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*Univerzita nových technologií (Kyjev, Ukrajina)*

*v rámci publikační skupiny Publishing Group „ Vědecká perspektiva “*

# MODERNÍ ASPEKTY VĚDY

*Svazek XXIV mezinárodní kolektivní monografie*

Česká republika  
2022

*International Economic Institute s.r.o. (Czech Republic)*  
*Central European Education Institute (Bratislava, Slovakia)*  
*National Institute for Economic Research (Batumi, Georgia)*  
*Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Kazakhstan)*  
*Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (Baku, Azerbaijan)*  
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*Public Scientific Organization "Ukrainian Assembly of Doctors of Sciences in Public Administration" (Kyiv, Ukraine)*  
*Public Organization "Association of Scientists of Ukraine" (Kyiv, Ukraine)*  
*University of New Technologies (Kyiv, Ukraine)*

*within the Publishing Group "Scientific Perspectives"*

# MODERN ASPECTS OF SCIENCE

*24- th volume of the international collective monograph*

Czech Republic  
2022

UDC 001.32: 1/3] (477) (02)

C91

Vydavatel:

Mezinárodní Ekonomický Institut s.r.o.  
se sídlem V Lázních 688, Jesenice 252 42  
IČO 03562671 Česká republika  
Zveřejněno rozhodnutím akademické rady

Mezinárodní Ekonomický Institut s.r.o. (Zápis č. 19/2022 ze dne 10. říjen 2022)



*Monografie jsou indexovány v mezinárodním vyhledávači  
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C91 Moderní aspekty vědy: XXIV. Díl mezinárodní kolektivní monografie /  
Mezinárodní Ekonomický Institut s.r.o.. Česká republika: Mezinárodní Ekonomický  
Institut s.r.o., 2022. str. 617

Swazek XXIV mezinárodní kolektivní monografie obsahuje publikace o: utváření a  
rozvoji teorie a historie veřejné správy; formování regionální správy a místní samosprávy;  
provádění ústavního a mezinárodního práva; finance, bankovníctví a pojišťovnictví; duševní  
rozvoj osobnosti; rysy lexikálních výrazových prostředků imperativní sémantiky atd.

*Materiály jsou předkládány v autorském vydání. Autoři odpovídají za obsah a pravopis  
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§3.2 CHILDREN OF FIN DE SIÈCLE: THE IMAGE AND METAPHOR OF THE CHILD IN THE LITERATURE AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (Halchuk O., Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University)

**Introduction.** The *purpose of this study* is to determine the correlation of images and metaphors of a child with the search for responses to the challenges of time by writers on the turn of the twentieth century, and analyze the authors' variants of artistic realization and development of this topos. *The urgency* of studying different national and diverse interpretations of an image of a child in the literature of the turn of the twentieth century is defined by: 1) the need for further research of modernist artistic traditions. After all, the literature of the twentieth century continues to remain in the lens of active scientific interests; 2) an opportunity to analyze the most typical images and motives of literature on the century turn as certain ideological and aesthetic concepts of modernist writing. The image of a child, which received a wide range of interpretations in the world literature of that period, is attributed to such concepts; 3) the need to analyze the author's specificity of perception and interpretation of the image of a child as a sign of a writer's idiosyncrasy. **Analysis of recent research and publications.** Researching the topic of child characters has become especially relevant lately. Thus, R. McGillis in the monograph *Children's Literature and the Fin de Siècle* (2003) proves its sensitivity to social and spiritual changes, analyzing the examples by authors from Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Australia and the United States. The works *Modernism and Childhood* (2009) by M.R. Higonnet and *Children's Literature: From the Fin de Siècle to the New Millennium* (2018) by K. Reynolds are also devoted to this issue. In the vast majority of studies devoted to children's theme in fiction, the image of a child is considered either in the context of social issues, or through the prism of peculiarities of age





psychology. This is due to the enlightening or realmate orientation of the analyzed works, which is specific for the literature of the nineteenth century. And in almost all cases, such a discourse is accompanied by the understanding of basic provisions of the work *Centuries of Childhood. A Social History of Family Life* (1962) by P. Aries. In particular, its provocative thesis about the relative 'indifference' to the children's theme in literature until the nineteenth century [1]. At the same time, literary critics are inspired by P. Aries observations on the variability of 'childhood' in time. In Ukrainian literary studies in recent decades, the topic and image of a child in the works of the century turn were investigated either on the material of the national (D. Yesypenko, K. Osadcha; T. Kleimenov, L. Tarasynska and T. Nechyporenko, T. Lopushan, etc.), or Russian (A. Ruban, O. Belichenko, S. Bader) literature. As for the works of Western European writers, there is no systemic comparative study of an image of a child in the literature of the century turn literature nowadays. Although it was in the days of *Fin de Siècle*, unlike a realistic tradition, that a broad literary paradigm of a child's image and the topic of childhood as a whole were formed. This leads to a **scientific novelty** of a comparative analysis of the outstanding works of the era of early modernism. The novelty of this study also lies in the proposed typology of children's images and in the analysis of tendencies in transforming the image of a child into a concept that embodies the ambivalent nature of the transition.

**The object** of study is also that of a novelty, as the texts of authors whose creativity in the literary history of their countries is associated with the achievements of modernist writing are selected for analysis. These are the works of such representatives of English writing as R.L. Stevenson (*Treasure Island*), J. R. Kipling (*The Jungle Book*), O. Wilde (*Picture of Dorian Gray*), T. Hardy (*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*), American authors, such as Mark Twain (*trilogy about Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn*), French –





E. Zola (*Germinal*) and G. de Maupassant (short stories), Belgian – M. Maeterlinck (*The Blind*, *The Blue Bird*).

Achieving this goal requires solving the following *tasks*: outlining new trends in the modernist interpretation of a child's image compared to the previous artistic tradition; identifying the most common types of a child's image and a model of their interpretation; To distinguish the concept of 'childhood' as a variant of development of the artistic topos of a child in the literature on the turn of the twentieth century.

We consider it appropriate to use the following *complex of scientific methods and techniques*: historical and cultural – for determining the conditions and sources of inspiration of the images of a child and 'childhood' in the works of the century turn; archetypal – for finding out the connection of these images with archetypes; psychoanalytic – for interpretation of the author's artistic understanding of child psychology; semiotic – for revealing the symbolic subtext in the analyzed works; comparative – for identifying figurative-thematic coincidences and differences in the texts of representatives of different national variants of modernist literature.

### **Main material. The image of a 'disadvantaged' child in Fin de siècle as a further development of romantic and realistic interpretations**

The image, motive, theme and eventually the concept of 'a child' were formed in the literature of Fin de Siècle against the background of declining moods, typical of the atmosphere of disappointment and pessimism. Caused by the total crisis of ideological and moral imperatives, these moods were embodied in different types of the child's image. We assume that, in addition to the author's plan, they are also caused by the influence of the artistic concepts of a child and childhood in previous literary days. Thus, in texts, the authors of which transformed the traditions of realism, the main focus was transferred to the role of society in the





formation of a 'childhood scenario'. And this scenario was highly dramatic or even tragic. It realized the writer's idea of reflecting the 'face' of the contemporary civilization as being destructive for the physical, mental and moral health of an underage person. This led to formation of a figurative paradigm of interpreting a child as a victim of socio-political circumstances and the most vulnerable part of society. The works of E. Zola and G. de Maupassant are indicative of this paradigm.

One of the factors for the relevance of children's images of this type is the tradition of French literature, related to the names of E. Sue (*The Mysteries of Paris*), R. Dussel (*Saint-Mary Monastery*) and others. And especially in V. Hugo, who in the epic *Les Misérables* aimed to reproduce 'the depression of a man belonging to the proletariat class; the fall of a woman as a result of starvation; and the extinction of a child due to darkness of ignorance' [4]. He portrayed a child as a victim of social evil – poverty, oppression of child labor, insecurity. The stories of Cosette, Gavroche and other child-characters expressed the author's conclusion that the world of a child is subordinate to the world of adults and is oppressed by the latter. At the same time, V. Hugo had a clear tendency for symbolizing the image of a child. As Y. Vilchanska observed in the study of *Genesis of a thematic paradigm: from 'miserable childhood' to a 'Child of Revolution'*, the image of an orphaned child, particularly Gavroche, in the context of understanding the social issues of the French Revolution is transformed into a new paradigm a 'Child of Revolution' [9] as a special type of marginal personality.

In E. Zola's works, one can observe the deepening of realistic and symbolic interpretations. Developing theoretical provisions of naturalism, the writer took into account the theory of heredity and depicted children through his prism. Thus, in the novel *Germinal*, the images of children from miners' families, i.e. Maheu, Levaque, Pierrons etc. the consequences of a conflict 'between the labor and





the capital' [12] are demonstrated even brighter in children images than in the images of adult miners. It is known that Zola has made this conflict central in his novel. He showed how hard work in inhumane conditions, forced premature adulthood, ignorance and absence of any future lead to degradation and pathologies. Thus, the physiological underdevelopment of Catherine and the crippled spine of Alzire embody the degeneration of Maheu miner's family line, whose father was ironically called Immortal. Maheu's ten-year-old son Jeanlin gets injured after a collapse in the mine. And during a strike that grew into a bloody rebellion, he also shows his moral injury by killing a soldier. The children also found themselves among the victims of armed suppression of the rebellion. This is the daughter of Pierrons Lydie, little Beber, and Mouquette. Therefore, all these images symbolize the type of child-victim. Like human sacrifices to ancient gods, the *Germinal* children are victims to the Moloh-capital that are being thrown into the mine of the mine.

Instead, in the works of Guy de Maupassant, the renewal of a realistic tradition of childhood is determined by the interconnection of social and moral and ethical issues. The most typical image of a child in Maupassant works is a bastard child. This image is considered a variation on the theme of an orphaned child, which has long turned into a mythological archetype. Speaking of a literary orphan, T. Windling emphasized that they were not only children who have literally lost their parents. These are 'lost, abandoned, cast out, disinherited by evil step-parents, raised in supernatural captivity, or reared by wild animals' [11]. The archetypality of such an image allowed Maupassant to have a special kind of interpretation based on the combination of traditional and individual author's reading. We consider the writer's interest in such problems as transformation of the family model, interest in the theory of heredity, strengthening of atheistic moods, increasing disappointment in the system of traditional





social and moral values, etc. to be the factors of actualizing the image of a Bastard child. The writer turned an image of a child born outside a marriage into a full-fledged topic and concept. At the same time, the stories of bastards in his short stories are shown in three variants: as a central theme, as a leitmotif or 'background' motif of a work.

In the largest group of short stories, where the story of a bastard child is a central theme, there are several subgroups. Such works as *The Olive Grove* (*Le Champ d'oliviers*) and *The Parricide* represent the first, where bastards become the executioners of their own parents, who once abandoned them, and therefore, the motive of a bastard child is combined with the motive of revenge. For example, in the short story *The Parricide* a young carpenter Jean Louis, nicknamed Bourgeois, is brought to trial. He kills an old couple, but it is not the guilt that troubles him, but the fear of being judged as a madman or a victim of political ideas. The finale of the work is a rhetorical question: '*How would you have acted if you were members of the trial of this father-killer?*'. In this way, the author leaves the readers room for discussion.

If in *The Parricide* the main character is a bastard, in the short story *The Olive Grove* attention is shifted to the image of the father, for whom the meeting with son becomes fatal. Once a baron de Vilbois, now a priest, it was the betrayal of his mistress that pushed him to religion. He explains his rapprochement to God as a way to displace love for a treacherous woman with 'mystical love'. But 25 years later, a tramp comes to the priest, demanding to recognize that he is his son. And de Vilbois realises that the feeling of betrayal lived in him all this time. But even more horrifying for the priest is his bastard: '*Grief took hold of his soul, an unspeakable, painful, grievous feeling, like a renewed twinge of conscience. Some things he was beginning to understand, others he guessed at, and again he saw before him the crude scene of parting. Only to save his life, under the threat of an offended man*





did the woman, this deceitful and insidious female, threw him this lie. And the lie succeeded. And from him a son was born and grew up to become this filthy, highwayman who reeks of vice-like the animal stench of a goat' [6]. When Vilbois' son, who has more than one murdered life on his conscience, starts bragging about his crimes, the priest feels that: 'between this man and himself, he already felt the filth of that moral cloaca which for some souls is tantamount to deadly poison' [6]. The finale of the work is also open: the villagers find a drunken tramp and a priest with his throat cut. The author leaves it to the reader's discretion whether this is the crime of Vilbois' illegitimate son, or the priest did it himself. The short story has distinct Christian allusions: the title *The Olive Grove* refers to one of the most dramatic episodes of the Gospel, when after the last supper Christ prayed and mourned his future suffering among the olive trees of the Garden of Gethsemane; at the age of 32 years, close to the age of Christ, Baron Vilbois took the priesthood; leaving Paris, the priest lives in a Provençal village surrounded by olive groves; the moment he meets his son, he is overcome with anxiety as 'facing an unknown enemy', and when the son insists on confessing, the priest withdraws in a 'biblical gesture of despair'. The Christian intertext of the short story increases the emphasis on the moral issues of sin and redemption.

The second subgroup is stories (*Child, Bandoned, Father, Duchoux*) consider the issues of readiness or willingness of Bastards' parents to go through the process of redemption and help their children. Yes, the hero of the short story *Child* is experiencing a kind of catharsis: on his marriage night, he learns that the former mistress, having given birth to a child, is dying and asks for the last meeting. He keeps the promise and picks up the newborn son, and his young wife agrees to raise the child. The third short stories subgroup is formed of the stories of bastards that become a test not only a test not only not only a test not only not only a test





not only for humanity, but also test the willingness of a man to take responsibility for someone else's child with the burden of a biased attitude towards one. It is noteworthy that in such works as *Simon's Papa*, *Father and Son Oto* we have successful conclusions close to fairy-tale plots with a magic helper who comes to aid the offended, which are not typical for Maupassant's short stories. For example, in *Simon's Papa*, a rural blacksmith becomes a Bastard's dad, and in the novel *Father and Son Oto*, a young farmer, after his father's death, sincerely helps his father's lover and their baby. In general, these works demonstrate a different – not comic or satirical (as in *A Normandy Joke*, *Theodule Sabot's Confession*, *Belhomme's Beast*, etc.) angle, rooted in the French national tradition of the anecdotal depiction of peasants, but the sublime (here we recall P. Toper's remark that 'the concept of "tragic" is traditionally inextricably linked with the "sublime"' [8]): it is the humanity and selflessness of Simon or Oto that, by most accounts, save the little bastard's future. It is important to note that Maupassant interprets the images of peasants who show fortitude and indestructible courage in extreme circumstances in the short stories about the Franco-Prussian war in a similarly pathos-filled manner: *Mother Savage*, *Father Milon* etc. The deeds of Simon (*Simon's Papa*) and Oto (*Father and Son Oto*) are then seen from an evaluative point of view as a kind of exploit in a 'daily war' in an environment governed by patriarchal prejudice and 'occupied' by the struggle for survival and the desire to get rich at all costs.

In the short stories where the motif of a bastard child is a leitmotif, the author covers two main tasks. The first is to show the dramatic fate of a Bastard as a victim of arbitrariness and cruelty (*Mother of Monsters*, *A True Story*, *The Son*, etc.). Here, the motif of a bastard child performs a satirical function and forms a symbolic subtext of a work. The story of the bastard is also a leitmotif of the short story *The Son*. As a young man, the future academic raped a young maid, in the inn where he was staying for





the night. And 30 years later he learned that she had died in childbirth, leaving a crippled son. The sight and fate of her son astonished and frightened the academic. Having never revealed himself to his son, every year since then he has come to the scene of the crime and watched over his son from a distance. The psychological nature of the novel is reinforced by the image of the dream, in which the son pursues the father in front of his colleagues, and then, turning into a dog, bites. This is how Maupassant reveals the real motives behind the hero's belated 'repentance' – fear of exposure and compassion-disdain for his son. Interestingly enough, the first version of the short story was entitled *The Unknown Father*, but in the final version the author refocuses on the bastard, although he makes the narrator someone, he cannot call a father. It seems symbolic that he is a highly educated man who, however, espouses the cynical philosophy that there is no man who does not have children unknown to him. At the same time, the tendency typical of late 19th century literature to portray the gradual psychological and intellectual grinding, the 'bourgeoisization' of the character is also apparent here. The academic status of the 'father' contrasts with his anti-humanist theory, like the notion of the 'weakness' of bastards in Victorian literature: 'Well, are you sure, my friend, <...>; that somewhere in the street or in a penal colony, you have no rogue son, who steals and kills honest people - like you and me, that you have no daughter living in some brothel, or - if she was lucky and was abandoned by her mother - serving as a cook in some family? <...>; Thieves, vagrants - in short, all outcasts, after all, are our children. And we are also lucky that they are not our fathers, because these scoundrels, in their turn, produce children!' [6]. By 'entrusting' the character to voice the opinion of the vast majority of his contemporaries, Maupassant emphasises the perception of children born out of wedlock as a mundane fact in order to reinforce the tragedy of the bastard hero through such 'deliberate prosaicism'.





The second task is to beat the characters with the emergence of such a child, to put them before an existential choice, which changes their life in the coordinates 'Poverty – Wealth', 'Life – Death'. Thus, in the novel 'inheritance' according to the conditions of the last will, only a birth of a child opens a path to wealth and luxury for Lezable. So, for the sake of money he accepts the fact that his daughter is actually a child of a colleague. While Lezable is a typical Maupassant anti-hero without a sense of dignity, in the short story *The baby* a similar situation becomes the cause of a dramatically different reaction of the Lemonie character. His history is built in the 'romantic' scheme: after early widowhood, Lemonie gives all his love to his son, but when he learns that he is not his child and the whole city knows about it, he commits a suicide. The disappointment in his beloved wife and a sense of affected self-esteem proved to be stronger than the duty, so it is difficult to say who causes more sympathy – the suicider or the abandoned toddler. At the same time, we believe that in both short stories Maupassant seeks to expose the model of a bourgeois family built on deception.

The works with no character of a Bastard child, and the motif itself plays the role of a background, are the short stories *Confession*, *Fly*, *Useless Beauty*. This is either a 'prehistory' of Bastard (*Confession*), or the death of a child at childbirth (*Fly*), or a fictitious message about a bastard child (*Useless beauty*). In all cases, Maupassant focuses on the fate of a woman who has committed a crime (or fallen) in the eyes of society and the church. Therefore, the object of author's criticism are the public morality and its prejudices.

Thus, the peculiarity of Bastards by Guy de Maupassant is that the author goes beyond the practice of realism to portray a child as a 'little adult' without taking into account the specifics of age psychology. Immersion in the sensory sphere of bastard characters enabled the writer to go further and turn these images





from a social type into a symbol of the day. The semantics of abandonment and abandonment implied by the image become a metaphor of a certain self- and worldview of a person that does not have or does not know their father. The absence of a father, who, according to Z. Freud, is a representative of God, an active organizing prime, a pre-basis of a family, providing generic life, succession of generations, that is, integrity of the world, is the author's metaphor of a person's worldview at the verge of fin de siècle, who feels that 'father-God' turned away from them. Thus, the Bastards in the works of Maupassant appear as a type of victim in social, moral, psychological, philosophical perspectives.

#### **A child adventurer in the works of neo-romantics**

Neo-romantic writers are close to Maupassant and Zola in terms of searching for a special type of marginality in the archetypal-mythological image of an orphan. However, French writers perceived children as the 'Other' category because of their 'vulnerability' to cruel social and religious prejudices. Instead, English and American neo-romantics were attracted by the combination of opposite elements – 'lack' (lack of life experience and knowledge) and 'excess' (dominance of faith and naivety) in children's images. This allowed writers to present images of children as active characters who acquire knowledge and experience not in an 'office' way, but due to their own energy and efficiency. This is mainly a teenage hero, which resonates with the ambivalence of this age category, and a symbolic characteristic of the fin de siècle transition period.

The 'otherness' of a child in the interpretation of neo-romantics is also a continuation of the romantic tradition. During certain period, romantics developed the Lockean-Rousseau concept of a child as a tabula rasa, where adults leave their 'writings'. Thanks to their closeness to nature, they perceived it as an almost ideal being and put forward the cult of a child as a cult of intuitive cognition. Thus, for romantics, a child is someone who is able to





find the truth hidden from adults, and at the same time, someone who, not knowing about the cruel and unjust world, can still feel happy. Accordingly, due to 'ignorance', childhood is interpreted as the 'golden age' of human life, like, for example, in the poetry of W. Blake. This theme is presented differently in the works of realists: homeless children, hostages of the struggle for inheritance, hungry and disenfranchised inmates of workhouses, humiliated students of private schools, victims of a punitive environment – such types replenish the gallery of children's images after the publication of books by Ch. Dickens, Charlotte Bronte, J. Greenwood et al. The image of the cruel 'outer' world gets adjective by the disclosure of the topic of 'inner' family hell, where children often become victims of domestic violence and tyranny. In a word, socially engaged texts present images of children in the roles of 'underprivileged' ones, but with a pronounced set of virtues – mercy, devotion, moral purity, sense of dignity.

The special feature of neo-romantic interpretation is the emphasis on the child's freedom from any prejudices and superstitions and readiness to actively overcome the gap between the ideal and the reality. Thus, the image of a child (especially a teenager) fits into the paradigm of a neo-romantic character who strives to realize himself, filling life with adventures, individual rebellion, breaking the limits.

Similar to an adult neo-romantic hero, a teenage character is quite often eccentric, close to the image of a weirdo known in the sentimentalist literature. He has a good sense of humor, irony and self-irony, he is prone to outrage and significant 'embellishment' of reality. Such is Jim Hawkins from *Treasure Island* by R.L. Stevenson. Fate makes him a participant of an unforgettable adventure on the ship 'Hispaniola' in a search for Captain Flint's treasures. It is Jim who always finds himself in the right place at the right time: he learns about the pirates' plot and helps his friends avoid death from the hands of the rebels, learns





from ‘the Robinson’ Ben Gunn where the treasure is hidden, runs aground a ship captured by pirates and, in the end, helps the team to end up the dangerous journey successfully. At the same time, Jim is noble and prone to mercy. Even in captivity, he boldly pronounces right into the pirates’ faces: *‘You have made yourselves fools, because from the very beginning all the threads were converged in my hands, and you frighten me no more than the last year’s snow. You want to kill me, you want to leave me alive, it’s your choice. But if you keep me alive, I will forget all the past, and when you are brought to trial for piracy, I will try to help you. So it’s up to you to make the choice. My death is of no use to you. And if you leave me alive, I will help you escape the gallows’* [7, P. 178].

Stevenson offers an image of a victorious teenager in the readable genre of an adventure novel, where he combined extremely productive themes in the English literary tradition – sea adventures and life on a deserted island. At the same time, he deliberately focused primarily on the teenage audience when he proposed a model of the protagonist’s evolution typical of an educational novel. It is not surprising that the novel was first published in the children’s magazine ‘Young Folks’. Jim went from an errand-boy in a tavern to a brave sailor who is ready to take responsibility for his life and the lives of his friends. As a true neo-romantic character, he, first of all, desperately struggles with daily routine and fills his life with the energy of true feelings, he truly believes in his dream. Second, Jim shows indifference to wealth. Among all the team members, he is the only one who considers the adventures experienced to be the greatest treasure: *‘The bar silver and the arms still lie, for all that I know, where Flint buried them; and certainly they shall lie there for me. Oxen and wain-ropes would not bring me back again to that accursed island; and the worst dreams that ever I have are when I hear the surf booming about its coasts or start upright in bed with the sharp voice of*





*Captain Flint still ringing in my ears: 'Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!! Pieces of eight!' [7, P. 220].* Thirdly, Jim is the hero who needs not only to test himself physically, but also to make a moral choice. Only then does he find his own identity.

Unlike adult characters, who often suffered defeat in the confrontation with the world, the neo-romantic teenage hero overcomes adversity and villains, even if only for a short time. This type of child-winner is close to the protagonists of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876). The text that became iconic for all American literature grew from the original idea of exposing the stiltedness of educational school stories with their ideal children's characters and the sermons.

Mark Twain, perhaps, like no other contemporary American writer, distinctly follows the traditions of enlightened optimism and the Rousseau concept of man, embodied in the image of a simpleton with his naive common sense. From this point of view, the books about Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn are not just a story of boyish rebellion, but also a symbolic interpretation of the Rousseau thesis about an uncorrupted heart viewed through the prism of the American dream myth. According to it, a simpleton who lives in harmony with nature and acts only according to the dictates of the heart wins practical success – prosperity. So the motif of treasure hunting, characteristic of the adventure genre gets a new sound in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The treasure found by the boys is both a reward for their virtues and a realization of the scenario of achieving life success as part of the American dream myth. Thus, Tom and Huck are turned into a new type of a cultural hero who seeks to change the stagnant world into a dynamic world that will live according to the laws of freedom and equality.

### **Author's variants of a demiurge child**

The tendency for mythologizing is extremely powerful both in American and in English neo-romanticism. This is also evident in mythologizing of the artistic space. Thus, while Mark Twain





creates a mythologeme of the 'great river' Mississippi, R. Kipling in *The Jungle Book* (1894) expands the literary 'geography' by artistically interpreting the exotic India. At the same time, he creates a self-sufficient author's mythology. In particular, in the stories about Mowgli, the child character finds himself at the center of the cosmogonic myth, where the structure and principles of world construction are reproduced. And the character himself acquires the features of a mythical demiurge hero.

The specificity of R. Kipling's author myth is its transformation into a social myth – an imperial myth. The gender myth additionally reinforces it. According to him, an empire created by a Man. can order the Chaos of the world. The writer offers a version of the latest 'sacred writing' – with Mount Sinai and the Law that appears after the first murder, with the history of transformation of a Human Child into a Messiah – the Son of a Man, showing attributes of all development stages of the humanity – from hunting, knowledge of fire, obtaining weapons to establishing 'social contract'. Accordingly, Mowgli is perceived as a demiurge child who, having learned about the 'alien' world, builds his own on its basis. Mowgli's world is a geographically specified territory (Indian jungle) where creatures of different orders coexist according to the common Law of the Jungle or the Law of the Pack. This world combines ancient ideas about the primordial harmony of nature, the position of Darwin's theory and the Enlightenment ideas of the emergence of the state. Researchers believe that the Law of the Jungle, which expresses R. Kipling's philosophy of the Order, became a kind of 'social contract' by T. Hobbes, but one that arose through a natural evolutionary path [2].

The story of the main character, 'adopted' by wolves, becomes the basis for both generalization and specification. After all, Mowgli's life in the jungle symbolically reflects the path of human development and at the same time embodies the complexity and contradictions of human nature. He is assigned a special role in





the system of characters created according to the mythological 'logics of the vertical'. Characters with certain functions and certain principles of naming are placed on each of the steps of the hierarchical pyramid. On the lower level there are educators Mowgli with common names Baloo ('bear') and Bagheera ('panther'), as well as Hathi ('elephant'), Nag ('cobra'), banderlogs ('bandar' – monkey, 'log' – people), Shere-Khan – 'Shere' (tiger). The 'middle' level is presented by those directly responsible for survival of a cub in the jungle: the she-wolf Raksha (the name of a demon in mythology) and the leader of the pack Akela ('however'). Names are individual, but still closely related to the nature of their existence. The higher third level represents Mowgli himself. And although Raksha explains that this name means, 'baby frog', researchers of Kipling's work are convinced that the author came up with it himself.

Mowgli's role is rather special: due to his position as a mediator between the world of animals and the world of people, he is able to rise above both the nature and the human civilization. Human concepts and feelings are projected onto his own universe, therefore mixing animal and divine, high and low is possible in it. This is how the Old Testament motif of a lost child, who is brought up in an alien environment and then rises to its peak, is transformed in *The Jungle Book*. This motif has inspired writers with its didactic and symbolic potential throughout centuries – from the spiritual novel about Josaphat and Barlaam to P. Calderon and J. G. Grimmshausen, authors of enlightening educational novels and, in fact, works of the turn of the 20th century. At the same time, Mowgli in Kipling's cosmogonic myth not only integrates into the 'alien' world, but also creates a new civilization like Prometheus. It is not surprising that the motif of stealing fire is also modernized in the work as the story of Mowgli's acquisition of the Red Flower. Thus, the child is put in the center of the evolutionary myth.





Children's images in the works of M. Maeterlinck are also connected with the understanding of the future and the awareness of the truth about the world. In the plays *The Blind* (1890) and *The Blue Bird* (1908), the concept of a 'child' is connected with the concept of 'blindness'. Their interaction determines the evolution of the author's concept of the world. 'Blindness' is the condition of modern humanity, which is wandering in the darkness without a guide. Faith in God and moral guidelines used to be this 'guide'. Having lost them, humanity especially acutely felt its insecurity before death. The drama *The Blind* shows blind characters as the embodiment of humanity that does not even know that the guide-priest is lying dead nearby, and keeps waiting for rescue in vain, because the sea tide is inexorably coming to the island. In the same way, in *The Blue Bird*, the fairy Beryluna speaks of modern humanity as blind: '... they see nothing and do not even guess about it...' [5, P. 343]. But in both works, an attempt to save the blind humanity is made by children. According to Maeterlinck, the concept of 'child' is the chosen one who approaches the mystery of the Unknown. The author as a fatal and faceless force that rules the world and is hostile to man designates the 'unknown'. In the face of the all-powerful Unknown, people are weak and lowly creatures. And only the chosen one can lift the veil over the mystery of the Unknown, but not solve it. Such characters are characteristic of Maeterlinck's early works. Researchers call them 'the warned'. These are usually images of women, cripples and children. Their perception of the world is dominated by intuition, so the rationalistic 'other' world does not hear them. Yes, the only sighted person in the drama *The Blind* is a child who is lifted above the crowd and turned to face the direction of the dangerous noise. But the baby will not be able to tell adults anything about what he saw. However, his reaction is quite eloquent: '<...> a desperate cry of a child is heard' [5, P. 77]. The motif of the mystery of the future that fills hearts with horror is typical for M. Maeterlinck's early





work. Whereas in the play of his late period *The Blue Bird* we can see a change in the author's vision of a tragic and hopeless world in the direction of finding ways to overcome the doom of human destiny and means of spiritualizing reality. In *The Blue Bird*, the mission of such searches is entrusted to children Tiltil and Mitil. On a symbolic level, they embody a renewed humanity, ready to search for happiness. Their fantastic journey in search of a blue bird resembles the exodus from Egyptian captivity to the Promised Land. In the case of Tiltil and Mitil, it is a way out of the captivity of ignorance to the awareness of true values and their own goals. Whereas, in Kipling's *Mowgli* the animals helped the hero to follow a similar path, Maeterlinck's heroes are helped by the souls of the elements, domestic animals, food, etc. Having visited the land of Memories, the Palace of the Night, the Enchanted Forest, the Land of Bliss and the Future, the children followed the path of enlightenment and saw what they failed to notice before. When they find themselves in their poor house again, they do not appreciate its visible side, but the feelings they experienced in it: *'Lord, how beautiful everything is here!'* [5, P. 444]. Their journey made them 'warned' of the truth that the 'blind' could not see. Thus, the concept of 'child' in *The Blue Bird* contains features of the mythological Moses and Prometheus. It is known that the poetics of Maeterlinck's dramas is largely determined by the features of the author's worldview, a component of which was 'Flemish mysticism'. Perhaps, in the actualization of such archetypal-mythological features, there is an attempt by Maeterlinck to give an artistic meaning to the evangelical call 'Be like children!'. It is perceived as a call to abandon the material, prioritize the spiritual, naive faith as a basis for perception of the world. When depicting children, the dramatist-symbolist not only expressed his piety towards childhood as a special stage of personality formation, but also drew a certain model for the future path of humanity as a whole.





### **‘Childishness’ as the origins of a character’s tragedy**

While Maeterlinck sees preservation of a person’s ‘childish’ perception of the world as an ability to rise to a qualitatively new level, to get closer to the understanding of the Absolute and to gain special enlightenment, in works of T. Hardy and O. Wilde such characters do not fit into the modern world with its pragmatism, cynicism and loss of moral guidelines. Usually they become outsiders and die, remaining true to their principles. Or, resorting to ‘mimicry’, they become the best among the worst representatives of the environment that is initially hostile to them, but they also fail. We consider ‘childhood’ to be another artistic model that emerged based on the Locke-Rousseau concept of a tabula rasa child. However, in contrast to the neo-romantic model, this is a tragic model of childhood as an optic of an adult character’s perception of himself and the world, which invariably leads to internal and external conflicts. Two polar versions of this model are Tess from T. Hardy’s novel *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* and Dorian from O. Wilde’s intellectual novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

In T. Hardy’s ‘new Victorian’ novel *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (1891), the main character is an illustration of the concept of ‘childishness’. In the author’s interpretation, this does not mean being infantile and unprepared for responsibility, but about naturalness. The story of Tess fits into the central theme of the novel – the theme of family history, developing which, and the author raises a problem of a new way for development of the country. In addition, he comes to a pessimistic conclusion: this path is destroying ‘good old England’. The main character of the novel is the symbolic face of this patriarchal-peasant England. Metaphorically reproducing the progress of humanity through the prism of the mythological degradation model as movement from the golden age to the Iron Age, T. Hardy depicts the history of his hero as a tragedy. Peasant Tess, finding herself in the estate of the D’Urbervilles, whom she considers to be distant relatives, leaves





her family and her social circle. That is, she breaks up with her natural environment. This can be interpreted as the beginning of an inevitable drama. After all, humanity, sincerity, naive belief in the best in people, inexperience – these signs of ‘childishness’, acquired as the best legacy of the patriarchal past, have ceased to be virtues in the author’s contemporary world. These virtues make Tess both vulnerable to human injustice and at the same time give her the strength to hold on in order to remain true to herself. But even in her environment, in the village of Merlot or on the farm, the girl is ‘different’ because she combines the ideal with the earthly in her essence: *‘She was a young woman in her twenties, whose spiritual and emotional growth had not yet been completed, and no event could have stamped on her that would not be obliterated by the passage of time’* [3, P. 85]. In this way, T. Hardy creates a special type of character at the intersection of realistic typification and mythopoetic conventions. Symbolically, one of the characters, thinking of Tess, gives her this characteristic: *‘This girl is a true child of nature!’* [3, P. 98]. One of the mythological characteristics of Tess is the full form of her name – Theresia. According to one of the versions this means ‘guardian, defender’. Its truncation symbolizes the loss of ‘protective’ functions, the archaic connection with the earth. Having lost these, the girl condemns herself to death. This is how mythological heroes who go into the outside world without knowledge of an ‘alien’ system of nominations die. We believe that the image of Tess with her emphasized femininity also embodies the type of woman-child (femme-enfant) that was popular in the literature of the century turn.

Instead, the genre of O. Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890; 1891) determined the specificity of the author’s interpretation of the concept of ‘childishness’ in the work. In an intellectual novel characters serve as an embodiment of certain ideas and usually do not contain any psychological characteristics. Yet, Dorian is a distinctly ambivalent hero. On the one hand, he is





an epitome of the new hedonism, a man who devotes his life to obtaining pleasure in any way, even criminal. On the other hand (at least before he adopted Lord Henry's life philosophy) he is a subtle aesthete. In the 1891 edition O. Wilde emphasized that he intended to reveal Dorian as a character, adding more details about his origin, aiming to describe his individual-psychological fall. And it's the story of Dorian's childhood, similar to biographies of Dickensian characters, that highlights his ambiguity. He is a loved child who was not accepted by his aristocratic grandfather due to social prejudices. It is he who becomes Dorian's guardian after the death of his parents. And since the very existence of the boy reminded him of the evil committed against his own daughter, Dorian receives no love, no idea of morality, no worldview instructions. These circumstances explain the ease with which the young man as a tabula rasa accepted the ideas of the artist Halward and Lord Wotton, and turned into a moral monster under their guidance. Not surprisingly, after their first meeting, Lord Henry thinks of Dorian Gray as potential material for experimentation: «... *he could be made into something wonderful. He has everything – charm, the snow-white purity of youth and beauty, the kind of beauty that the ancient Greeks captured in marble. You can mold anything out of it, make it a titan – or a toy*» [10, P. 33]. Thus, unlike Hardy, Wilde interprets 'childishness' in a different way: as Dorian's inability to think critically, to recognize evil and fight against it, as a prerequisite for becoming part of this evil.

### Conclusions.

(1) In their interpretations, the writers of the century turn period creatively interpret the concepts of previous eras in representing the image of a child and childhood, in particular the Lockie-Rousseau, romantic and realistic ones. The development or discussion of their key theses is conditioned by an author's aesthetic program and ways of realizing their ideological and artistic idea in a certain textual space.





(2) Different types of images of a child and models of their artistic interpretation vary within the limits of literal and/or allegorical ‘reading’. Unlike their predecessors, modernist writers often resort to metaphors and symbolization of the image of a child. This is due to the common ‘initial’ perception of them as being ‘different’, and therefore, as an image with a rich interpretative potential in works of various issues.

(3) For E. Zola and Guy de Maupassant, the ‘otherness’ of a child lies in being rejected by society due to their family belonging to the lowest hierarchical level or due to ‘expulsion’ from their own family as a micromodel of society. So the image of a child appears in the context of the theme of a disordered childhood as a reproach to the ‘disordered’ society with its double morality and cruelty. This is an image of a ‘miserable’ child.

(4) On the other hand, for the modernists, who focused on renewal of romanticism with its concept of individualism, the image of a child corresponded to the characteristics of a marginal character. Common tendencies for neoromantic writers included creating their own original mythological system; reproducing deep mytho-syncretic structures of thinking; modernization of mythological plots; revival of folklore and ethical original layers of national existence and consciousness; orientation towards the original archetypal elements of being. In the novel *The Treasure Island* by R. L. Stevenson, the mytho-concept of a child is an artistically realized attempt to contrast the respectable and rational-centric worldview of the Victorian era with an unengaged, unbiased view of the world. His goal is to see the world as it really is. The same is true for Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn in Mark Twain’s trilogy. At the same time, it represents the development of the enlightenment era concept of a ‘natural man’. This might be most fully embodied in R. Kipling’s formula ‘We are of the same blood – you and I!’, where a childishly wise character, close to the image of a demiurge, hides behind the mask of a naive simpleton.





M. Maeterlinck uses the mask of a child as a guide, someone who has the desire and strength to open new horizons.

(5) The role of various artistic models of the child in the works of the turn of the 20th century appears, first of all, in the transformation of texts into child-centered ones, that is, a children's theme is formed as a self-sufficient one. Secondly, the image grows to the concept of 'childishness', which acts as a metaphor for the crisis worldview in the works of T. Hardy and O. Wilde.

The image of a child as a subject of study has significant prospects. In particular, the analysis of the typology of images of the child in the works belonging to a military theme appears to be a relevant topic for further research.

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§3.3 THE CONCEPT OF THE OTHER AND ITS SEMIOTIC CODE IN RHCP LYRICS (Tombulatova I.I., Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University)

**Introduction.** In the age of an ongoing fast transformation of an everyday lifestyle, social media and further development of communication all over the world it must be quite useful to get to study some of the main socio-cultural concepts and their reflection in mass-culture phenomena, among which the concept of the Other is one of the most actual nowadays and it is studied by a number of sciences to improve communication and understanding the role of the communication by people and their perception of themselves and others in the process of communication.

Actually, usually the scientists analyze the texts of classic / popular literary works, the critics of different epochs, the interviews of influencers and authors, but it may be rather beneficial to get to the texts which have already had their impact on several generations by means of popular songs` lyrics, for instance. Such texts are often considered to be “simple”, by the way, still, this short research is focused on an attempt to dwell on the concept of the Other in the lyrics of RHCP, as this band is beloved by the public from the 1980s (the first album – “The Red Hot Chili Peppers”, August 10, 1984) and recently they have released a new album (“Unlimited Love”, April 1, 2022), that is a great news for all of the fans worldwide. Moreover, on March 31, 2022 the band got their Star in the Hollywood Walk of Fame in the Category of Recording. On August 29, 2022 the band got two awards at the MTV VMA ceremony for the Best Rock Video (“Black Summer”) and Global Icon Award. Next album of the band is to be released in October 2022. Due to these facts it is, obviously, clear that for almost forty years some concepts, ideas and senses were revealed to lots of people and were absorbed by the audience of the band so they are quite influential for their public and beloved by the

