by Gogol, Soloha, Vakula the Smith, and German character Tuzenbah in Chekhov's "Three Sisters", and many other exemplary characters are reflections of the mentioned mentality towards aliens. The emergence of alien characters like Hermann in Pushkin's "Queen of Spades", Stolz in Goncharov's "Oblomov", Insarov and Lemm characters in Turgenev's "On the Eve" and "A House



of Gentlefolk" respectively gives information about the authors' approach towards the characters they create (Папилова, 2011, 37).

The genre of travel literature which has become popular in the age of enlightenment plays a special role in the development of imagology. In Russia, authors like Ekaterina Romanovna Dashkova, Denis Ivanovich Fonvizin, Nikolay Mikhailovich Karamzin, Pavel Ivanovich Sumarokov, Nikolay Ivanovich Gretch and Mikhail Petrovich Pogodin contribute in this genre of literature. Traveling to alien lands and meeting the natives of these places is considered to be the actual birth of imagology. The first or one of the earliest of these works is "The Journey Beyond Three Seas" by Afanasy Nikitin. While this work is a written monument of that period, on the one hand, it is a bunch of impressions about India, which is still exotic both due to itself and its route to destination, on the other hand. With the travel notes, reports and documents of the Russians, authors like B. I. Kurakin, A. M. Apraksin, P. A. Tolstoy, B. P. Sheremetev show great interest in different aspects of Western culture. Then it is contributed by late authors like A. I. Herzen "Letters from France and Italy" (1847-1852), F. M. Dostoyevsky "Winter Notes on Summer Impressions" (1863), N. I. Danilevsky "Russia and Europe" (1869) (Папилова, 2011, 37).

Imagology quickly exceeds the limits of literature, which transform into a different system, by examining the form and development of alien cultures, countries and peoples in any culture. In such a plan, the first brilliant works in Russia were A. B. David and V. A. Makrushin's "Appearance of a Distant Country" About Africa (1975) and N. Ye. Yerofeyev's works, "Foggy Albion: British in the eyes of Britain and Russians 1825-1853". However, imagology, which is seen as a discipline in relation to national views and ethnic stereotypes and their impact on society, is present in alien disciplines such as ethnology. At the same time, new interpretations of imagology continue to occur in philology over time. Imagology is referred in literature as a scientific field which offers the possibility of conveying literary views when translated from one language to another, whereas in philology, it is referred to as learning the stereotypes of those who convey a language to another language or "alien languages" in the form of their own language (Бойцов, 2010, 79).

Upon examination of the representation of the alien image, folkloric elements are also considered as a discipline of the image cycle. Proverbs, idioms, epics, historical songs, fairy tales, religious rituals, jokes, child's rhymes and funny anecdotes are resources of folk art. Folklore, a product of folk art, can reflect popular patterns of mass conscious of aliens in direct and convincing manner. For example, the German image is an image formed on the basis of Russian jokes about the Germans by V. Dalem: "The German is cunning, he invented a monkey; The German has the tool for everything. "German invents, Russian takes over." The German image reflected in these proverbs is created on the basis of ideas which are formed and stereotyped in Russian national conscious during the course of history (Папилова, 2011, 37).

Ideas about alien peoples and countries are reflected in the daily use through works of art, memoirs, journalism, travel writings and anecdotes. For example, the funny stories which starts with "German, French and Russian meet ..." ends up presenting German to be pedantic and French to be thoughtless but affectionate. As can be seen from these examples, imagology continues to use the concept of "typical" with respect to the nation, however in our day, a nation-specific characteristic is not considered to be a reflection of hereditary essence, but a concretization of reputational traits (Хорев, 2013, 24).

In the article "The depiction of the" neighbor "in the formation of ethnic identity", the Russian imaginalist V. N. Toporov talks about the natural and inevitable differentiation of the ethnic stereotype development of the other / foreigner. According to Toporov, competition relations and struggle for resources are an important factor in sustaining life, which is grounded on the negative stereotype of the "alien" in relations. This primitive and fundamental mechanism is preserved throughout the history of humanity until modern times, and it cannot change the efforts to establish international organizations and legal norms which can ensure a more tolerant presence



during the 20th century, especially after the Second World War. Political scientists assert a "peaceful existence" in the form of mutual deterrence efforts by two rival superpowers and menacing coalitions uttering threats to acquire weapons of mass destruction. However, on the other hand, human beings concurrently try to solve the problem by confronting different forms of centrism (racism) with universalism (Christian, humanist, Marxist-socialist, liberal-democratic, or globalization project in its current state). However, some sort of "centrism" is concealed in every paradigm of universalism in our day, as in the "Pax Americana" behind western globalization. The struggle of the "centrism" is always a constant phenomenon and mechanism of the world history, and the most effective weapons of this struggle have always been imagological stereotypes and depictions (Земсков, 2006, 123). Although the lines between religious, social or cultural formations are rendered imperceptible under the name of universalism, some kind of alienation will be inevitable as long as competitive environments prevail. For example, even in the Slavism / Westernism discussions which affect Russian cultural life, marginalization or Alienation are involved. Even if there were to be a union of countries, religions and cultures, some form of "alien" concept would also emerge somehow. And such "aliens" also produce innumerable stereotypes and depictions.

In addition to all these studies, the most important contribution to the development of imagology in Russia is made by V. B. Zemskov, a professor at the Gorky Institute of World Literature, who has served as the chairman of the European and American modern literature department. In 2006, his work titled "Image of Russia at the Return of Time" (Theoretical view: acceptance and representation of "alien" culture) on the site of "New Russian Human Studies" is considered to be the theoretical and methodological pillar of imagology by many Russian scientists who have recently focused on alien culture, image and perception problems. His work titled "At the turning point: Image of ancient and contemporary Russia in European and American culture and literature (the end of XX century - the beginning of XXI century)", which came into existence as a result of the work of Zemskov et. al. and with the financial support of the Russian Humanities Foundation is considered as a joint work. The representation of the image of Russia in a book for the first time is presented in such a big literary circle encompassing German, English, French, Polish, Serbian, American, Canadian, Spanish-American literature and accompanied by the materials of contemporary Russian literature. Some authors who push the boundaries of the material subject to the research address the problem in a broader historical and cultural context, whereas others draw attention to media publications which reflect the public. Doing their full share of work in these researches and discoveries, all participants of this project emphasize the importance of imagology in the age of globalization and increase the intensity of mutual contacts between different nations (Полякова, 2016, 3).

Other studies on Poland, investigated in detail and constitutes a part of imagological studies of the world-famous Philologist V. A. Horev apart from Zemskov, as well as numerous Slavic literature are available. One of Horev's main works, published in the 21st century, "Polish and Poles through the Eyes of Russian Literature. In the Imaginative Essays, the researchers' scientific quests are compiled in conceptual integrity, and scientific innovations and interpretations of literary events, theoretical provisions are included in the research field and the works of Polish and Russian writers are reflected. It is particularly emphasized by many researchers that Horev laid the foundations and successfully developed literary analysis, being the first one to call it imagology in Russia. The basic theoretical provisions of imagology, which put focus on the most important and current problems of imagology, are conceived by Horev. A series of international scientific conferences are organized under the supervision of Horev, bringing together the most important scientists of different countries with interest in this problem. From the results of these conferences, substantial publications are made in Russia and Poland and they attract the attention of the scientific world. In Horev's research, again, and with new interpretations, very rich materials are presented, covering the typical character of Russian and Poland, the Russian-Polish relations regarding the hardest challenges Russian and Polish states face against each other, starting from



the 11th century to the late 20th century. The author examines both countries' folklore, literature, philosophy, psychology, politics and other fields and the history of their attitudes towards each other from the viewpoint of imagology (Мусяенко, 2012, 77).

Apart from Horev's works, imagological analysis becomes the basis of historical and cultural studies, in which both literary texts and the texts published in printed journals are explored, in Russia. The monography titled "Russia in French Intellectual Life:1839-1856" published by French historian M. Cadot in 1967: evidences that the Russian social thought was present in the cultural life of France in the 19th century. In the said monograph, the French, who travel in Russia, write their travel notes and memoirs and make brief explanations about the Russian people, are consulted. In this context, it is concluded which imagology is also used in journalism. Apart from this, monography is the analysis of the texts made available in various media types. For example, A. De Custine's travel to Russia and the brochure "Russia in 1839" are discussed. There are two chapters of the monograph for a detailed study of the causes of this travel, and the image of St. Petersburg in the book of Custine, analysis of some topics and responses of Russia and Western Europe the studies of Custine respectively. Considering the issues in the monograph of Cadot, the impression of Russian-French cultural contacts between 1839-1856; The views of the French about the geography, climate and social structure of Russia; French thoughts about Russia and religious life in Russian literature; The relations between Poland and Russia, Russia and Europe, the results of the revolution in 1848 clarify the quality of this study. First of all, the work should be handled in terms of historical and cultural, then literary analysis, because it is thought to be a source of information for a historian who reconstructed literary material, Russian-French cultural contacts on which the author is based (Михайлова, 2015, 346).

### 3. CONCLUSION

In the last decade, a number of publications have emerged in Russia which address the issues of imagology and target the foundations of the this research field, carrying local imagology forward to a new, higher level of development and gaining scientific appreciation. These publications also consolidate its position in the arena of international and interreligious relationship problems which exacerbate literary criticism in the modern society and require urgent solutions. Apart from monographic studies discussing the history and methodology of imagology in Russian literary criticism, the monographies of Prof. Dr. O. Y. Polyakova and Assoc. Prof. Dr. O. A. Polyakov, which treat imagology as a method of literary criticism, obtains more significance in this field. This makes it possible to realize the "imago-typical" features of the auto-images of the different nations formed in the level of inter-literary interrelation of the science of literature and the hetero-stereotypical constants of the national character. In the monograph of the Polyakovs, the evolution of the idea of imagology from its early formation to the present is systematically presented in the first section of the monograph titled "History and Methodology of Imagology". In the first half of the 20th century, the authors describe the transition of the "national" category from anthropological analysis to historical analysis within the framework of comparative literature, and eventually they mention its formation and development.

As a result, the interest in imagology increases significantly in Russia. To this situation, Ye. Yu. Artemova, V. Ye. Bagno, N. P. Mihalski's "Odessa. The Man in History. "The Appearance of the "Foreigner "in Culture" (1993), "Russia and Europe in the XIX – XX Centuries. Mutual Perception Problem of Peoples, Societies and Cultures" (1996), "The Appearance of Russia. Studies such as "Russia and Russians in the Perception of the West and the East" (1998), Russia and the West in the Beginning of the New Millennium "(2007). From a general point of view, there are various types of imagology, which operate in various fields in Russia, categorized under scientific knowledge. Historical imagology studies the existing images in the past and the stereotypes of perception of the world around these images. Another type of imagology is artistic imagology. In literature science, the analysis and interpretation of images of other communities in works of art is



the area of interest. Based on the studies of the researchers, national images concretized in literature are expanded and enriched with the help of structural, thematic, philological, semantic analysis and fields such as history and psychology. Comprehensive interpretation of national imagology with the help of these fields contributes to the development of ideas, rendering the ideology and cultural mentality of society profounder.

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