

С РАБОЧЕГО СТОЛА УЧЕНОГО

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THE REVIVAL OF THE GENRE: KEY TRENDS IN THE CONTEMPORARY TRAVELOGUE DEVELOPMENT

Abstract. Travelogue as a personal journey suggests a high degree of reflection. The writers have referred to this genre at all times. However, at the turn of the 20th – 21st centuries, it has become extremely popular due to its transformation into a multi-level, syncretic genre. A travelogue author fixes his personal experience of movements in the external space, creates the model of the world and broadcasts an individual concept of the spiritual journey. The genre of travelogue gets definite ethnic and gender-related overtones in much of today's Russian-language literature, helping the latter get across to a wider range of readers and transforming it into a mass culture phenomenon.

Keywords:
travelogues; travels;
Russian literature;
travel literature; travel
theme; literary genres;
space; friend/foe oppo-
sition; landscapes.

Having obtained some peculiar characteristics, contemporary travelogue preserves the classic features: narrator/traveller model and time-space discretion. Some scientists consider that it is still too early to speak about travelogue as a ready-made literary genre in relation to the Russian literature. However, numerous recently published texts indicate that travelogue has become a top popular genre throughout the last decade. It interprets different geographic and cultural landscapes, provides a detailed description of the author/character moving around in space. Special attention is given to visiting the iconic places that determine the fate and mentality of the traveler. The contemporary synthetic travelogue is the fusion of genres. In addition to investigating new locations, the main characters of such travelogues get into adventurous situations; fall in love, flee persecution. Thus, travelogue synthesis with romance, detective story, thriller, and guidebook gives new dimensions to the popular literature discourse.

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ВОЗВРАЩЕНИЕ ЖАНРА: ТЕНДЕНЦИИ РАЗВИТИЯ СОВРЕМЕННОГО ТРАВЕЛОГА

Аннотация. Травелог, предполагающий высокую степень рефлексии как личное путешествие, оставался привлекательным для художников во все времена, но на рубеже XX–XXI веков он является чрезвычайно востребованным во многом потому, что превращается в многоуровневый, синкретический жанр. Современный травелог при всех его особых характеристиках, тем не менее, обладает классическими признаками жанра: наличием образа повествователя-путешественника и пространственно-временной дискретностью.

Ключевые слова:
травелоги; путеше-
ствия; русская лите-
ратура; литература
путешествия; тема
путешествия; литера-
турные жанры; про-
странство; свой-чу-
жой; ландшафты.

В современной русской литературе жанр травелога, по мнению ряда исследователей, возможно, еще до конца не сформировался и находится в стадии становления, но многочисленные тексты, оригинальные и переводные, опубликованные в последнее время, позволяют говорить о травелогe как о жанре десятилетия. В современных травелогах анализируются различные географические и культурные ландшафты, подробно описывается перемещение автора-персонажа в пространстве, особое внимание уделяется посещению знаковых мест, влияющих на судьбу и мировосприятие путешественника. Фиксируя в тексте личные ощущения от перемещений во внешнем пространстве, автор, как правило, создает собственную модель мира и транслирует только свою концепцию духовного путешествия. В русской и русскоязычной литературе синтетический травелог приобретает отчетливую этническую и гендерную окраску. Оказавшись в ином географическом пространстве и знакомя читателей с культурой, обычаями, образом жизни той или иной страны, автор – персонаж переживает личные драмы, попадает в авантюрные ситуации, но при этом погружается в чужую реальность и репрезентирует тот локус, в котором находится.

Социокультурное взаимодействие с другой реальностью, усвоение культурных кодов, открытие новых географических объектов, особенности восприятия пространства для синтетического травелога не являются ключевыми характеристиками. Основным художественным принципом таких текстов становится гармоничное проникновение путешественника в ментальность аборигенов. Синтетический травелог – это своего рода попытка погружения автора – персонажа в абсолютно иную реальность, которая никогда не станет своей, но при этом не останется и абсолютно чужой. Таким образом, синтез травелога и любовного романа, детектива, триллера, путеводителя открывает новую грань дискурса популярной литературы.

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Introduction

The aim of the study is to analyze the phenomenon of a personal journey, represented through the 'friend-foe' opposition. In these terms, the subject of the research is the specificity of the foreign world as it appears in the travelogue literature. The methodological basis of the paper is a combination of system-holistic and typological approaches to the text. Thus, we will attempt to identify the place of travelogue in the context of contemporary Russian literature and the mental image of another geographical space in the historical, ethnographic and cultural contexts.

In contemporary mass literature, travelogue becomes one of the most actively developing genres: "The genre is now not just in demand, it also stays popular. Yet, for that very reason, it blurred. <...> After all, the traditional travelogue is not only a documentary of a trip, expedition, research, but also a story, supported by historical evidence (sketches, maps). It even resorts to a comparative analysis (what happened in the past and occurs now) and author's reflection (expectations and perceived reality)" [Bondareva 2012: 165]. Modern travelogue, with all its specific characteristics, however, carries the traditional features of the genre: the presence of the narrator-traveler and space-time discreteness. Travelogue is a literary work describing the journey of the narrator and objectifying socio-cultural and mental interaction with another reality, the assimilation of cultural codes, the discovery of new geographical objects, or alien space perception peculiarities. Here, the 'friend-foe' dichotomy lies at the basis of the travelogue sense formation. Modern travelogue explores various geographical and cultural landscapes, describes the travelling experience of the author/character. Special attention is given to visiting iconic places that affect the future and the traveler's vision of the world.

Theoretical background

Actually, travelogue popularity in the XXI-st century testifies to the erosion of many geographical borders: "The idea of 'travelling' continues to be very attractive to the general cultural consciousness. No wonder, texts about travelling, original and translated, tend to be produced in great amount" [Balla 2013: 128]. According to some researchers modern travelogue is still in its formative stage, but numerous texts published in recent years, allow us to perceive it as the most popular literary genre. Thus, "travel prose, being a convenient form of fixing impressions, became a universal scheme of comprehending 'something different', creating the image of 'an alien world' at different levels of artistic generalization, regardless of the author's tasks, and consequently, his narrative strategy" [Mamurkina 2013: 112]. Towards the most famous texts today we can refer "The Island, or Justification of Pointless Journeys", "Space and Mazes" by V. Golovanov, "On the Way to Ithaca" by S. Kostyrko, "The Sunset City" by A. Ilichevskii, "Come and Take It" by A. Stesin, "The Sailor on the Mast" by A. Tavorov, "Book of Relocations" by K. Kobrin, "Internal Venice" by D. Babinski, "Tasting India" by M. Arbatova, "Sky Snail" by M. Moskvina, "The Road" by M. Goncharova, "Translit" by E. Klyueva, "Gallop down Europe" by A. Exler.

The emergence of the travelogue as a genre is associated with the desire to describe the journey undertaken by the human, to remember everything that happened on the way, and to record it: "The intent of travelling is not enough to

be fixed: the journey must be described and narrated" [L'vova 2016: 38]. The travelogue author depicts what he has seen during the trip, records the emotions and thoughts that came to him on the way, and tells about the spiritual experience. Today, when the environment around is actively investigated, the inner world of the human is still a mystery and thrills the reader. The purpose of the modern travelogue author is not only to tell about the objective side of the journey, but, as a rule, to retransmit the subjective experience of the narrator, to explore his inner world, which allows to demonstrate the vivid sensations and emotions received on the way: "Transferring the accurate and reliable knowledge, as well as sincere emotions in the world where absolutely everyone is able to discover information and become a newsmaker, loses its relevance. In this case, there arises a set of significant questions: what unique knowledge or experience do I carry? Can I discover anything still new in the world, and what 'land' can it be? And this is not the pathos of the pioneer, but the appetite for some aesthetic experience, which by definition is unavailable in the real, everyday life" [Tuzova-Shchekina 2016: 203]. The key task of the travelogue author is not so much creating the idea of new lands, but rather broadcasting the experience of the 'alien world' acceptance, and as a result – the recognition, better understanding of 'his own place': "There is an assumption that the very existence and the enduring popularity of travelogue is in the formation of vital experience in a reader's mind and better understanding of the experience – in an author's mind. But this process requires certain prerequisites. Many researchers, travelers noted that surmounting some limitations (not necessarily overcoming the state borders, but even getting out of one's internal world) sharpens perception: you start to carefully examine the surrounding objects and people, as if hoping to see something entirely unfamiliar. The traveler will never explore his own streets and houses so closely, because he regards them 'his own', and in the journey he faces 'the alien ones'. No less important is the factor of the 'insular position', when the traveler is physically torn out of the common, familiar surroundings and is placed in the same concrete, but different ones. Both the 'insular position' and the degree of perceptive intensity cannot last long enough. Therefore, the feeling of finiteness, closure of these experiences occurs almost immediately once it is lived through" [Tuzova-Shchekina 2016: 203].

Thus, the relocation of the hero (moving to an unfamiliar place) becomes the opportunity not only to demonstrate a different world to the readers, but also to invite them to follow the narrator and to approach their own world from a new perspective: "The formed movement strategy actualizes not only the 'friend-foe' dichotomy, but also the idea of the border as the juxtaposition of marginal worlds. With the development of literature, the journey description is increasingly based not on the idea of relocation as a physical movement and landscape visualization, a different culture immersion, but on the transition to a qualitatively different ego-state" [L'vova 2016: 40].

The motif of identity change, a moral rebirth becomes dominant and matches the travelogue motif of movement: "The trip – moving from point A to point B – is associated with the time travel; arriving in another place, a person comes through a spiritual transformation <...> The change may be so drastic that the one who returns will not even

be recognized as, for example, Odysseus, who returned to Ithaca after twenty years of wandering. He certainly changed externally, but also experienced a serious spiritual evolution" [Golovchenko 2017: 32–33]. One of the key motifs is returning to the starting point, since the new space that provokes strong emotions is still felt as being alien: "The motif of the journey is inextricably linked with the motif of coming back: every traveler sooner or later returns to the point of departure or regrets that he has no chance to get back" [Golovchenko 2017: 33]. However, he objectively can not return without receiving a new spiritual experience and without undergoing an internal transformation: "The motif of coming back is archetypically linked to the motif of accepting the spiritually changed person who returns to his family (the return of the prodigal son motif)" [Golovchenko 2017: 33].

In the travelogue, the narrator is 'inscribed' in the surrounding space, involved in the emotional 'development', since "the travelogue space becomes a fragment of personal experience; there is a kind of reality interiorization" [Shpak 2016: 266]. Today popular literature develops a special synthetic form of travelogue, based on genre fusion, as the "travelogue is a free genre schema where the narrator's mobility becomes the most salient feature" [Chernyak 2015: 60]. The modern text, absorbing and combining elements of different genres, is characterized by syncretism. Thus, we can talk about such genre type as a synthetic travelogue.

Synthetic travelogue is a literary work, integrating travelogue, romance novel, detective story, thriller, and travel guide, and describing the journey of the character (narrator), who is immersed in alien reality (mentality) and occurs in various adventurous situations. During the trip, the author (the character) gains a personal experience and represents the locus he is in. In such stories, in addition to discovering new places, the narrator falls into adventurous situations, finds love, escapes the pursuit. The novel "Eat, Pray, Love" by Elizabeth Gilbert has currently become one of the most popular synthetic travelogues.

Empirical Data

In Russian language, popular literature synthetic travelogue acquires a distinct ethnic and gender coloring. The author/character travels to different countries, where, as a rule, there occurs a meeting, sacred to him: India ("The Wedding Sari" by Yu. Monakova), Turkey ("My Body is the Bosphorus" by L. Bokova), Spain ("Spain. Fiesta, Siesta and Manifesto!" by A. Kazenkova), Italy ("Italy. Love, Shopping and Dolce Vita!", "Italy. Sea. Amore" by T. Salvoni). Once in a new geographical area and introducing the readers to the culture, customs, way of life, the author/character experiences personal dramas, gets into adventurous situations, but at the same time is immersed in someone else's reality and represents the locus where he occurs. The motif of the traveler pursuit (escape from the chase) brings the travelogue together with quest and adventure stories, as the inhabitants of the new space can be hostile to the narrator. Thus, synthetic travelogue (with the features of romance novel, detective story, thriller and even a tourist guide) opens new dimensions of popular literature discourse.

In the novel "The Wedding Sari" (2009) by Yulia Monakova the 'friend – foe' opposition disappears due to the full immersion of the heroine in the Indian reality. Monakova's novel is autobiographical: the character fulfills her

childhood dream – she comes to India, meets her love and stays in this country. This book is in a way a synthetic travelogue. The author (the character) assimilates in India and perceives it as her own, a friendly one, while at the same time continuing to discover the specifics of Indian everyday life: "*India has grown into my soul, enters my blood, becomes my essence, my destiny, my love, my song, and my life...*" [Monakova 2009: 397]. The main character of the novel «The Wedding Sari» accepts India with all the peculiar features. It becomes more a domestic than symbolic perception, but the specifics of the text by Monakova imply some ease and simple sounding. Thus, the character refuses "her own" and dissolves into the "alien" reality. It should be noted that in the novel by Julia Monakova the visual set, sensuality, tactility of Indian images contributes to the creation of a single cultural and geographical paradigm, included in the infinite mythological space of India.

Today Eastern motifs are more than popular in synthetic travelogue. The novel "My Body is the Bosphorus" (2006) by Lola Bokova depicts the journey of the main character through modern Turkey. Dasha (that is the name of the heroine) runs around Turkey, driven by strong feelings. Her Turkey is a country of love. The character travels in it, considering each city through the prism of another sacred meeting. For Dasha life in Turkey becomes a reality, and Moscow everyday life is a simulacrum and stands for a foe, dim existence: "*This is my second spring in Turkey, and my life is now divided into 'before' and 'after'*" [Bokova 2006: 7]. Thus, "The temptation of an alien world always devalues one's own culture, which seems unreal and frivolous, like a simulacrum. <...> Lukrimaks is the people's instinct for 'something genuine' and the denial of their own life as of 'inauthentic'. Lukrimaks will inevitably lead to simulacrum multiplication: the stronger the belief in the inaccessible authenticity of the alien reality is, the more your own identity seems fake and shallow" [Etkind 2001: 9–10]. It is 'lukrimaks' that allows the main character in Bokova's novel to plunge into the Turkish social, gender, geographical, and cultural contexts, though it happens in a rather peculiar way. Dasha is obsessed with the dream of Turkish travel, because it is in Turkey that she gets the energy she needs. In Moscow, she simply exists, waiting for the next return to the country of her dreams. Existing outside of 'the Turkish fairytale' is meaningless and useless because Dasha feels the pulse of life only in Turkey: "*The idea that in a month Nif-Nif and I will go to our zone of life is the only thing that keeps me afloat. Surely, it will be a very small breath of air – just a week – and it will last not for long...*" [Bokova 2006:158–159].

On returning home after the spiritual rebirth the travelogue character often stays in conflict with the common environment: "Movement and travel are juxtaposed to calm and inertia, which are further developed in the motif of the romantic rebel to society opposition: the character's spiritual growth is the antithesis of the inertia that is typical of the surrounding society" [Golovchenko 2017: 33].

In synthetic travelogue, inner development is also possible. As a rule, the characters of this kind of texts are interested not only in new place, but also in people living in a particular geographic location. Socio-cultural interaction with another reality, adapting new cultural codes, discovery of the new geographical objects, peculiarities of space

perception is not the key characteristics of the synthetic travelogue.

No doubt, the collection "Contour Maps for Adults" (2010), compiled by Almat Malatov is a form of synthetic travelogue. The stories by Elchin Safarli, Kittja Karlson, Niki Muratova, Tatiana Solomatina, Aglaiya Durso, Lydia Torti describe other people's customs and traditions: the colors of Turkey, Africa, Japan, America, Italy are mixed in the texts, depicting a bright, expressive picture of the world. The traveler, visiting certain nooks, plunges into an alien reality and interacts with a foreign mentality, which allows him not only to overcome certain problems, but also to represent the locus where the author occurs.

The character of the story "The Corner of her Rounded House" by Elchin Safarli seems to have lived three lives for one year. Three cities (Moscow, Istanbul, and Kemer) helped her to understand herself, feel absolute happiness, and experience a deep-rooted personal drama and to achieve a long-awaited harmony. The character is alone in Moscow, but happy in Istanbul: "Istanbul has become our city. On the first day, it captivated our hearts with velvet sunsets, bustling gulls, mother-of-pearl colored waters of the Bosphorus, solid horns of ferries, the brightness of spring tulips. One does not have to struggle to win the heart of Istanbul, a noisy metropolis with almost fifteen million people" [Safarli 2010: 39]. The character loses her beloved and goes to Kemer to reconcile with reality, to learn to live without a dear person. The internal shift occurs to her quite unexpectedly: she did not plan to change her residence, but the move allowed her finally to gain the long-awaited peace. Thus, the journey turns into life and contributes to finding her own world: "I am going along the path of scorched grass, skirting the bushes of wild roses. I'm sorry to pluck miniature buds, but sometimes I still can not stand and break off a couple of thorny twigs with red, maybe burgundy inflorescences at the top. I hide them behind as if I am going to make a surprise. And then I leave the roses on the coastal stones. They will be washed away by the wave. It will happen the same night, when the wind comes to Kemer, to my Turkish city – my savior at the heart of the Taurus Mountains" [Safarli 2010: 63].

Kittja Karlson, in the story "Three Parts of Land", represents Japan through the diversity and uniqueness of local traditions, such as the tradition of giving presents: "Do not be surprised, to give food as present in Japan is an important social tradition, as well as a huge industry. It has its logic. Perhaps, I do not know any other nation, which so frequently and regularly shares so many gifts. When public orders require people to give literally thousands of gifts annually, diamond necklaces, of course, are out of question" [Karlson 2010: 79]. The character, who has been living in Japan for several years, is integrated into Tokyo reality mainly with the help of traditional cuisine that he tastes: "The concept of Japanese cuisine is very simple. Any food should be a combination of simple, cheap food available to everyone and used as a basis, and a small amount of delicacies" [Karlson 2010: 89]. It is the national cuisine, which is the subject of the traveler's examination, and in an effort to understand its intricacies, the character gradually begins to comprehend the Japanese identity.

In general, the food images in the collection of stories "Contour Maps for Adults" become the symbols of immersion in foreign culture. Thus, the main character of the story "The Corner of her Rounded House" by Elchin Safarli gives detailed recipes of 'syutlach' (Turkish rice pudding)

and 'simit' (a Turkish bagel with sesame seeds). The heroine of Lydia Torti's story "Dedicated to Italian Cuisine" admits that it is the cuisine that helped to assimilate in Italy, to feel this country and to plunge into Italian reality, to understand Italy, to love it: "Now, being experienced enough, the situation makes me laugh. Now I understand that for Italians food is sacred. It is cult, tradition, culture, and traditions should be honored" [Torti 2010: 272].

There we can also trace a gender motif in the storybook. The story "Essa" by Niki Muratova depicts Africa with its peculiarities, traditions, specifics of gender communication, mentality, which remains foreign to the European heroine. The violent clash of African gender traditions with European way of life make the character flee from Senegal, a completely foreign, even alien country. All her attempts to approach Africa, making friends with the young man called Essa, whom the heroine generously helps, lead her to the serious personal drama: "I do not think I can explain everything that happened to me in an understandable way. I don't think I can fully understand myself in this story. I doubt that I still can believe that all nations will ever understand each other, that there is an opportunity to reconcile and understand everyone. Help everyone. No, that is impossible. They are not us. We should live and forgive, forgive ourselves as well. We should learn to love, and to love ourselves. We should try to be happy. And they are to live as they wish, staying alien like a different planet to us" [Muratova 2010: 175].

The same alien to the heroine of the story "The Sky over Berlin" by Aglaya Dyurso becomes the space she does not even try to approach: "Why is so gloomy? This is music from the cartoon "Pink Panther". On your sms request: "Are you on the plane?" I answer: "Yes. Already in the sky over Berlin". The whole city lies below, wide open. However, it doesn't change anything, because even if I close my eyes, it will be imprinted all over my eyelids. <...> But it doesn't change anything either, because knowledge won't make us closer. And it is good. It is so good, Doctor, to be happy like an orphan" [Dyurso 2010: 270]. The essay by Almat Malatov emotionally connects all the stories in the collection: "Sometimes it seems to me that cities do not exist. There is only our attitude towards them. I have done many miles: by trains, planes, buses, even long-distance trolleybuses. I perceive new cities as complex life forms" [Malatov 2010: 3]. The author talks about the «magic of the place», the wonderful influence of the locus, feelings and emotions received in different cities, the eclectic perception of these foreign cities that can nevertheless become home-like, friendly, even for a while: in this collection of stories there is a place to remember of the cruel fascinating Africa, Turkish sweets, Italian pasta, the highways of America, and of Japan, which you can try to comprehend all life and never succeed, because Japan is hostile to strangers. "This world is not invented by us" –... – We only remember and capture that, the Polaroid pictures of the cities hang on the walls of our memory. Do you want to have a look?" [Malatov 2010: 7]. Thus, the main artistic principle of a synthetic travelogue is the harmonious penetration of the traveler into the mysterious mentality of the natives.

The travelogue "The Sunset City" by Alexander Ilichevskii, dedicated to Jerusalem, is also unusual for this kind of texts, as it is not just a synthetic travelogue, harmoniously combining lyrical and epic contexts, but also a specific study which considers the phenomenon of the 'Golden city'. Jerusalem remains a sort of a private society,

developing according to its own laws, although the country welcomes the travelers: *“Apart from being mentioned in every news report, Israel, with its historical, state, geographical dimensions projects its image on the whole world, and the world, inspired by Judeo-Christian ideas, must perforce relate its evolution and reactions to its biblical childhood”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 53].

Today, the Israeli culture, especially its religious cross-section, attracts not only pilgrims and artists. Jerusalem is a cultural and religious space that connects Christian, Jewish, Muslim traditions, allowing the author/character to plunge simultaneously into the geographical, cultural, religious worlds, to feel foreign as something domestic, and to form their own perception of reality. The main character in Alexander Ilichevskii's novel travels through Jerusalem, as if seeking to meet an alien, yet at the same time his own world, where even time flows differently: *“Jerusalem with its essence, the essence of being the Temple, is the only place where the wasteland and the stones embody the dream of many dead and living people. This city has a unique landscape, unique air – it cannot be either underestimated or forgotten. Jerusalem is not so much a work of art as the other cities, but a work of hope: hope for deliverance and eternal life. Its role in the Universe is exceptional. Man dies, but Jerusalem stays, for there is hope. Jerusalem makes hope real, equalizes it with the present. Here the tear brings relief, and the sole becomes visible”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 59].

Israel becomes part of the life road of the author/character, who encounters Jerusalem and understands that this universe is boundless: *“The warm wind touches a little thuja and hard bushes with resinous fragrant leaves covered with small flowers. The crusaders, Romans, Babylonians stomped on this grass – all is too little compared to God and at the same time fits Him”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 41]. Jerusalem's holy site – the Wailing Wall (the Western Wall) becomes the sacred place where a person can reflect on the eternal issues and they become accessible to a man: *“The revival of Hebrew is nearly the same miracle as the establishment of the state of Israel, while the latter would hardly be possible without the first. How can you imagine twenty centuries of timelessness, during which the language was deprived of its flesh – the people? And just as Hebrew was reborn for life, ancient Jerusalem must appear before the future, crowned with a Temple”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 66].

Traveling around Jerusalem, the character in Ilichevskii's novel observes the surrounding reality and memorizes everything he sees. He gives detail story of his journey, describing spontaneous meetings, talking about the ethnic peculiarities of the city. Thus, the author's intention is to show a new world to the reader. Each episode, each meeting in the text gets his personal description and characteristics: *“Jerusalem zoo is a wonder of the world, located on a multi-level terrace around the valley. At the bottom of it there is a pond teemed with waterfowl. On the slopes, with dangling vines, there are monkeys, that jump and quarrel in their invisible cages. Or they meditate on islands”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 87]; *“The Girl with bitter honey eyes, on a train going to Nahariya, with a notebook on her knees and a face wearily foreign, immersed in a thoughtful literary reality”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 123]; *“In Yom Kippur the city is mysteriously quiet. It is the silence you enjoy, which fascinates you. The windows are open, and you listen to the silence, the way the city keeps quiet, you hear scraps of passers-by phrases, and again a mysterious, enigmatic sound, some distant sound of the choir, the remote noise of air conditioners, or the silence generated by the city itself. This is not reticence,*

but some secret, barely audible important melody” [Ilichevskii 2012: 99].

Overall, Jerusalem in A. Ilichevskii's travelogue appears a very atmospheric space. Perception of Jerusalem occurs in organoleptic way – through visual, olfactory, sensory, tactile characteristics. In Jerusalem, we can trace the particular manifestation of specific colors and shades. Black and white palette together with bright floral highlights creates an incredible atmosphere: *“Only the flowers in Jerusalem are brightly colored. Everything else is a negative: the white sun mixed with coal of scorched sticks, cones, nerves”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 159–160]. In Jerusalem, the character faces interesting ethnic characteristics peculiar to this city: he observes the life in religious, secular, European, Arab neighborhoods. The boundaries between settlements and neighborhoods of the city are more conditional than real, which allows considering a specific landscape, divided into religious enclaves, as a single boundless space. Jerusalem is only a part of the journey of the character in Israel, but precisely this city made the most significant impact on the author's artistic vision of the world.

Thus, socio-cultural and mental interaction with another reality, the perception of cultural paradigms (especially that of the 'Golden city'), getting acquainted with new geographical realities, contribute to the creation of a unique Jerusalem text in the novel by Alexander Ilichevskii “The Sunset City”. The mixture of different cultural landscapes confirms the special status of the Holy Land, and the three religions merged in one locus creates an amazing atmosphere of immersion in a multidimensional theological space; the intersection of different cultural axes forms a special aura. In the author's vision non-material nature of Israel converts into a material, explicit image of the Holy Land, so close to him: *“Jerusalem makes hope material, equates it with the present”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 59]. Jerusalem, which linked the East and the West, the Jewish, Christian and Muslim religions, is manifested as a spiritual center, the focus of the world's spiritual potential. For Ilichevskii it becomes the city where the past and the future, suffering and grace, dream and reality are intertwined, the city which aura improves a person, contributes to his spiritual maturing: *“There is a city of gold...”, and it is built by our pure thoughts, and what is more important: it exists not only in the dreams, but also on the map”* [Ilichevskii 2012: 171].

It is in the Middle East that the profound sensory perception of existence is formed; Jerusalem attractiveness in the traveler's eye is extremely strong, because it embodies the divine energy. Thus, Jewish, Christian and Muslim cultures also merge in the living space of the main character, and the amazing proximity to the Holy sites is perceived as a blessing from above. Jerusalem seems a place where one can achieve peace of mind, creative activity is natural, and everyday life brings new experience: sunbaked pavement, clear morning air are the recognizable images of the Middle East landscape, inscribed in the author's vision of the world and perceived as a part of the Jerusalem Universe.

The immersion in an alien but surprisingly familiar reality becomes dominating for A. Ilichevskii. He creates a model of a world without borders, the illusion of a “dual homeland”, and the image of the unknown land gains a special meaning. Yurii Lotman notes that the traveler in some way integrates all the spaces, since he is identified with any

of them: "In a way, he gives the highest cultural point of view" [Lotman 2002: 747]. According to Yurii Lotman, "Cultural location (geographical, political, typological) is a permanent factor that spontaneously and subconsciously, or openly and explicitly determines the ways of cultural development" [Lotman 2002: 744]. Thus, Jerusalem inspires the author to write, to search for the right word, stylistic colors and storylines. Each city, like any symbol, "is associated in the mind with a minimum set of features" [Tsiv'yan 2001: 41], which means that the ambivalent mentality of the East contributes to the city being located in an appropriate cultural space. The eternal symbols of this almost unreal world are the great desert and the legendary Mount of Olives: "*The most authentic is the antiquity of the road that leads from Bethany to the country of Azazel, the deep, winding and terrible in its deadness the hollow of El-Hoth. This path has not changed through centuries. There is no other bearable road in the desert of Judah, there was no such, and could not have been any, because only on this way there is a spring (the Apostles' spring), without which coming up the path is out of question*" [Bunin 1965: 385]. Jesus, experiencing all the hardships of the painful way through the harsh desert used this road many times. The main character perceives the Mount of Olives, the Christian sacred place, as an unceasing spiritual source, that emerges as if by magic in this mysterious place: in Jerusalem text, the Christian space is traditionally objectified through the resignation motif and is associated with images of coolness, water, silence, purity and mystery.

The book "The Shadow of a Bird" by I. A. Bunin forms the special context that gives the travelogue by A. Ilichevskii a distinct intertextuality. The latter refers to the journey of I. A. Bunin in the Middle East and the background of the story collection "The Shadow of a Bird" (1907–1911). In fact, the name of travelogue by A. Ilichevskii is consonant with Bunin's lines: "*The sun at sunset. I go out on the roof, take off my cork helmet, and a strong and cool wind blows on my head from the West. The sky is deep, pale blue, without a single cloud. I am in the province Judea, amidst a squiggly plateau, only here and there covered with sparse vegetation. All colors are soft, with a certain grayish-violet tone. Frozen passes, deep valleys, dome like hills... Behind, in the sunset there lie olive groves and the buildings, scattered around the hills: Catholic orphanages, schools, hospitals, villas. In the North, on the horizon there is a clear calcareous cone, the Mount of Samuel. To the East, beyond the Cedron Brook and Mount of Olives, there are the Judean desert, the Jordan*

valley, and a high ridge of the mysterious Moab Mountains like a wall of soft purple smoke that hides half of the sky. Just below me, like a flat, bare roof of yellowish pink there stretches a stone mass of a small Arabian city, on all sides surrounded by deep valleys and ravines" [Bunin 1965: 363].

Actually, the desire to create the text that is so consonant with Bunin's essay allows the author of the travelogue "The Sunset City" to delve into the historical, religious and philosophical contexts and to concentrate on the history of unique world of Jerusalem rather than to describe the real city or the emotions it inspires. The same as Ivan Bunin, Alexander Ilichevskii draws historical parallels, forms a lyrical context, linking the Old Testament myths and new contemporary myths, and tries to formulate the algorithm of this unique place appeal. Jerusalem is the crossroads where different cultures meet and many ethnic groups come into contact, and the existence of several ethnic groups in one space creates in the city of three religions a special carnival atmosphere, embodying the Eastern festive colorful diversity: "The dichotomy of the East and the West in Russian culture can expand to the limits of the widest geography, or narrow to the subjective position of an individual" [Lotman 2002: 748]. It is in the Middle East that an in-depth sensory perception of the author/character is formed, and the evident attractiveness of Jerusalem is extremely strong, since for Alexander Ilichevskii's character it becomes an ideal embodiment of the life value, and returning to Jerusalem turns into a journey into one's heart: "*Jerusalem is the whole world. Jerusalem yearns for Paradise, and Paradise yearns for Jerusalem*" [Ilichevskii 2012: 55–56].

Conclusions and Perspectives

Thus, synthetic travelogue is a kind of an attempt to sink into a completely different reality, which may never become your own, familiar, but it will not remain completely alien, because this text explores the phenomenon of almost unreal space, so easily recognizable around the world.

We can conclude, that the travelogue authors look forward to explore foreign space, which becomes the task almost impossible to achieve. The foe aesthetics, aesthetics of a different world seems to be most attractive for them. The appeal of an alien world allows the author/character to immerse into social, geographic, ethnographic and cultural contexts of the visited countries and to explain the impact of travel phenomenon on creating a transformed vision of the world.

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