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## ЗВ'ЯЗОК РОМАННОЇ ТА МАЛОЇ ПРОЗИ АЛЬТЕРНАТИВНОЇ ІСТОРІЇ: СЕГМЕНТУВАННЯ МЕТАЖАНРУ ЯК ВНУТРІШНЯ АРХІТЕКТОНІКА ТВОРУ

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## THE COHERENCE BETWEEN THE NOVEL AND SHORT PROSE OF ALTERNATIVE HISTORY: SEGMENTATION OF THE META-GENRE AS THE INTERNAL ARCHITECTURE OF THE WORK

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**Антоніна Анистратенко. Связь романной и малой прозы альтернативной истории: сегментирование метажанра как внутренняя архитектура произведения.** Статья посвящена компаративному анализу выражения связи архитектурных компонентов в малой и романной прозе. **Цель** предлагаемой статьи заключается в том, чтобы в компаративном ключе продемонстрировать концепции сегментирования метажанра АИ в малой прозе Т. Фермеса, О. Меньшова, В. Кожелянко в сравнении с сочинениями малой прозы, парадигмой взглядов на это понятие в разные историко-культурные вехи и их экстраполяцию в литературе современности. Новизна **статьи** заключается в том, что здесь впервые рассмотрены хромотопные концепции в малой прозе метажанра альтернативной истории в сравнении с романной прозой АИ. **Методы исследования** представляют собой комплекс из сравнительного, описательного, историко-литературного подходов. **Выводы.** На основе исследования современного функционирования генеалогии в обширном отечественном и зарубежном литературоведческом и литературоведческом дискурсе, можно развить потенциал отечественной компаративистики: избежать опасности попасть в ловушку «литературных вневременных» теоретических аналитических принципов; в ходе анализа, было заключено, что, определяя жанровую маркировку прозы, следует учитывать не только особенности поэтики в контексте четырехуровневой структуры прозы, но и временной контекст произведения, его культурный фон, литературную область или направление, в которых писатель анализирует в основном произведения, и нацеленные на реципиентов скрытого понятийно-символического набора анализируемой литературы метажанра альтернативной истории; существует набор архитектурных особенностей романной прозы АИ, переносимый в сочинения малой формы, отчего хромотоп последних подвергается модификации.

**Ключевые слова:** метажанр, альтернативная история, хромотоп малой прозы, романная проза, временной концепт, жанровое сегментирование.

**Introduction.** The alternative history (AH) concept as a phenomenon of the literary process in the Ukrainian literature is outlined in the field of neo and postmodernism, therefore it is connected with the 1970s–1990s and the first decade of the 21st century. Examples of AH works have been known as phenomena since the beginning of the 20th century. They were published both in Ukraine and in emigration (for example, V. Vynnychenko's "The Solar Machine", 1920, M. Tchaikovsky's "For the Power of the Sun", 1918). In historical science and fiction, the desire of an individual to change something in history to turn it back to the right track is ever more frequently realized.

The term alternative history describes the meta-genre of literature that is a combination of fictional and historical narratives and historiographic description of events, historical figures, preceding the fantasy story.

It produces active sub-genres in the context of creating new samples, and, meanwhile, this formation exists provisionally and is rarely named in literary or critical works, as it is seldom indicated in annotations to fictional works. For example, the novel by O. Menshov "The Third Tertiary" is marked as one of the retro-detective story genre, V. Kozhelyanko's "Terorium" – as a political mock novel,

A. Afanasiev's "The Last Warrior" – as an adventure novel, V. Vynnychenko's "The Solar Machine" is described as the greatest contribution to the Ukrainian science fiction in the 1920s and the largest and most complex science fiction work, although all of these works, with their specific genre palettes, based on the architectonic and fable formula, belong to the meta-genre of AH.

**Historiographic of the study.** As the subgenre of "N genre + AH element", the path of AH starts in the Ukrainian literature, dating back to the 1920s. Meanwhile, in the American literature, the chronology is quite clear and associated with post-postmodernism. M. Schneider-Mayerson in his article «What almost happened...» clearly indicates the year of emergence of the AH genre: «1995 can be considered the year of the birth of alternative history as a genre»<sup>1</sup>. As we can see, the basis for such distinction derives from the view of William Joseph Collins stated in his dissertation paper «Paths Not Taken: The Development, Structure, and Aesthetics of the Alternative History»<sup>2</sup>. While W. J. Collins offers the global direction and description of the AH genre to develop a simple way of reading and analyzing this type of novels, Matthew Schneider-Mayerson writes his own alternate history of the

<sup>1</sup> Schneider-Mayerson M. "What Almost Was: The Politics of the Contemporary Alternate History Novel", *American Studies*, Vol. 150 (3/4), P. 63-84, URL: <https://journals.ku.edu/amerstud/article/view/4177> [in English].

<sup>2</sup> Collins W. J. Paths Not Taken: The Development, Structure, and Aesthetics of the Alternative History, Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of California-Davis, 1990, P. 85–86.

alternative history world: «The alternate history is primarily an American phenomenon; almost two thirds of Sidewise winners or runners-up are American, and the most popular topics deal with themes directly relevant to U.S. history, often in an intentionally nationalistic manner. Judging from their web presence, the vast majority of alternate history fans are Americans. As a result, I examine the alternate history in the context of American politics and culture»<sup>3</sup>. So, we've got a point to seek some general options in the same historical and fiction field of novel and short prose of AH meta-genre.

**The main body of the article.** Genealogy of alternative history definitely goes back to the genre matrix of the historical novel and the literary means of fantasy and science fiction. However, where it functions as a meta-genre, we see there interpenetrations of the basic elements of poetics and genealogy of modern urban political prose, being an artistic alternative to the post-postmodern novel as a genre segment.

So, to establish peculiarities of poetics and the genre of the alternative history political novel, we compared the following works: "The Third Tertiary" by O. Menshov and "Look Who's Back" by Timur Vermes (Germ. "Er ist wieder da").

Genealogically, alternative history was formed based on the matrix of the historical novel (according to N.Kopystianska it is based on the English historiographical novel), borrowing the formal markers and architectonic "puzzles" of the science-fiction novel. In the historical and literary key of temporality, the first actual examples of the alternative history novel appeared in the early twentieth century in the United States, Canada, Western Europe, and they spread in literatures of the Slavic world in the mid-twentieth century, having been actualized in the Russian and Far East literatures in the 1970s. In the second decade of the 21st century, historical alternatives in fiction appeared and gained popularity in the middle-literature of Australia and Oceania.

Functioning of alternative history subgenres in the discourse of the meta-genre and interaction of the post-genre cultural factors of the modern novel are heterogeneous. Logical genealogical intersections and superstructures of poetics create secondary connections between the phenomena of literature and real time cultural sections. For example, cultural aesthetics of the urban novel fit into the framework of the alternative historical detective story, which, in turn, partially contains signs of a political novel. Such interweaving is not uncommon in the field of the ekphrastic novel. According to D. Zatonyskiy, T. Bovsunivska in her well-known monograph "Genre Modifications of the Modern Novel"<sup>4</sup> views political novel as a genre variety rather than a thematic segment, however, she develops this statement: "The political novel has a peculiar feature, –T. Bovsunivska writes, – it coexists with the artistic and political type of communication, which is an important factor for the next genre's creation"<sup>5</sup>. The "next

genre" also involves re-arrangement of genre schemes, consolidation of cultural and historical contents as an extract of the ideological basis of the novel and creation of a unique model of poetics of a work of art. The researcher sees this process as a three-way communication: "Communication, in this case, is understood as interaction of manifested consciousnesses. Communication by means of the text of a political novel is creation of a system of conscious verbal behaviors of the author of the novel aimed at interacting with the collective recipient (and building a certain model of the world in their cognitive system) in order to transfer personal or collective meanings and exert aesthetic and political influence on them"<sup>6</sup>. Consequently, the communication goal "guides" the work of art at all levels. For example, at the cultural and stylistic level, the authors mainly use the journalistic style, slang words, phrases, internal dialogues in the form of indirect speech in their work ("...Sokol told us, sipping cognac and eating "nikoliashkamy"... counterintelligence already set their pants on fire out of joy. I can only imagine how many people felt at the top of the world due to the fact they had caught a spy! And he ran away from them before they know it"); at the syntactic level there are incomplete sentences, appellative constructions, etc. ("...the reader is caught in a trap where the ridicule ends with Hitler, the reader laughs. Not of him, but with him. Is it possible to laugh with Hitler? Is it allowed? Find out for yourself. It is finally a free country. Yet..." (ed. transl.) ["Weil der Leser sich zunehmend ertappt, wie er nicht mehr über Hitler lacht. Sondern mit ihm. Lachen mit Hitler – geht das? Darf man das überhaupt? Finden Sie's selbst raus. Dies ist schließlich ein freies Land. Noch" (orig. Germ.)])<sup>7</sup>. At the symbolic level, political slogans may act as characters, and famous historical figures act as symbols of the collective national choice ("We are at war! What do you think the Russians will do to you when they come here? Believe me, a Russian will look at your child and say, for example, Oh, it's a young German girl, but for the sake of the child I do not want to let low instincts in my pants?" (ed. transl.) ["Wir sind im Krieg! Was glauben Sie, was der Russe mit Ihnen macht, wenn er hierherkommt? Glauben Sie, der Russe wirft einen Blick auf Ihr Kind und sagt, oho, ein frisches deutsches Mädel, aber dem Kinde zuliebe will ich meine niederen Instinkte in meiner Hose lassen?" (Germ.)])<sup>8</sup>; at the genealogical level we will have a combined genre variety, and at the ideological and thematic ones - the declared result of communication, which consists in impacting the reader aesthetically and politically so that can they had food for rethinking certain historical and political events ("And when you read this thing, love my little-known city and its citizens, when you are imbued with respect for the history of Yaropol and its future movements, then I will consider that my life has not been in vain"<sup>9</sup>, – concludes Yu. Scherbak in his letter to the reader of his novel.

It should be noted that qualification of subgenres of alternative history within a meta-genre highly depends on

<sup>3</sup> Schneider-Mayerson M. "What Almost Was...", op. cit., P. 64.

<sup>4</sup> Bovsunivska T. Kohnityvna zhanrolohiya i poetyka [Cognitive genre and poetics], monografia, Kyjiv, VPTS Kyjiv's'kyy universytet, 2010, 180 p. [in Ukrainian].

<sup>5</sup> Bovsunivska T. Zhanrovi modyfikatsiyi suchasnoho romanu [Genre modifications of the modern novel], Kharkiv, Disa plyus, 2015, P. 282 [in Ukrainian].

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>7</sup> Rychlo P. Czernowitz [The Chernivtsi], Klagenfurt, Wieser Verlag, 2004, P. 303 [in German].

<sup>8</sup> Vermes T. Er ist wieder da [He is here again], Der Roman, Köln, Lübbe GmbH & Co.KG, 2012, P. 4–5 [in German].

<sup>9</sup> Shcherbak Yu. Khroniky mista Yaropolya [Chronicles of the city of Yaropol], Kharkiv, Folio, 2008, P. 242 [in Ukrainian].

functional characteristics of each of the subgenres. English-language literary criticism tends to describe alternative history as a subsidiary genre of science fiction just because of the traditional inclusion of alternative history into the genre prose in mass literature (genre fiction). Tom Shippey uses a similar approach in his work “Hard reading: learning from science fiction”<sup>10</sup>. But the European literary criticism, in particular, Eastern European, operates the approach to consideration of alternative history based on “stratification as subsidiary subgenres”, as S. Sobolev points out in his “Manual for Chrono-hitchhikers”<sup>11</sup>. Actually, in terms of the content of national literatures, the both versions work well.

There is a lot of disagreement regarding perception of the genre as such. Today, understanding of the genre as a basic frame element of a work of art in modern literary criticism is increasingly sidelined and is perceived as an element of the classical “outdated literary criticism”. After 2010, the split of researchers as two “rival” camps has been ongoing in English-language criticism. They can be conventionally referred to as “far-right genealogists” and “far-left genealogists”. In this case, “far rightists” devote themselves to the concept of “overgenre”, regardless of the thematic aspect of the research (this may be a work on aesthetics of popular literature or historical-literary analysis of the works of a particular writer, or even a comparative study), while “far-left activists” purposefully negate influence of the genre on the form or content of the modern novel, they put on the pedestal the artistic style, the ideological-thematic level of the work, the contact between the author and recipient, the artistic context, etc. It is clear that these dualities imply researchers who ignore such discourses and work in harmony with literary methods and with the literature they have undertaken to analyze.

Speaking in detail, the far-right group, for example, includes K. Gelder, who attributes the genre of a fiction work with a marker of a literary niche, dividing literature into *belles-lettres* (i.e. popular literature), and the “most popular literature”, moreover, the very popular literature is completely determined by its genre canon, while intellectual literature, literature of high writing, does not need genre marking and in each case it can be described as some author's variations beyond the genre or any other limits. K. Gelder states in his work “Popular Fiction: The Logics and Practices of a Literary Field”: “It is simply one way of noting that Literature deploys a set of logic and practices that are different in kind to those deployed in the field of popular fiction”<sup>12</sup>. Following English-speaking “far-right” literary critics, Ukrainian researchers support superposition of the genre. For example, S. Filonenko in her monograph “Mass literature in Ukraine: discourse / gender / genre”<sup>13</sup> borrows the theory of K. Gelder and fits it into the theoretical framework analyzing the Ukrainian mass prose, focusing on the genealogical aspect of fiction. It is the genre, according to S. Filonenko, that comprises the complex discourse of the work and asks questions that “make it clear that the answers will be completely

dependent on the genre identification of a particular work”. Consequently, the genre appears to be not just a frame of the work, but even an inevitable fate for the writer, because, as the literary critic points out, “the author always exists in connection with a certain genre”<sup>14</sup>.

At the same time, “far-left genealogists” declare the actual role of genre in literary studies, which stems from understanding of the functional genre in linguistics. The theory of C. Miller about the nature of the genre as a social action was taken over in works by Ukrainian linguists from Kharkiv. “The genre is a rhetorical means, which plays the role of an intermediary between concrete intentions and social necessity, it connects the personal with the public, the individual with the repetitive”, indicate I. Korneiko, O. Petrov, N. Popov in their monograph. The artistic genre acquires this interpretation among literary critics engaged in literature of the post-postmodern era. The predominant influence of the social factor on formation and rearrangement of genres of the modern novel, in particular in the Ukrainian literature, is often perceived by literary critics of the post-postmodern era as key: “From now on, the Ukrainian literature exists in a free society where everyone can write and read whatever they like. Mass genres develop [...] In this case, the national context is modified as the context of mass literature. At the same time, Ukrainian writers remain active (neo-positivists, neo-modernists), they seek to create “high” literature, the writers (postmodernists), appealing to mass genres, try to imply serious senses in them”<sup>15</sup>. In an attempt to generalize the genealogical and stylistic discourses of the contemporary Ukrainian prose, R. Kharchuk narrowed the boundary between mass and intellectual prose, thus complicating analytical work for literary critics, who mainly develop an extensive range of texts of the historical and literary nature, the theoretical and literary components develop focused on the trends of the Western European literary theory or the trend of the Soviet literary studies.

So, we are talking about the fact that the distinction between mass and “high” literatures is quite vague, especially when we use the concept of a “bestseller”. Novels based on the scheme of the fictional text have mostly stylistic, not genre identification markers, which is stated, for example, in the encyclopedia article: “In modern literary fiction *belles-lettres* refers to a light, lively, entertaining, accessible, formulaic story about some event or scientific issue, a well-known personality, with the aim of promoting them, mainly for the naïve recipient; it is considered to be a type of popular literature that employs narrative forms focused on easy reading”.

So, we see that genealogy studies today in Ukraine face the problem of insufficiently clear differentiation of the social intent of a literary work, especially of a modern novel. Therefore, introduction of the term “a literary product” in circulation of the Ukrainian literary criticism, which is actually close in semantics to the concept of “a printed product”, brings the discourse of literary criticism

<sup>10</sup> Shippey T. *Hard reading: learning from science fiction*, Liverpool University Press, 2016, 352 p. [in English].

<sup>11</sup> Sobolev S. *Alternativnaya istoriya: posobiye dlya khronokhichkhaykerov* [Alternative history: a guide for chronochichhaikers], Lipetsk, Krot, 2006, 232 p. [in Russian].

<sup>12</sup> Gelder K. *Popular Fiction: The Logics and Practices of a Literary Field*, Routledge, 1st edition, 2004. P. 11–12 [in English].

<sup>13</sup> Filonenko S. *Masova literatura v Ukrayini: dyskurs / gender / zhanr* [Mass literature in Ukraine: discourse / gender / genre], Donetsk, LANDON –XXI, 2011, P. 146 [in Ukrainian].

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> Kharchuk R. *Suchasna ukraïns'ka proza: postmodernyy period* [Modern Ukrainian prose: the postmodern period], Navch. posib., Kyjiv, VTS “Akademiya”, 2008, P. 233 [in Ukrainian].

back to the twentieth century, when the so-called “high” literature was created based on the principle of “free-load books”, and “a printed product” on the level of poetics and stylistics is approximated to “tabloid periodicals” for one-time entertaining reading. It was at that time that the cliché was formed regarding a lower emotional and intellectual level of popular literature in particular, as well as the culture in general. At the same time, the Western European literary criticism both in the twentieth century and today has not implied a reduced status of belles-lettres, so it distinguishes it from samples of intellectual prose solely by the structure of the genre matrix, i.e. based on rigidity of subordination of the plot of a novel to its genealogical variety.

**Conclusions.** To summarize, based on exploration of modern functioning of genealogy in the vast domestic and foreign literary theoretical and literary discourse, it is possible to develop the potential of the school: to avoid the danger of falling into the trap of “literature timeless” theoretical analysts, defining genre labelling of prose, not only features of the poetics in the context of the four-level structure of the prose should be taken into account, but also the temporal context of the work, its cultural background, the literary domain or the direction in which the writer analyzed mostly works, and target recipients of the hidden conceptual and symbolic set of the literature analyzed.

Reclassification of genres of the modern novel, which actively developed in the Ukrainian literature in the early 2000s (while the Western European literature leaves the Slavic discourse some 30 to 50 years behind) has been marked by changes in the structure of the alternative history meta-genre. We see the process of transition of stylistic forms and features of poetics as subgenres and genre units based on repeated and reproducible schemes. So the political novel according to style characteristic and the detective novel according to the genre one - merging with the genre of journalism in the intermedial space – form the AH subgenre of the political novel.

**Аністратенко Антоніна. Зв'язок романної та малої прози альтернативної історії: сегментування метажанру як внутрішня архітектоніка твору.** Стаття присвячена компаративному аналізу вираження зв'язку архітектонічних компонентів у малій та романній прозі. **Мета** запропонованої

статті полягає в тому, щоб у компаративному ключі продемонструвати концепції сегментування метажанру АІ у малій прозі Т. Фермеса, О. Меньшова, В. Кожелянка порівняно з творами малої прози, парадигмою поглядів на це поняття у різні історико-культурні віхи та їх екстраполяцію у літературі сучасності. **Новизна статті** полягає в тому, що тут уперше розглянуто хронотопні концепції у малій прозі метажанру альтернативної історії порівняно з романною прозою АІ. **Методи дослідження** є комплексом з порівняльного, описового, історико-літературного підходів. **Висновки.** На основі дослідження сучасного функціонування генеалогії у великому вітчизняному та зарубіжному літературознавчому та літературознавчому дискурсі можна розвинути потенціал української компаративістики: уникнути небезпеки потрапити в пастку “літературних позачасових теоретичних аналітичних принципів”; в ході аналізу було з'ясовано, що, визначаючи жанрове маркування прози, слід враховувати не лише особливості поетики в контексті чотирирівневої структури прози, а й часовий контекст твору, його культурне тло, літературну галузь або напрямок, в яких письменник витримує твори, та націлені на реципієнтів приховані понятійно-символічні значення історії та альтернативної історії, реалізованих у літературі метажанру альтернативної історії; існує набір архітектонічних особливостей романної прози АІ, що переноситься у твори малої форми, через що хронотоп останніх піддається модифікації.

**Ключові слова:** метажанр, альтернативна історія, хронотоп малої прози, романна проза, часовий концепт, жанрове сегментування.

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