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Горбылева Д.Р., ТГУ, магистрант

Gorbyleva D.R., TSU, master student

Зооморфия образа Сибири в современной англоязычной литературе: на материале романа Т. Клэнси “The Bear and The Dragon” (2000)

Zoomorphic images of Siberia in contemporary English literature: Tom Clancy’s “The Bear and The Dragon” (2000)

Рассматриваются зооморфные элементы, найденные в романе политическо-го триллера Тома Клэнси «Медведь и дракон», где мы наблюдаем традиционные изображения животных России и Китая. История развивается на основе локуса Сибири в 1960-х годах. Специальный зооморфный код воображаемой территории состоит из изображений оленей и волков. Поскольку зооморфные изображения являются неотъемлемой частью формирования образа Сибири в английской литературе, необходимо проанализировать, как англоязычная аудитория оценивает регион и его место на ментальной карте другой зарубежной культуры.

Here is attributed the zoomorphic elements found in a political thriller novel by Tom Clancy “The Bear and The Dragon”, where we observe the traditional animal images of Russia and China. The story develops on the basis of the locus of Siberia in the period of 1960s. A special zoomorphic code of an imagined territory is made up of deers and wolves images. As zoomorphic images are the essential part of Siberian image formation in terms of English literature, it is necessary to analyze how the English-speaking audience estimates the region and its place in the mental map of other foreign culture.

Ключевые слова: Сибирь, воображаемая география, зооморфизм, зоо-образы, Том Клэнси, имагология.

Key words: Siberia, imagined geography, zoomorphism, zoomorphic images, Tom Clancy, imagology

Научный руководитель: Никонова Наталья Егоровна, д-р филол. наук, доцент.

The North of Russia has become the object for scientists from all fields due to its unique climate, landscape, history and cultural heritage. A group of Siberian researchers from Tomsk State University is united by the direction named “Trans-Siberian scientific path”, in which the study of oral culture occupies a special place. Having done the front-line analysis of modern English literature, we selected thirteen works as novels of detective, historical, scientific and documentary genres in which we can observe a tendency to zoomorphism in the depiction of Siberia. According to S.G. Vatletsov, zoomorphism is “the use of zoological denominations with the identification of the properties and characteristics of animals by man in his life and activity, i.e. the creative rethinking of genomic and phenotype representatives of zoo-world”¹.

The aim of the research is to determine functions of zoomorphisms in creating the image of Siberia in English fiction of the 1990s-2010th based on the material of

Tom Clancy's techno-thriller "The Bear and The Dragon" (2000)². The method of the research combines traditional literary techniques and imaging analysis.

Tom Clancy's techno-thriller "The Bear and The Dragon" (2000) is considered to be one of the author's most popular works (The Guardian: Top 5 of the best T. Clancy's novels) and received positive reviews of both American critics and readers. The plot of the novel is built on the confrontation of three states – Russia, the United States and China, seeking control of oil deposits in the Siberian region during the 60s of the XX century. Although, the genre is focused primarily on a dynamic plot, zoomorphic code is presented quite clearly: the world of T. Clancy's novel is filled with images of animals.

There are two dominant images of animals appearing in the title of the book – "Dragon" and "Bear". Based on the plot of the novel, they should be associated with China and Russia. The image of the Bear participates in creation Siberian region culture, as it is known, the image of "Russian bear" was popular in the American media during the Cold War. In T. Clancy's novel a bearish zoomorphism becomes more complicated.

In the fifth chapter titled "Headlines" two military men are discussing the new location of oil in Siberia and when analyzing contacts between the USSR and the United States, Sam Sherman says that Russians share nothing and others rarely manage to get into the territory of the USSR, to which George Winston asserts:

"So take a rifle and bag yourself a bear, make a nice rug," Winston offered.

The conversation continues with Sherman's memories of how he shot three polar bears and made rugs for his house in the mountains. The polar bear is depicted as a slow, stupid, unnecessary animal that can be easily traced and killed. This episode shows that the US militaries consider the region to be a place without any cultural value that can be used to gain profit.

Absolutely an opposite image of the bear appears in the twelfth chapter called "Conflicts of the Pocket" in the conversation between the protagonist, President Ryan, and the Minister of the Interior. The latter states that to increase the rating of the president it is necessary to conclude an agreement with the owner of the talisman "Smokey Bear" who is also the patron of a national park. This person is popular and respected by US citizens and the president himself "could only look at this park on TV". Smokey Bear is a mascot of the US Forest Service, created to educate society about the dangers of forest fires. In American culture the image of this animal has earned the love of both children and adults. In 1952 the Congress issued a special act stated the use of the image of Smokey to educate children and warn them of forest fires.

Thus, in the American novel there is a dialectic of the bearish zoomorphism. On the one hand, we can find an image of a polar bear associated with cruelty, stupidity and valuable fur. On the other hand, there is a good bear – Smokey designed to carry knowledge and safety for children.

To describe the wild and distant Siberia, the author uses other zoomorphic words. Here we can find a rapid image of a deer. In the T. Clancy's novel the reindeer appears in those parts where the history of the oil wells development in Siberia is described:

*“Some of the semi-nomadic tribes in the area, who had **made their living for centuries by herding reindeer**, had brought into a government office some shiny yellow rocks. Few people in the world have been unaware of what such rocks mean, at least for the preceding thirty centuries, and a survey team had been dispatched from Moscow State University, still the nation's most prestigious school. They had been able to fly in, since their equipment was far lighter, and the last few hundred kilometers had been done on horseback, a wonderful anachronism for the survey team of academics, **who were far more used to riding Moscow's fine subway system.**”*

Northern reindeer are included in the figurative system of the work to describe underdevelopment, backwardness of the region, and, at the same time, its desired wealth. This semantics is emphasized by showing a contrast with Moscow citizens who came by horse (not by the metro). The image of Russia in the novel falls into two parts: Siberia and Moscow.

Another zoomorphic image found in the novel is a wolf. For the first time it is mentioned when reporting recent news from Siberia: having found an open oil field in Siberia as well there happened to be many caves with wolf pelts of the Renaissance times or even Egyptian Pharaohs which are estimated at millions of dollars.

*“The **wolf pelts** were hanging inside the old soldier's hut looked on first inspection to be sculptures by Renaissance masters, or even artisans of the Pharaohs of dynastic Egypt, they were so evenly coated, and then the explorers found that each **pelt** weighed a good sixty kilograms, and there were thirty-four of them!”*

Although, the paragraph is not about the wolf itself but about its skin, this episode creates an aura of mystery around the past of Siberia, where the ancient geological and cultural values are located. Clancy creates a zoomorphism which depicts the highest degree of human lust for money because there is no any understanding of the cultural significance of the ancient treasure.

Here is a quote by a Siberian policeman who is trying to trace the location of wolf pelts.

*“Actually, I find the gold report the more interesting. I must see one of these gold-encrusted **wolf pelts**. Something for Prokofiev, eh? Peter and the GoldenWolf.”*

“Petya and the Wolf” – a symphonic fairy tale for children written by Sergei Prokofiev in 1936. This tale was popular in the USA in the late 40s due to the Walt Disney's screen adaptation of it. T. Clancy implies into the novel this ironic comparison with the same imagological function and as a result, the pelt of the murdered wolf

is personification of the riches of Siberia, human greed, lack of culture. For the American author and a reader these become a sign of Russian mentality and an attribute of Siberia as a territory.

On the basis of the study it can be concluded that zoomorphism is one of the most important a plot- and form-building element that creates the image of Siberia in English-speaking works. Interacting with other literary categories it allows understanding how the region appears in minds of a foreign culture. In Tom Clancy's techno-thriller "The Bear and The Dragon" the tendency to zoomorphicize the image of Siberia is productive due to the incorporation of images of a bear, a deer and a wolf. The image of Siberia in the novel acquires oriental features acting as a place where the American dream becomes a reality due to the resource riches of the region. However, in the figurative system of the novel zoomorphism is intended to reveal not only narrow-mindedness of local residents but also the underdevelopment of those who represent national interests in hunting for Siberian riches: Americans, Russians and Chinese.

¹ Vattelsov, S. G. *Systematics of zoomorphic vocabulary and its English-Russian equivalence*. PhD Thesis. Nizhny Novgorod: Lobachevsky State University of Nizhni Novgorod, 2001. – P. 6.

² Clancy T. (2000). *The Bear and The Dragon*. Berkley, 2000. – 1152 p.

Дулеба, М., УК в Братиславе, студент

Duleba M., UK in Bratislava, student

К вопросу рефлексии морализма в романе Флэнн О'Брайена *О водоплавающих*

On the reflection of moralism in Flann O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds*

В статье иллюстрируется позиция Флэнн О'Брайена в мировой литературе как маргинализованной фигуры в рамках т.н. малой литературы, а также предложен анализ литературного героя Дермота Треллиса в романе „О водоплавающих“ в аспекте потери культурных и моральных ценностей в эпоху модернизма.

*Following study illustrates the position of Flann O'Brien in the context of global world literature as a marginalized figure bound to the sphere of small and „provincial“ literature. Study involves analysis of literary character Dermot Trellis in *At Swim-Two-Birds* in relation to the loss of moral and cultural values in the epoch of modernism.*

Ключевые слова: Флэнн О'Брайен, *О водоплавающих*, морализм

Key words: Flann O'Brien, *At Swim-Two-Birds*, moralism

Научный руководитель: Отрисалова Люция, канд. филол. наук, старший преподаватель кафедры англистики и американистики, философский факультет, университет им. Коменского в Братиславе