

Received: February 2023 Accepted: March 2023

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/ks.v11i2.446>

Multicultural Context of the Foreign Novel in Modern Literature

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Abstract

This article provides clear theoretical definitions of the main research concepts", "context", "multicultural context". The essence of the phenomenon "multicultural context of the modern novel" is revealed. The peculiarity of philosophical and aesthetic attitudes of modern Western theorists of multiculturalism and postcolonialism is determined. In this article, we explore modern English literature, namely, the work of modern English writers V. Naipaul, S. Naipaul, S. Rushdie, X. Kureishi, B. Okri and other authors who combined the fundamental archetypes of two or more cultures in their creative biography and in their work, but at the moment linking their creative being with England, the cultural and literary tradition of this country. In the article we present cultural-historical, comparative-typological, axiological research methods. The genre features of the multicultural novel are investigated on the basis of the synthesis of the traditional analytical approach to the disclosure of the nature of the literary genre and new theoretical calculations of researchers of this phenomenon of literature. The linguistic phenomena recorded in the works of modern English prose writers-multiculturalists are explained through the prism of the conscious desire of authors - carriers of various ethno-cultural roots to differentiate their cultural identity.; The possible prospects of the mutual influence of new, multicultural literature on the dominant literary tradition are indicated in the dialectical way of the mutual influence of the key concepts of "center" and "periphery", "dominant" and "marginal".

Keywords: literature, multicultural aspect, novel, English novel, culture, globalization, literary history, dialogue of cultures

Introduction

Philology undoubtedly plays an important role in solving the problem of national identity. "Literature is involved in it only insofar as it always reflects not only life realities and life patterns, but also the way of thinking of the people with their characteristic picture of the world"¹. According to L. Weisgerber, each language represents a special point of view on the world - the point of view from which the people who created this language looked at it, while the language is equated in importance to religion and myth. Language is a reflection of the archetypes of a nation, its mentality. In this regard, it seems important to turn to the analysis of basic and metaphorical concepts characteristic of the work of modern English writers. As D. S. Likhachev

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rightly notes, the conceptual sphere in which any national language lives is constantly enriched if there is literature worthy of it. Using a variety of approaches to a problem helps to explore the overall conceptual picture of the world. "The word "concept" is a translation from the Latin *conceptum*, which literally means "conception, conception" (from the verb *concipere* - "to conceive"). As a unit of cultural studies, the concept is associated with the integrative nature of this discipline; the concept of "concept" is applicable in the field of art and literature, linguistics, computer science, psychology, philosophy, anthropology, history, ethnography, ethnology..." As M. V. Tsvetkova believes, a concept can have both verbal and non-verbal forms. The non-verbal form of concepts includes a number of significant (ritual, ceremonial) situations, actions, gestures, and the verbal form includes "key words" (texts, "cultural scripts") of a given language and a given culture. "For different authors, artistic reality can be presented as through concepts common to speakers of a given language (in our case, English), and through individual modifications of general linguistic conceptual metaphors."³ Important for our consideration is the concept as a clot of culture, a kind of pass to another world. Illustrative examples are holidays that have their roots in the distant past, where they were sacred rites, traditions, cults, and important historical events. "The concept of a conceptualized area, like the concept itself, is located in two spheres - language and culture."⁴ The linguistic image of the world is created both by nominative means (lexemes) and functional means of language, among which special mention should be made of the communicatively relevant linguistic means of the people and figurative means of language - national metaphors, nationally specific images. In other words, "our own culture gives us a cognitive matrix for understanding the world, the so-called "picture of the world."⁵ According to Z. D. Popova and I. A. Sternin, there is a so-called artistic picture of the world. It is similar to the linguistic picture of the world and is associated with the reader's perception of a literary text. "The artistic picture of the world can reflect the features of the national picture of the world - for example, national symbols, nationally specific concepts. At the same time, one should always remember that the artistic picture of the world is a secondary, mediated picture of the world, and it is mediated twice - by language and by the individual author's conceptual picture of the world."⁶ An integrated approach to the problem contributes to the reconstruction of the national linguistic picture of the world on the basis of linguistic, cultural, semiotic analysis. "A literary text as a product of culture fully embodies the peculiarity of a person's worldview, which allowed E. Cassirer to define a person as a symbolic being. With the help of symbolic structures, individual and collective pictures of the world are created, which form the basis of cultures."⁷ The symbol is a component of the nuclear structure of artistic meaning - the conceptual picture of the work. Symbolic language should be considered in the system of artistic means of the novel.

The national picture of the world is a correlation of several national components: mentality, conceptual sphere and picture of the world. "Different national mentalities may perceive the same subject situations differently. The national mentality, as it were, forces a person to see one thing and not notice the other."⁸ A specific manifestation of the national mentality is the national character and national behavior of the people. The range of problems we have identified today falls within the competence of cognitive literary criticism. Cognitivism as a macro theory is distinguished primarily by its use of an interdisciplinary approach. "Specialists in different fields of knowledge convey what V. Iser calls "cultural competence" and propose joint activities. Research within the cognitive paradigm can be called borderline research, conducted on the border of various sciences and directions."⁹ The key concepts of cognitive literary criticism include: cognitive, cognitive-discursive, cognitively intuitive, intertextuality, interpretation as a purposeful cognitive activity. Cognitive literary criticism today strives for

interaction between literary scholars of different directions, which in fact means flexibility and dialogism. Identifying the author's cognitive system means creating a micro-theory by the interpreter about the author's goals and motives through the eyes of the author himself. The purpose of private cognitive interpretations is to recognize the type of artistic thinking of the author (polyphonic or monological), which is based on the author's marked concept of seeing the world. Currently, the text-reader problem is a problem of intertextuality, based on the cultural unconscious and representing a special universal strategy for relating one text to other texts. And, since the historiographical material proposed by modern authors is largely based on myths and private history, the researcher resorts to an intuitive-cognitive approach. As L.V. Borisova notes, following V. Iser, "the study of literature is acquiring completely new tasks (Iser 2001). Modern literary criticism has faced a number of problems that allow, for example, left-wing deconstructionists, both here and abroad, to talk about the "death" of the author, the "death" of literature and literary criticism."

The relevance of addressing the topic of this research of this article is due to the fact that in recent decades, in the light of the developing dialogue of cultures, the problem of the fate of literary history has become more acute, which at the moment is much more dependent on the large-scale processes of internationalization and globalization, within which these studies are carried out.

The subject of the research of this article is a new component of modern English literature, namely, the work of modern English writers V. Naipaul, S. Naipaul, S. Rushdie, X. Kureishi, B. Okri and other authors who combined the fundamental archetypes of two or more cultures within the framework of their creative biography and in their work, but at the moment linking their creative being with England, the cultural and literary tradition of this country [1].

It is important to note that the work of these writers in modern literary criticism has been little studied or not studied at all. This is also the reason for the novelty of the research, since the object of scientific analysis is mainly the works of the above-mentioned authors - both artistic, journalistic, critical, not translated into Russian.

The study of literature and its history developed primarily in countries that sought to cultivate national identity and gain state independence. However, since the first half of the 20th century, the positions of Eurocentrism and the European model of nationally oriented literary history have been greatly shaken [2].

Until the 70s of the XX century, it was believed that the term "English literature" means, first of all, literature created in the area of the British Isles. The work of major writers who lived outside of England was either not studied or assimilated within the English tradition. The literature of the United States of America stood apart because it had its own history. However, American literature was studied outside of North America quite sporadically, although many American writers preferred to live in England and in Europe.

Since the second half of the XX century, the point of view on English-language literature has gradually begun to undergo changes. The attention of critics was attracted by the Australian prose and literature of the Caribbean (West Indies), as well as the work of writers from Africa and Asia who gained independence.

A number of universities (Canada, Australia, South Africa) gave courses of lectures on African, Irish and Canadian literature. Books written by regional authors expanded the idea of the cultural range of "young literature". The plot of these works, their subject matter and style were

based on extraordinary characteristics that are not always accessible to the understanding of the European reader [3].

In this case, the consumer of the latest literary products had to deal with such phenomena as social images of the British in the perception of residents of former colonies, American individualism, Nigerian tribalism, Indian mysticism, self-identification of West Indians. Since writers outside of England tend to work within their national literary tradition, it seems likely that "awareness of the essence of other English literature may become part of our reading habit."

The British Empire was the largest state ever to exist in the history of mankind with colonies on all inhabited continents. The empire, "over which the sun never sets," has been growing for two hundred years. The apogee of the expansion of the colossal state is considered to be the beginning of the XX century [4].

However, after the Second World War, the general decline of the capitalist system sharply worsened. The liberation movements of the peoples of Africa and Asia took on an unprecedented scale. The imperialists could no longer reign supreme in the countries of the East, and the enslaved peoples no longer wanted to endure the oppression and violence of the invaders. The mighty British Empire has entered the stage of disintegration. It began a powerful rise of the national liberation struggle, which was the main and decisive factor in the aggravation of the crisis of the state. The results of the war created exceptionally favorable conditions for the protection of the captured peoples of their independence [5].

Thus, the process of multicultural mixing that took place in Great Britain in the last decades of the 20th century as a result of intensive migration of citizens of former British colonies, the interweaving of alien ethnic systems and the emergence of "new Englishmen" were accompanied by the assimilation of traditional English culture and, at the same time, the voluntary or involuntary introduction of cultural features uncharacteristic of foggy Albion. The term "multiculturalism" appeared for the first time in the late 60s of the twentieth century in Canada and already in 1971 acquired the status of an official term and the designation of a government course.

Discussion

At the end of the last century, the frequency of its use began to grow rapidly and at the turn of the 80s - 90s of the twentieth century, this concept began to be included in various dictionaries on sociology, philosophy and political science, and the modern meaning of "multiculturalism" became one of the main categories of modern social sciences. More than 235 thousand links were issued to the query "multiculturalism", set in one of the largest Internet search engines "Google", which indicates a special interest in this term in modern society [6].

According to the ethnographer E.A. Pain, "multiculturalism is a very fresh concept that entered scientific circulation only in the late 1980s and, due to its youth, does not yet have a serious theoretical basis. This term itself is extremely vague, although it has been used extremely widely in many countries of the world recently... Nevertheless, despite all the theoretical uncertainty of this concept, its popularity is based on the basic postulate that recognizes the intrinsic value of the cultural diversity of the country (region, the whole world) and the fundamental inadmissibility of ranking cultures according to the principle of "lowest – highest", "main – secondary"[7]

The American sociologist N. Glazer defined multiculturalism as "a complex of diverse development processes, during which many cultures are revealed as opposed to a single national culture"

The scientist also identifies several forms of multiculturalism: transformative, incremental and afrocentrism. The transformative type is one of the forms of militant multiculturalism. According to N. Glazer, in it the whole history is rewritten anew, and the main role is given to races and ethics that were previously discriminated against [8].

Additional multiculturalism also refers to a militant form, the aggressiveness of which gradually increases and becomes apparent over time. Liberality towards ethno-cultural groups generates a pendulum rollback in the direction opposite to the original direction of the pluralistic side of multiculturalism.

N. Glazer deciphers the additional form as the fact of the active addition of some significant figures representing minority cultural groups to the political processes. Afrocentrism is an offshoot of a transformative kind of multiculturalism [9].

Being initially directed through meaningful steps to include the study of the African continent in the educational process to restore the rights of the African-American component of the population, multiculturalism faces the demands of reviewing the course of history, as well as the world cultural and scientific, the main technological achievements of mankind from the position of the primacy of African, in particular Negro culture. Benhabib, in turn, understands multiculturalism as a theory according to which cultures and groups of people are clearly identifiable and divided communities that maintain rigid boundaries and coexist with each other like elements of a mosaic.

Nevertheless, the term "multiculturalism" did not have an unambiguous definition already at the time of its origin. At the present stage, multiculturalism has one of the most vague definitions of the 9 political lexicon and means only what every speaker puts into it. Supporters of multiculturalism view it as a reflection of a modern society characterized by a diversity of cultures and as an exclusively culturological principle, consisting in the fact that people of different religions, races, ethnicity, without departing from their cultural identity, should learn to live side by side with each other [10].

As a rule, this approach does not meet with objections from serious European diplomats, but they oppose other aspects of multiculturalism, considering it through the prism of state policy.

The problems of intercultural communication, communication between carriers of various cultural stereotypes in modern society are increasingly forcing researchers to think about issues related to translation as a cultural, linguistic and literary "transfer", and Western writers are increasingly discussing whether the language they "were able to master is really a global language based on only on the scientific and military superiority of the West." [11]

These arguments are becoming more and more relevant every day, because they make it possible to somehow realize whether this language, along with the overwhelming flow of standardized slogans of mass media, advertising and marketing, is capable of creating a common basis for interethnic communication, which will make translation the most important phenomenon of the social landscape [12].

The globalist tendencies towards unification in the last decades of the last century were opposed by the emerging position of cultural relativity in modern cultural studies and ethnology, which defended the diversity of cultures and their specific characteristics, even though it is quite difficult to talk about cultures in terms of an authentic, self-sufficient "whole".

The so-called postcolonial discourse, which developed after the collapse of the world colonial system, replaced the concept of cultural relativity with the idea of cultural difference, thus personifying the paradigm of cultural contacts and clashes that had undergone transformations, which seriously influenced cultural policy.

The newly emerging, largely controversial, theories about the "clash of civilizations" (S. Huntington) state that the axis of the upcoming international conflicts will take place rather not along the national, but along the cultural "meridian" separating various religious, political and economic systems: "In the foreseeable future, there is no universal civilization yet, rather we will face a world of different civilizations, each of which will have to learn to coexist with its neighbors." [13]

Such postulates pose a serious challenge to the humanities, whose traditional categories and concepts of "cross-cultural pollination", mainly Eurocentric, require revision. In this regard, in the debates on the problems of world literature, the idea that a huge variety of literatures and cultures can be considered as based on a multifaceted "archive" of texts is becoming less popular. This diversity should be shaken as a result of a serious collision with the explosive dynamism of the text itself, which spreads the energy of unification from its base in the central zones to the periphery of the world cultural space [14].

On the agenda is the need to create a space of "oscillation" between cultures outside the framework of nations, in which a new productivity of atonal consonances can be discovered, the experience of border zones in all its inconsistency is mastered. Such an area should take the place of the synthesis of "multicultural symphonies". Based on this, "every effort to expand the horizons of world literature will face cultural misunderstanding, but this moment can also play a stimulating role from the point of view of creativity."

The growing influence of national literatures in English is becoming a reflection of such cultural and political phenomena as the collapse of the British Empire, the entry of new nations into the world culture, the weakening of ties within the countries of the British Commonwealth, the growing awareness of independence in the former colonies, the reaction to the attempts of the United States to play a special role in the world [15].

The English cultural tradition is no longer dominant outside the British Isles, and it is unable to support one or another elite subject to British influence. The destruction of the established idea of English in national literatures reflects the growing cultural fragmentation of the English-speaking world.

The English language is in conflict with the lifestyle, behavior and national traditions of the speaker, and, moreover, the writer. Writers, educators, and scientists do not unquestioningly follow the patterns of speech, behavior, morality, and beliefs that dominated minds in the past. The loss of the unity of literary culture entails the recognition that the acceptance of the pronounced qualities of various national literary traditions has become an urgent necessity [16].

It is important to note that the so-called "English studies" became relevant at a time when Greek and Latin had already lost their unconditional role in the education and upbringing of a gentleman. Homer, Virgil, Cicero within the framework of the European tradition as sources of moral and intellectual education gave way to Shakespeare, Donne, Pope, Dickens in the lists for compulsory reading and study.

In the process, of course, the sense of cohesion inherent in the European worldview was lost, the palimpsest of human memory was destroyed, the historical vision was shredded, which had

previously been based on a more acute sense of the momentary, proximity to the spiritual world of favorite writers.

The literature of the beginning of the XX century can be considered as an echo of the classical tradition, which was formed by an instinctive attraction to the cultural heritage of the past. The transnational thinking of T.S. Eliot, E. Pound and D. Joyce became "part of the modern cosmopolitan style, but the writers managed to adhere to a clear, timeless, permanent view of human nature, in which the past always serves as a tuning fork for existence in the present."

The embodiment of ideals in English poetic and prose works was often reduced to the themes of rural seclusion, family values, patriarchal traditions associated with the family estate, and as a contrast — the depravity of the urban environment [17].

Very often, as for example in "Mansfield Park" by J. Austin or E.M. Forster's *Howards End*, the intrigue of the work was connected with who would inherit the estate, and this to one degree or another led, in the end, to the question of inheriting the best cultural tradition [18].

Just as the moral aspirations and motives of English literature reflect the patterns of development of British culture as a whole, so the features of the narrative become a direct consequence of changes occurring at the level of language.

The English language can create in its verbal fabric, in dynamics and imagery, a sense of genuine experience, the presence of real life. Rather, it is the use of the riches of the English language, rather than criticism and formal literary conventions, that become the foundation for the development of English prose and criticism. "The English language shows its capacity for endless metamorphoses, variations of dynamics and texture within a paragraph, sentence, phrase. The sound very often imitates the meaning. By contrast, we could compare this phenomenon, for example, with the French language, in which the reproduction of local national phenomena is more difficult to simulate." [19]

It was only after a clear definition of the English literary tradition that it became possible to compare it with the traditions of other countries, "to self-identify within the framework of relatively recently formed nations."

A writer representing a small nation faces a difficult task when he begins to write in an intermediary language. How can he convey the specifics of his own national and cultural identity by means of a "foreign" language for him?

How to reconcile the "other", "alien" — the language of the colonizer — and the cultural spirit, which is present as an ethno-cultural protoplasm in the blood, in the genes of the artist, transmitting the spiritual experience of ancestors to a new generation of readers who will become owners of this experience? "At the same time, the writer must depict various shades and omissions of a certain train of thought, which is not adequately conveyed in a foreign language," states the Indian writer R. Rao. — I use the word "alien", although in reality English is not a foreign language for us [20].

This is the language of our intellectual makeup. We are all instinctively bilingual, many of us write in it as in our native language. We can't write like native Englishmen, and we shouldn't. We can't write just like Indians either."

Self - observation p. Rao conveys the specifics of the verbal creativity of a multicultural writer, who, like a two-faced Janus, always looks in different directions. He is a modern ethnographer of his own culture and at the same time its interpreter.

If at the same time the writer resorts to extra - textual inclusions: footnotes, glossary, preface with explanations — then these elements become a way of reading a prose text, to which some "foreign creator" must resort, whose consciousness always coexists with the worldview of a multicultural writer. "Modern literature in English" implies a collision of the researcher with just such a "cipher".

In academic circles abroad, the term "new English literature" has become widespread, the definition of which assumes at least several components:

- a) the literature of writers, British citizens who are non-British by origin; they entered Britain at the dawn of their youth and, having received an excellent education at English universities, began to speak and write in English;
- b) descendants (mainly in the first generation) of immigrants of foreign origin who retain foreign cultural and psychological archetypes, but they have a perfect command of both the language and the traditional British cultural and literary baggage;
- c) a wide range of writers in former colonial countries who create literature in English as the second official language and feel at the same time their belonging to the English-speaking culture;
- d) writers are pronounced bilinguals who are bilingual, first of all, not only in everyday communication, but also in part of their literary creative research.

In modern academic discussions about postcolonialism and multiculturalism, the latter examples are rarely resorted to. But this question should not be overlooked when considering the work of such a writer as, for example, the modern Somali novelist Nuruddin Farah, for whom English — the language of his prose — is a foreign language.

Thus, the process of internationalization of English literature runs parallel with the development of "young literature" and should be considered in the context of intertwining with the literature of the Commonwealth countries, postcolonial and multicultural literature [21].

Conclusion

Many researchers (S. Greenblatt, G. Tikhanov) note the main trend in the development of modern literary history, and, first of all, English literature: its desire to "adapt to these new conditions with all the flexibility and pliability that it is capable of. A living example of this is the new Oxford History of English Literature in thirteen volumes.

The work will focus on the English component of the new literature, that is, on the layer that appeared in the process of multicultural mixing that took place in the last decades of the XX century, and led to a kind of "reactive colonization" of Great Britain, as a result of which thousands of descendants of former colonized peoples settled and assimilated in the foggy Albion [22].

These "new Englishmen", assimilating traditional culture, voluntarily or involuntarily bring with them the cultural archetypes of their peoples, which manifests itself at different levels and to varying degrees in the hybridization of their literary works, which are sometimes very difficult to call the traditional text of a British writer.

If various English literatures reflect national characteristics of speech, they often show both unique thematic and formal qualities. The English novel strives for a realistic portrayal of society, awareness of the values represented by different classes, and concerns the morality of human relationships.

Even when the narration is conducted on behalf of the main character, the emphasis is on the relationship between the individual and society. "In the novels of Henry Fielding, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, George Eliot or John Wayne," writes Canadian researcher B. King, "we observe a hero realizing his destiny in society, and at the same time we realize that conflicting moral values and beliefs are reflected in the process of contrasting and imposing various stereotypes of behavior.

In the American novel, the emphasis is more often on characters than on social motives and, moreover, on showing the nuances of the inner world of these characters. Huckleberry Finn, Isabel Archer and the Duke are trying to realize reality through themselves; the importance of society is determined only by the fact that it becomes a theatrical platform on which its moral credo can act as a character..."

The structure of the study is subordinated to the solution of these tasks. The main part of the study consists of four chapters, divided into paragraphs, and is framed by an introduction defining the main tasks, and a conclusion summarizing all theoretical calculations, drawing conclusions, and making assumptions related to the possible future development of multicultural literature in England.

It is important to note that the relevance of the problems raised is determined not only by the fact that the literary material we have taken as a basis has been little studied or practically not mentioned in Russian literary criticism.

Numerous realities of reality, and above all, belonging to the sphere of culture and literature, which are characteristic of the second half of the XX century — the beginning of the XXI century, have received a multidimensional and filigree artistic representation in metaphorical paradigms of global and national, the versatility of which is determined by various aspects of the literary and cultural order.

The maturation of new, multicultural values occurs at the level of artistic thinking long before the syncretization of spiritual constants of various ethno-cultural and ethno-psychological order makes itself felt at the level of social and political everyday life. Literature thus becomes the "foreground" of negotiations on new value systems emerging in the context of migration and globalization, on the one hand, and awareness of the special role of the national and ethnocentric, on the other.

Classification of typological features inherent in the work of a modern British writer who brings non-English roots to the literature of foggy Albion allows us to build the logic of research in the context of the nodal problems of the multicultural context of the modern English novel using a comparative method of analyzing the creativity of the main representatives of multicultural literature in England.

The sequence and construction of chapters and paragraphs is connected with topical issues of self-identification of an author, the author's point of view, the functions of the chronotope, the parameters of the ethno-cultural and tender space of literary works, qualitatively new language forms reflecting the paradigmatics of merging (hybridization) of ethno-cultural and literary images.

The main topical content of the study is preceded by the first chapter related to the definition of the conceptual sphere of the main thematic motives of the work, and it provides a detailed historical overview of literary trends that preceded the modern multicultural picture of English literature.

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