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The Global Campus: Academic Fiction in World Literature

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The global campus: Academic fiction in world literature

OKSANA BLASHKIV

In university history, the turn of the 21st century was marked by several books that proclaimed its changing role, rapid decay, and even ruin. The institution which had guaranteed the continuity of education since the 12th century, which was one of the pillars and powers of Western civilization for centuries, which guarded nation-states and national cultures in the 19th century, with the coming of globalization showed evidence of a deep crisis or a transition phase revealing the need of rethinking, redefinition, and reform. The condition of the university at different stages of its development was the focus of attention of philosophers, historians, sociologists, cultural theorists, writers, and literary scholars. After centuries of recording annals of the university in literary texts, 19th-century literature in English elaborated the genre of the campus novel, which despite all odds preserved its popularity through the 20th century into the present. In recent years, literary studies have moved beyond the Anglo-American tradition of the campus novel into examining non-Anglophone literatures around the world.

The topic of this issue of WORLD LITERATURE STUDIES provides a unique opportunity to present non-Anglophone campus fiction and, consequently, to view the literary representation of higher education in its plurality and diversity. In their choices, the authors focus on contemporary Ukrainian, Swedish, Spanish, Slovak, Romanian, Polish, German, Czech, Bulgarian, and American literature, providing comparative global/transatlantic and national/local perspectives on the university and the ways it is perceived in different cultural contexts. Simultaneously, the authors have attempted to delineate a series of idiosyncratic characteristics of the campus/academic novel within a specific national literary tradition, while drawing parallels with the best-known case, the Anglo-American subgenre. The issue places principal emphasis on the transatlantic perspective on campus fiction comparing literature written in English and contemporary European literature. In the context of world literature, the articles highlight the diversity of campus fiction, thus widening the discussion about the global campus and enriching it with the topics of national/local history and cultural memory, distinctive perspectives on multilingualism and hybrid identities, and above all, the past and present of the university that defines its future.

Aging professors: Reading transatlantic academic plays of the 1990s

ANNA GAIDASH

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Aging professors: Reading transatlantic academic plays of the 1990s

Professor. Aging. National Identity. Ethnic Identity. The 1990s. University. Volodymyr Prat͡s'ovytyĭ. Donald Margulies.

A comparative reading of Volodymyr Prat͡s'ovytyĭ's *Ostannia͡ polemika profesora Dobrenka* (The final polemic of professor Dobrenko, 1991) and Donald Margulies's *Collected Stories* (1996) contributes to the understanding of the Ukrainian and US-American academic play of the 1990s. The chosen plays address the vulnerability of late adulthood, the close correlation of academia's decline with the physical and emotional deterioration of older professors, references to the past, the complexities of memory, and power dynamics. If Prat͡s'ovytyĭ's drama engages with the essential theme of national identity within Ukrainian academia in the transitional period, Margulies's text for the stage captures the intricate layers of personal memories and a problem of cultural appropriation. Both plays illuminate generational conflicts between younger and older scholars, emphasizing health struggles, emotional wounds, growing disillusionment, and the heavy responsibility the latter bear. The medical humanities framework is instrumental in reading aging professors' unsettled relationships and the medicalization of narrative.

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It is an open debate whether academic drama constitutes a genre. The scholar Rudolf Weiss doubts its existence by calling it a "missing genre", but he enumerates, surveys, and analyzes several plays by British dramatists (and one from the US) which tackle the world of academia and its power structures in the second half of the 20th century. His view is that the crisis in academia, with the university "in extremis or on the point of tumbling into the abyss" and "in ruins" (2016, 134–135), limits dramatic productions of the academic play. Addressing playwriting of the 1990s, I find the vision of the period to be complicated, because of memory as a "central illusion", ambivalent, as "defined by an overwhelming assumption that life, and particularly American life, was underwhelming", and internationally anxious, as "the world was starting to go crazy, but not so crazy that it was unmanageable or irreparable" (Klosterman 2022, 2–4).

In this context of international anxiety, the following aspects of aging discourse in playwriting deserve special attention. The article studies and contrasts older professors' generational conflicts and emotional vulnerabilities in two plays authored by Ukrainian and US-American dramatists based on the shared background of the power shifts of the aging experience. Both the male chair of the department in Volodymyr Praŝ'ovytyĭ's[1] drama *Ostannia͡ polemika profesora Dobrenka* (The final polemic of professor Dobrenko[2]), written in 1991, and the female professor in Donald Margulies's play *Collected Stories* (1996), confront zeitgeist changes and struggle with aging. Although Praŝ'ovytyĭ's drama primarily addresses the critical issue of national awareness within the turbulent Ukrainian academia, Margulies's play centers on the problem of cultural appropriation of personal memories. Both of these texts from the 1990s explore the dramatic conflict between the younger and older generations of academics, highlighting the significant vulnerabilities of the older generation – including physical ailments, emotional scars, feelings of betrayal, and the weight of responsibility. In addition, the stereotypical perception of the aging professors as a metaphor for the "aging" of the institution of higher education thoroughly analyzed by Eric Leuschner (2006, 352) applies to the dramas by Praŝ'ovytyĭ and Margulies.

Among the negative consequences of the lack of the experience "necessary for the production of great art" in campus fiction, Merritt Moseley singles out the focus on personal life of academic writers and conventionality of expression (2016, 30–31). Opposing Sanford Pinsker and Leslie Fiedler in the genre's formulaic (in terms of the plot twists) and stereotyping (in terms of the characters) nature, Moseley detects its advantages in integrating and interacting with highbrow and lowbrow literature genres (2016, 33). Praŝ'ovytyĭ incorporates a nation-developing agenda into its very texture of his play, which reveals the Ukrainian zeitgeist of the period. Thomas Docherty's premise of the development of modern aesthetics "in an explicitly nationalist arena […] with social questions pertaining to the formulation of the autonomous human subject […] regulated by the academy" and his statement that "questions of major national concern find their mediation in the teaching of the humanities disciplines in the university" (1999, 1) resonate with Praŝ'ovytyĭ and Margulies's dramas reflecting Ukrainian and Jewish-American identities respectively. Docherty elaborates on the role of modern universities in reconciling experience/sense with

knowledge/reason (1999, 232). His inferences prove that academic "commitment implies national allegiance" (244). Although the history of Western academia in Weiss's "missing genre" of academic drama has already been (at least selectively) examined, a brief comment on the development of a similar literary phenomenon in the Eastern European context is necessary.

The Ukrainian academic play has a fundamental background in Jesuit school drama (Ukr. шкільна драма – *shkilna drama*), which spread in Ukraine through the Polish influence in the 17–18th centuries. Shkilna drama was formed due to the curriculum favoring dramatic performances as an additional means of examining poetics, rhetoric, and philosophy (Sulyma 2010, 11). Authored by the teachers and performed by the students (in the Jesuit tradition), shkilna drama developed morality play and historical drama subgenres, apart from performances of Christmas (vertep) and Easter cycles, apocrypha, and panegyrics, which shaped the foundation of modern Ukrainian drama (16).

Didactic in its essence, shkilna drama tackled not only basic Christian staples but also national awareness of community (18, 21), epitomized by the anonymous[3] historical drama *Milost' Bozhiia Ukraïnu Svobodivshaia* (1728; the title is translated by Dmytro Doroshenko as *The Liberation of Ukraine by the Grace of God*, 1957, 105) describing the Khmelnytsky Uprising of 1648. As a result of his survey of numerous dramatic texts of the 17th and 18th centuries, Mykola Sulyma infers that "old Ukrainian school drama carried a great charge of spirituality, promoted Christian morality, fostered charity towards one's neighbor, self-sacrifice, and taught to think in high religious-philosophical categories" (50) having formed afterward the basis of the secular Ukrainian play. The foundation of this playwriting tradition is inherent in Praŝ'ovytyĭ's drama, too. The dramatist uses the polemic as a principal imagery of his plays and even foregrounds it in the title of *Ostanni͡a polemika profesora Dobrenka*. Built on a dialogical base, drama employs disputes and debates as its semantic tools, which in the selected plays of Praŝ'ovytyĭ and Margulies acquire additional connotations of competition between younger and older colleagues.

What is nationally marked in Praŝ'ovytyĭ's drama is the exposure to Ukrainian academia's double standards, which are rooted in the educational system of the ex-USSR. In her analyses of Ukrainian campus novels, which formed a genre in the late 20th century, Oksana Blashkiv detects "a rather tragic picture of the post-Soviet (academic) society, lost and disoriented. Marginalized, alienated, disoriented, and lonely – these would be the adjectives defining professor images in Ukrainian contemporary fiction" (2018, 158). This depiction applies to the older adult professor in Praŝ'ovytyĭ's play. In discussing US-American campus fiction, Eric Leuschner refers to the negative portrayal of college professors and "the negative public perception of the university" in popular culture and academic novels, highlighting how bodily defects serve as a metaphor for their separation from the public (2006, 349). Apart from the deep crisis in the Soviet and post-Soviet Ukrainian universities in the late 20th century, as shown in *Ostanni͡a polemika profesora Dobrenka*, and the restrictions on creative writing in terms of ethnic identity and private life, as shown in *Collected Stories*, a shared theme of the academic play of the period is the deterio-

rating health of older adults. Thus, the playwrights build parallels between politics, represented by academia, and personal struggles, represented by the characters.

Regarding the characters, the dramatic action around the aging Jewish professor in *Collected Stories* is enhanced by the New York City milieu, which serves as a setting for numerous plays about Jewish-Americans. Ethnic identity is highlighted in Margulies's play, in contrast to national identity as an essential issue in Prats͡ovytyĭ's play. As noted by the cultural and literary historian Sander L. Gilman, "being a New Yorker in the 1990s means sounding Jewish – being a Jew in spite of oneself" (1991, 30). In parallel with Gilman's metaphor of New York as the city of disease, "the locus of one's sense of alienation from the self" (31), Margulies's drama reflects the crisis of ethnic identity appropriation: aging professor Ruth Steiner, considers the use of "Jewish intellectual life" in the novel by her younger non-Jewish colleague Lisa Morrison as "mimicry; parody; bogus; inauthentic; irresponsible" (2002, 207). Compared to the turbulent, financially insecure years in the former USSR, "the 1990s represented the longest economic expansion in U.S. history" (Klosterman 2022, 2). The contemporary generalization of the decade as "the last period in American history when personal and political engagement was still viewed as optional" (2) seems to fit the transatlantic dichotomy produced by the two dramas: the focus on the political in the text of the European author and the preoccupation with the personal in the play of his US counterpart. This binary opposition is reflected in Leuschner's study of academia as a disease: in contrast to European intellectuals, "the American university professor [is] civically and politically *dis*engaged" (2006, 350). Comparing the struggles of a Ukrainian professor with national identity to the concerns of a Jewish-American professor about cultural appropriation enables a discussion of academia's late adulthood in a global context. The philosophy of medical humanities, represented by intergenerational conflicts involving power shifts and markers of aging, enables a close reading of vulnerabilities (including professional ones) in these dramatic texts.

MEDICAL HUMANITIES IN THE ACADEMIC DRAMA

Although the subjects of these plays are, strictly speaking, non-medical, and even if it is the case (as in Act I of *Ostannia͡ polemika profesora Dobrenka*), "the [medical] concerns are more patently social" (Beecher 2023, 31), the predicament of the elderly characters in both plays can be productively viewed through a medical humanities approach. The focus is not on medicalization but on interpersonal communication between different age generations: in late adulthood, illnesses produce mostly negative corporeal ambivalence, forming the ground for ageism.

What is conceptually at stake in medical humanities is the consideration of the liminality of human existence in therapeutic practices (17) that makes "questions about the meaning of life and death [...] essential to medicine" (Cole, Carlin, and Carson 2015, 1). One of the directions of this interdisciplinary field of healing science and culture is highlighted by Alain Touwaide, who claims that "science in recent times has become increasingly interested in connectedness, expressed in terms of communication, interrelation, and networks between the elements that it has persistently

searched to identify and isolate in previous periods" (2023, 369). Certain fictional texts have already become seminal for the discipline, including the Pulitzer-prize winning drama *Wit* (1995) by Margaret Edson, adapted into a cable TV film in 2001.[4] Literary scholarship considers that "diseases are essentially social or psychological in nature" (Beecher 2023, 27). Developing Beecher's observation of the medical practice in "complex social environments" (31), I argue that the nature of the dramatic conflicts in the selected plays of Ukrainian and US-American authors depends strongly on the interaction of health and/or diseases of the older adult characters and social and psychological setting. Thus, in his consideration of the intellectual hero in early post-Soviet Ukrainian prose, Mark Andryczyk foregrounds three prototypes of novel characters, among them the "Sick Soul":

> Many of the Ukrainian intellectual protagonists that appear in the prose of the Eighties Writers are shown to be suffering from some sort of illness; repeated references to the physical and / or mental sickness of these intellectuals show them to be maladjusted, mad, and dysfunctional. […] Their sickness is revealed throughout these prose works through direct and indirect references to illness and health institutions, by the omnipresence of alcohol and alcoholism in the characters' lives, and through the depiction of these characters' families as being broken or dysfunctional. (2012, 67)

Andryczyk's close reading of fiction by Oksana Zabuzĥko, Iurii Andrukhovych, Kostiantyn Moskalets, Iurii Gudz, and Iurii Izdryk detects a number of sick intellectual characters which he explains "as a return to the modernist depiction of the tortured intellectual, which was forbidden during the era of socialist realism" (81). This point of view resonates with Praťs'ovytyĭ's drama.

The 1990s represent the narratives of illness in US-American fiction, for example, in *Autobiography of a Face* (1994) by Lucy Glealy and *The Caregiver: A Life with Alzheimer's* (1999) by Aaron Alterra. Auto/biographical in nature, these texts contribute to "heighten our powers of perception, deepen our self-knowledge, and thicken our understanding of what it's like to suffer through an illness or cope with an injury" (Cole, Carlin, and Carson 2015, 136). Although medical issues are only references in *Collected Stories*, they add realistic touches to the aging discourse in the play.

INTERGENERATIONAL CONFLICTS

An animating force in the aging discourse, intergenerational relations constitute the core of the modern drama. From the sociological perspective, "conflict is natural and inevitable to human life" (Lowenstein 2005, 407). In the framework of the family (the smaller model of society), conflicts between generations develop a "normal expectable aspect" (406), forming later through solidarity intergenerational ambivalence, that is, "the intersection of affection and conflict" (Giarusso et al. 2005, 414). Yet, the conflicts between aging professors and their younger counterparts in the selected dramas occur beyond family circles. The confrontation in both cases leads to the failure of the older adult characters, though this is somewhat ambiguous.

Ostannia polemika profesora Dobrenka consists of three acts, each developing in its own setting: hospital – professor's apartment – campus. Act I introduces the opposing forces embodied by the university associate professor Maksym

(the lead character) and the chair of his department, Professor Dobrenko (who is also arguably a lead character). The latter stays in the hospital after heart surgery, and Maksym takes care of him, alternating with the professor's much younger lover, Oksana, who is Maksym's age. As a result of the polemic with Maksym (whose stand on Ukrainian national identity is bold and unacceptable for the ideology of the 1980s, when the dramatic action unfolds), Professor Dobrenko gets worse and is transferred to the intensive care unit.

Act II displays Maksym and Oksana in Dobrenko's apartment, where Oksana reveals the inside story of her relationship with the professor. Her tawdry tale, devoid of romanticism and full of routine details, fits Moseley's remark that "the uses of campus adultery or other forms of sexual irregularity have altered in recent academic fiction; the routine acceptance of sexual relations between professors and students has been problematized – in fiction as in life" (2016, 35) which is relatable to Margulies's drama as well. After all, Oksana tries to seduce Maksym, but it is in vain.

The final act opens with the news of professor Dobrenko's death, which provokes an additional plotline with the university's rector at the head. This line represents the internal conflict of the play as it examines the Ukrainian academic system trying to take a new course after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and sheds unexpected light upon the image of the deceased professor.

The polemic of Maksym and the professor in Act I determines the type of conflict. There is a context of power: even though the professor is disabled, he is still his colleague's boss. At the very beginning, he asks to change his bed into a sitting position and Maksym to take a seat. Thus, the older adult tries to have an equal, if not dominant, stand on the nonverbal plane. In his open talk with the younger colleague, the professor argues that they used to be enemies because Maksym subverted his academic concept and, thus, his authority. The dramatist does not reveal the concept's details, which one can quickly grasp from Maksym's cues: the professor's methodology, built on a Soviet ideological background, is unviable. Dobrenko's violent denial of his opponent's invectives ("junk", "fiction") further deteriorates his physical condition. In turn, the elderly scholar accuses his junior colleague of an immature attitude toward the team and science: Maksym ignored the taboo subjects and academic conventions of the era. Despising corruption, the younger scholar embodies the ideal model of a disinterested scholar independent of the Soviet regime. One of Dobrenko's final questions, as he actually nears death, sheds some light upon his role in academia: "Do you really think that I alone can change anything in the system or alter human nature?" (Praťs͡ovytyĭ 2008, 23) This rhetorical sentence spurs further dynamics in the debate between the male characters, resulting in Maksym's accusation of the professor for writing negative reviews on the scholars who had been unafraid of the regime and, for that, were later deported to Siberia. The defamation (as we learn in the play's finale) kills Dobrenko, whose blood pressure rises, leading to the imminent end. This dramatic conflict is ambivalent yet unresolved because it is an incident or tragic force, in Gustav Freytag's construction of the drama (1900, 99). Having learned the background and biography of his deceased boss, who hap-

pened to have a tragic life and who appointed Maksym as his successor, the younger lead character declares his guilt in the professor's untimely death.

The ambivalence of intergenerational conflict is also indicated in Margulies's drama. In the system of his dramatis personae, two female characters shift the position of power throughout the play, similar to Praŝ'ovytyĭ's lead. The action unfolds in the apartment of Ruth Steiner, an aging professor and distinguished short-story writer who is on friendly terms with Susan Sontag, Norman Mailer, and E. L. Doctorow (Margulies 2002, 160). In this text for the stage, the relationships between Steiner and Lisa, her student and assistant, develop in two acts, each consisting of three scenes demonstrating the characters in different time spans and roles. First introduced as a devoted student to Steiner and then as her caring assistant, Lisa turns into a successful short story writer and later a novelist, yet she flaunts the private life of her teacher, mentor, and close friend in her novel. In her review, Elyse Sommer interprets the conflict of *Collected Stories* as an "undefined illness to dramatize how the student moth's emergence as a butterfly embodies an inevitable contrast to the waning powers of the successful mentor [...]. This also heightens the teacher's sense of betrayal" (1997, n.p.).

Initial communication between the two characters is rather cold on the part of the older adult, who does not give full credit to the student, implying that the appearance of the latter hardly corresponds to her serious writing: "You *do* write better than you talk" (Margulies 2002, 145). The distance that Steiner keeps is explained by her privileged role as a university professor who teaches creative writing: "I've prided myself for years for being able to match the student with the story [which students practice writing in Steiner's class]. It's a game I play with myself" (140). As an apprentice, Lisa uses every opportunity to get what she needs, including "sucking up to" the woman professor (144), comparing Steiner's mentorship with a religious experience (144). Similar to Professor Dobrenko from Praŝ'ovytyĭ's drama, Ruth Steiner is a complicated character: despite her irony, sarcasm, and detachment, the professor teaches her student responsibility, performance, and writing ownership, discussing and analyzing Lisa's writing in detail that creates an additional metafictional layer of the text. A tutor of creative writing, Steiner argues that "writing cannot be taught" and that "the university is taking your money under pretenses" (146). Her self-critical claim that writers who teach do not have the answers, though "the good ones ask the right *quest*ions, that's the key" (147) demonstrates the crisis of academia of the time. Nevertheless, Steiner enjoys teaching because interaction with younger generations forces her to be critical, keeps her vision honest, and keeps her brain active.

There is a strong match in the mutual antagonism of Lisa/Steiner and Maksym/Dobrenko: after months of working as the female professor's assistant, Lisa still cannot satisfy the demanding Steiner: "no matter what I do, it's wrong. I always seem to get your disapproval when it's the opposite I want so badly" (162). This leads to the discussion of the role of media among younger generations of US-Americans and the negotiation of their identities in this context. Thus, Lisa infers that her life is commonplace and "so *television*" (184). This inference is preceded by a debate

on the influence of media upon young women who, through their interrogative manner of expressing affirmative sentences, tend to be "begging to be heard, begging to be understood" (155). Noting that in the 1990s, "there were more television networks than ever before" (2022, 8), Klosterman infers "Younger generations despise older generations for creating a world they must inhabit unwillingly, an impossible accusation to rebuff. Older generations despise younger generations for multiple reasons, although most are assorted iterations of two: They perceive the updated versions of themselves as either softer or lazier (or both)" (8–9).

Probably the older generation's disdain in the form of Steiner's all-encompassing control over her young colleague (as a result of her success with the first published book, the professor regards her protégée as an equal now) prevents Lisa from sharing her concept of the novel in which she appropriates her mentor's youth without prior consent. Steiner feels deceived, to say the least. In their final confrontation, the aging professor's words are filled with hidden meaning that Lisa is unable to discern: talking about burglars, the professor does not mean literally cheating but rather metaphorically hinting at Lisa for stealing her memories and the vulnerable fragment of her youth, not meant for publicity (Margulies 2002, 194). Whereas Maksym, who defames professor Dobrenko, indirectly causes the latter's demise, Lisa's case of "creative appropriation" (Sommer 1997) brings professor Steiner disparagement. The older protagonist confesses to Lisa her envy of the young woman's "life ahead". A similar feeling of doom about Professor Dobrenko is read in Praf͡s'ovytyĭ's play in the rector's line in the final Act: "His life had finished him off… And he was hopeless then… His time was up" (2008, 65). The markers of aging reinforce this discourse of the decline of late adulthood.

MARKERS OF AGING

The critical feature of the verbal component of *Ostanni͡a polemika profesora Dobrenka* is its ageist use of language in the lines of the lead characters: Maksym calls the professor derogatory names behind his back: "old geezer" and "decrepit" (Praf͡s'ovytyĭ 2008, 7) as well as "old demagogue" (55). Labeling the intensive care unit where the older protagonist stays as "a ward of die-hards", Maksym demonstrates his masculine superiority over a vulnerable opponent in his invective language. In turn, Dobrenko is prone to self-stereotyping in the following lines: "a frail, weak person" (15) and "my goose is cooked" (21). Metaphorically, the lead character embodies the hypocritical system of the collapsed Soviet Union, and therefore, his demise may designate the beginning of a new era. After all, "[i]n the construction of narratives of illness, the writer strives to make existential sense of an experience by placing it in the context of a larger narrative of suffering and loss or healing, and then, in that light, giving a plausible account of what is happening now" (Cole, Carlin, and Carson 2015, 136). The emphasis of medical humanities on the "narrative of suffering and loss or healing" can be insightful in understanding agency of late adulthood.

Unlike *Ostanni͡a polemika profesora Dobrenka*, whose timeframe is limited to several days, *Collected Stories* covers six years, giving some advantage for studying age in fiction. Also in contrast to the Ukrainian drama, there are no invectives on the part

of the younger character, but rather cases of Steiner's self-deprecation who names and shames herself as "an old fart" (Margulies 2002, 157), "an old ham" (197), and a "pitiful old woman" (200) that makes salient not only cultural ageism but also gender discrimination. What is universal in both plays is that stereotypes which the aging professors apply to themselves, fit the category of illness and powerlessness according to Erdman Palmore's taxonomy (Palmore, Branch, and Harris 2005, 301), with the sole exception of Steiner's intelligence as "the feisty older woman who cracks wise" (Margulies 2002, 159). Both older adult characters resist patronizing: Dobrenko expresses it ironically in the line, "is it nice to take out pots after me, to serve me like a small child?" (Praťs͡ovytyĭ 2008, 16); and after betrayal, Steiner refuses to accept Lisa's assistance (Margulies 2002, 195).

Memory relates to the challenges that both fictional professors share. Common ground for markers of aging is found in the fragments of "life review" in both dramas. The concept of revision of one's life, designed by the gerontologist Robert Butler and further developed by Michael Mangan, foregrounds recollections as a form of self-awareness in late adulthood (Mangan 2013). On this basis, Mangan singles out several types of reminiscences in drama, some of which are employed in the selected plays. Thus, the rector's recollections of the deceased professor help Maksym radically reconsider his attitude toward his former boss and intellectual opponent (Dobrenko grew up as an orphan in dire straits, served in wartime in an assault unit, and his family had Cossack origin[5]). Even though these reminiscences are uttered by other characters (namely, the rector and Oksana) rather than the older adult himself, they perform a transmissive function, that is, "passing on of one's cultural heritage and personal legacy" (Mangan 2013, 126). In her lengthy, monologue-like revision of her love story in young adulthood, Steiner builds an escapist reminiscence because the memories of that period are both painful and glorious for her at the same time: "it *was* my shining moment" (Margulies 2002, 177).

Though experiencing various physical setbacks – Dobrenko endures two heart attacks, an aortic aneurysm (Praťs͡ovytyĭ 2008, 43), and high blood pressure (24) while Ruth Steiner suffers from memory problems (Margulies 2002, 139), arthritis (195), calcium deficiency and stinging eyes (199), both fictional professors age in compliance with gerontological data (Palmore, Branch, and Harris 2005, 164–165). In terms of medical humanities, the above-mentioned medicalized aspects form the discourse of decline and become pivotal in perceiving the aging experience of the professors.

In the rising action of both plays, there develops social withdrawal of older adult characters due to their interpersonal ties, which become the points of their vulnerability manifested by the May/December romance: Dobrenko has an extramarital affair with a much younger PhD student, Oksana, and Ruth Steiner had an infatuation in her youth with the much older (real-life) poet Delmore Schwartz. Because the field of medical humanities focuses not only on the medicalization of narrative but also on unsettled relationships, this subfield negotiates and criticizes their interaction to build a connection between physical and psychological. Considering chronic conditions and other age markers of the aging professors in these works, each drama brings a complicated resolution to intergenerational conflicts.

CONCLUSION

Although the plays under discussion here have more contrasts than parallels, they demonstrate how both professors defy memory issues, loss of influence, and generational confrontation, which can be a common denominator inspiring transatlantic reading. In both plays, professors in their sixties are anxious about knowledge transfer and power shifts, underscoring the universal concerns of aging in academia. The elderly professor gestalt, regardless of gender, though in a different way, reflects the challenges of aging in a global academic culture, which are generally marked with ageism and self-stereotyping on behalf of the older characters. At the beginning of the 1990s, Volodymyr Prat͡s'ovytyĭ nationalizes Ukrainian drama: the playwright imagines the formation of national (non-Soviet) academic character while analyzing the predicament of the Soviet times in the history of Ukrainian scholarship. Like his Ukrainian counterpart, Donald Margulies lays bare Jewish-American identity at the core of his plays in the familiar university milieu of the Eastern coast. The aging markers in both plays manifest the discourse of decline rather than progress. The "failure" in terms of dramatic conventions of aging professors signals the crisis of academia in the 1990s. Finally, polemic functions as a driving force in the plays, foregrounding vulnerabilities of masculinity and subordination and reaffirming the university's still important role, even in crisis, for the community.

NOTES

[1] The present article uses the norm of transliteration and romanization of the US-Congress Library: https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/romanization/ukrainia.pdf.

[2] *Остання полеміка професора Добренка* (in original). Unless otherwise noted, all translations from Ukrainian are by the present author.

[3] Although historian Dmytro Doroshenko mentions Teofan Trofymovych as the author of the drama in his 1957 study, Yaroslav Gordynsky (1925 and 1927, cited in Sulyma 2010, 33–34) and Yevhen Onat͡s'ky (1961, 978) insist on the text's unknown authorship.

[4] See Gaidash 2018.

[5] For a Ukrainian reader, social exclusion signifies the inability to be employed and influence life in the state.

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KATARÍNA BEDNÁROVÁ – MÁRIA KUSÁ – SILVIA RYBÁROVÁ: Slovník prekladateliek a prekladateľov: vedy o človeku a kultúre. Bratislava: VEDA, vydavateľstvo SAV – Ústav svetovej literatúry SAV, v. v. i., 2024. 464 s. ISBN 978-80-224-2070-9 (print), ISBN 978-80-224-2077-8 (online). DOI 10.31577/2024/9788022420778

Kolektívna publikácia prináša prostredníctvom portrétov takmer stovky prekladateľských osobností a ich výberových bibliografií súhrnný obraz podstatnej časti knižnej produkcie najdôležitejších diel filozofickej, sociologickej, historickej, literárnovednej či umenovednej orientácie, ktorá bola preložená a vydaná na Slovensku v rozpätí od medzivojnového obdobia 20. storočia po 20. roky 21. storočia. Poskytuje profily osobností slovenského socio-humanitnovedného prekladu, charakterizuje ich dominantné zameranie a vo svojej podobe tvorí aj svojské dejiny recepcie tohto typu literatúry na Slovensku. Spolu s úvodnými kontextovými statami, bibliografiou prekladov, výberovou sekundárnou literatúrou k jednotlivým heslám, registrom mien a ďalšími materiálmi umožňuje zároveň ich rekonštrukciu, a to aj vďaka prepojeniu jednotlivých hesiel a osobností prostredníctvom prekladaných autorov. Práve komplexnosť spracovania rozsiahleho materiálu, dosiaľ vedecky reflektovaného iba čiastkovo, zaručuje, že sa publikácia môže stať dôležitým študijným a bádateľským prameňom.

The dictionary of Slovak translators in the humanities and social sciences presents – through the portraits of almost one hundred translators and their selected bibliographies – a comprehensive overview of a substantial part of the book production of the most important works of philosophical, sociological, historical, literary, and artistic orientation, published and translated in Slovakia from the interwar period of the 20th century to the present day. It provides profiles of the personalities of Slovak socio-humanistic translation, defines their dominant focus, and also creates a unique history of the reception of this literature in Slovakia. Together with the introductory contextual articles, bibliography of translations, selection of secondary literature on individual entries, index of names, and other materials, it also allows for their reconstruction, thanks to the linking of individual entries and translators through the translated authors as well. Although the dictionary was published in Slovak, it also contains three introductory texts in English translation: "Foreword" (K. Bednárová – M. Kusá), "Contexts of translation in the humanities and social sciences I: Mapping the field" (K. Bednárová), "Contexts of translation in the humanities and social sciences II: The publishing environment in the coordinates of the socio-cultural and political system" (1918–1989) (M. Kusá).

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Čo dnes znamená globálny kampus? Aké sú jeho reprezentácie v literatúre? A čo hovoria o aktuálnej úlohe univerzít? Autorky a autori štúdií v čísle o akademickom románe hľadajú s rešpektom k jeho pluralite a rozmanitosti odpovede v súčasnej anglofónnej, ale najmä v neanglofónnej literárnej tvorbe. Závažnosť zvolenej témy vyplýva z výrazných zmien, ktorými akademický svet a jeho literárne stvárnenie v súčasnosti prechádzajú. Štúdie, ktoré obracajú pozornosť na univerzitnú fikciu v ukrajinskej, španielskej, švédskej, slovenskej, rumunskej, poľskej, nemeckej, českej, bulharskej a americkej literatúre, prispievajú k výskumu zobrazovania globálneho kampusu a jeho národných špecifík.

What is the global campus today? What are its representations in fiction? What do they say about the university's role in contemporary society? This issue devoted to the campus novel searches for answers in contemporary Anglophone and particularly non-Anglophone campus fiction in its plurality and diversity. The relevance of the topic is explained by the significant changes that the world of academia and its literary narratives undergo in the present. By bringing attention to campus fiction in Ukrainian, Swedish, Spanish, Slovak, Romanian, Polish, German, Czech, Bulgarian, and American literature, the authors shed light on the global campus and national peculiarities of its portrayal.