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"Us" versus "Them": The Image of Self and Other in Ukrainian Fiction and Non-fiction Literature about the Ongoing Russian-Ukrainian War[3]

Introduction

War undoubtedly influences people, their activities, and emotional states, impacting all spheres of social, economic and cultural development. Despite their cruelty, absurdity and immense human toll, conflicts can have some positive influence on societies. Wars have inspired writers, poets, artists and composers to create immortal works of art. Anderson points out that the purpose of war literature is not only to draw attention to sociopolitical problems but to transform views and reality by its power, "At its best, war art – literature and art – is witness to the power of word and image and for the human craving for meaning. And if one of the functions of art is to disturb the status quo, to force us to view the world anew, to consider our capacities to build or tear down, then we must welcome those disturbances".[4] In this research article, we seek to examine the images of *'self'* and *'other'* in literature about the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, to analyze discursive strategies and linguistic realizations employed to draw distinctions between "yours" and "ours", "friends" and "enemies". The research drans on literary sources of both fiction and non-fiction – the novel

Internat by Serhiy Zhadan (2017) and the collective volumes of non-fiction reportages – *Veni, vidi, scripsi: the history LIVE* (2015) and *Veni, vidi, scripsi: War. Life defacto* (2016).

Firstly, the fundamental dichotomy between "us" versus "them" is a basic impetus of human nature. As Brewer states, "human beings have two powerful social motives: a need for inclusion that motivates assimilation of the self into large, impersonal social collectives, and an opposing need for differentiation that is satisfied by distinguishing self from others".[5] It is noteworthy to mention, that in contemporary scholarship, identities are examined as non-discrete and rather fluid categories. For instance, ethnicity is not considered "a property of a group; it exists in between and not within groups".[6] In other words, people define who they are, doing so by not only relying on common features that unite them but on the characteristics that differentiate them from others. Wars undoubtedly draw lines of distinction between portrayals of "us" and "them" in the accompanying war literature. Moreover, as Yuval-Davas points out, peacetime identity construction differs greatly from identity construction in times of military conflict: "A dichotomous, zero-sum way of constructing a boundary between 'me' / 'us' and 'them' is, indeed, characteristic of situations of extreme conflict and war in which the individual's fate is perceived, at least by hegemonic discourses of identity, to be closely bound with their membership of a particular collectivity".[7] Yuval-Davis illustrates this manner of diffusion between "me" and "us" by mentioning cases of parents sacrificing for the sake of their children and soldiers sacrificing for the salvation of their homeland.

This research applies methodological tools of critical discourse studies, namely the sociocognitive approach. The pioneer of this method, van Dijk points out, "language users (including collective ones such as organizations)

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[5]   M. Brewer, *Ingroup identification and intergroup conflict: When does ingroup love become outgroup hate* [in:] *Social identity, intergroup conflict, and conflict reduction*, ed. by R. Ashmore, L. Jussim, D. Wilder, Oxford 2001, p. 21.

[6]   T. Eriksen, *Ethnic Identity, National Identity, and Intergroup Conflict: The Significance of Personal Experiences* [in:] *Social identity, intergroup conflict, and conflict reduction*, ed. by R. Ashmore, L. Jussim, D. Wilder, Oxford 2001, p. 46.

[7]   N. Yuval-Davis, *Theorizing identity: beyond the 'us' and 'them' dichotomy* [in:] "Patterns of Prejudice", vol. 44, nr. 3, p. 276.

speaking as members of ideological groups typically use the 'political' pro-noun *we* (as well as *us*, *ours*, etc.) to refer to themselves and fellow group members. Similarly, they refer to members of other, competing or domi-nated groups in terms of *they* (*theirs*, *them*). Given the overall polarization between ingroups and outgroups, its pronominal expression is the pair *Us* vs *Them*"[8]. Therefore, the main tasks of this study are as follows: 1) to ap-ply implications of social identity theories and discourse analysis tools to an empirical analysis of the examples of Ukrainian fiction and non-fiction literature about the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war and 2) to reveal dis-cursive and lexical patterns of self- and other-representations within the military conflict.

Self and Other in Serhiy Zhadan's Novel *Internat*[9]

Serhiy Zhadan's 2017 novel *Internat* was depicted by the media as the most anticipated prose about the war in Ukraine and raised a wave of re-views, written by professional literary critics, as well as by average readers. We will not delve into the literary value of the novel since the core goal of our analysis is to focus on the depiction of the images of "selves" and "oth-ers". Our analysis is based on linguistic methods, using mainly discourse analysis tools. However, literary reviews can be a fruitful source for this research because they shed light on the main symbols of the novel, its time and space constructions, and character development.

It is also important to elaborate upon the profile of the writer himself as he is a person of prominence. Serhiy Zhadan, a Ukrainian, was born in the Donbas region in 1974 and later moved to Kharkiv to attend univer-sity. He presently lives in Kharkiv, a city in Eastern Ukraine that is close to the contact line. Though Zhadan is not directly involved in the Rus-sian-Ukrainian war, he regularly visits the zone of the enduring conflict to

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[8]   T. Dijk, van. *Critical Discourse Studies: A Sociocognitive Approach* [in:] *Methods of Criti-cal Discourse Studies*, ed. by R. Wodak and M. Meyer, London 2016, p. 73.
[9]   Serhiy Zhadan's novel *Internat* will appear in the English translation in 2019. Since it still in the process of publication, N. Trach translated all quotations from the Ukrainian. To avoid excessive footnotes, the novel quotations are given in parentheses.

help the Ukrainian army and victims of war. Furthermore, he is a head of "The Charity Foundation of Serhiy Zhadan".

From linguistic point of view, *Internat* does not appear to be typically constructed. On the one hand, the main character Pasha is a Ukrainian language teacher who lives in a small village near the occupied territories. It seems that by choosing such a profession for the protagonist, the author wants to put an emphasis on the language issues in the region, but the case is more complicated than it seems at the first glance. Pasha is apolitical and although he is a teacher of Ukrainian (a state language), he chooses Russian as his language of everyday communication. Pasha does not watch the news, shows no interest in the political situation, and when people ask him what he teaches at school, he answers "*A bit of everything*" (Internat, p. 42). On the other hand, Zhadan avoids raising language issues in his novel. All characters in the novel speak pure literary Ukrainian (apart from a few examples when the mixed Russian-Ukrainian code called *Surzhyk* is spoken), in spite of the fact that Donbas is predominantly Russian-speaking region. Readers can understand the linguistic complexity of the conflict region only from metalinguistic comments, which the novelist includes frequently. Since the novel is written in literary Ukrainian, the author often provides metalinguistic comments for Russian-speakers, like: "*Peter speaks so in **relatively acceptable Russian**, still not disguising his accent*" (p. 27); "*His language is strange, sounds like Russian, literary, without dialects, but **somehow alien**" (p.151); "*He **speaks grammatically correct, without an accent, it is obvious that he is not local**. He wants to understand intentions of local population*" (p. 240). Occasionally, Zhadan comments on Ukrainian-speaking characters as well: "***translates from Russian into Ukrainian**, tries his best, as if he was at an exam*" (p. 25); "*He **speaks Ukrainian, moreover, pure Ukrainian**. It seems like he is a student*" (p. 319).

It is essential to bear in mind that readers perceive the situation through the lens of the main character, who is a linguist by profession. Observing accents, mistakes, and intonations is the part of his everyday routine and his professional identity. On the other hand, linguistic details serve as identity markers, signs that could define which side of the barricades a particular person chooses to stand on. The division of Ukrainian society is not a simple problem that can be reduced to black or white – Ukrainian and Russian speakers; the local population is divided ideolog-

ically, rather than by language issues. Pasha often hesitates about the language he should use in responding to a certain question, since hiding his identity allows him to survive the wartime conditions and carry out his main objective – to take away his nephew who is currently in a specialized school for disabled kids on the occupied territories. The permanent state of linguistic alertness leads to a constant emotional state of panic, "*And most importantly – Pasha **cannot understand at all, which language the combatant is speaking**. Words are leaping out of his mouth so torn and broken that there is no intonation, no accent; he is just screaming as if he wants to cough out a cold. Pasha panics: the combatant should have spoken in state language. A month ago, there was a military base from Zhytomyr, and soldiers were often making fun of Pasha, sliding from one language into another. **They or not they?** – Pasha feverishly hesitates, looking into the combatant's angry eyes that reflect the extent of Pasha's fright*" (p. 19). Language is incidental and, at the same time, is crucial and central – this paradox penetrates through the whole text. The main character thinks in linguistic terms. Reflecting on his pupils and their life choices, Pasha sadly concludes: "*What could I say to them? … **What can I teach them, besides grammar? Everybody decides by her/ himself what to do, with whom to stay**…*" (p. 82-83). After all, language as a key point of culture is more notable than conflicts, "*Checkpoints will be destroyed, but **grammar rules will persevere**️*" (p. 155) and "*to know the language is useful*" (p. 217). Thus, language performance becomes one of the central symbols of the novel and serves as the key to the dialoging that unlocks understanding.

After literary critics analyzed the novel, they agreed that Zhadan avoids using definite naming to an extent. For instance, Saba points out that it is important "…to draw attention to the attempt to disorient the reader by not referring to specific parties of the conflict, specific flags, specific emblems".[10] Saba critically estimates this author's strategy, which "…provokes the reader to define ours and others by her/himself".[11] In *Internat*, the characters and locations often do not have proper names; the author often uses periphrases instead, such as "***the flags of Pasha's country***" (p. 17), "***people with***

[10] A. Saba, *Ŝo vdalosâ ì ne vdalosâ Žadanu v „Ìnternatì"?*, https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-41982889, [14.11.2017].
[11] *Ibidem.*

weapons" (p. 40). On the one hand, this stylistic technique forces the reader to constantly reconsider which conflict party is being described in any given moment; while on the other hand, it assists in adding universal value to the text and is consistently applied throughout the novel. At the beginning of story, readers could observe an indefinite landscape of the conflict zone: "*State flags were washed out with rains, colors faded, dissolving in grey autumn air as snow does in the warm water*" (p. 16-17). These depressive landscapes correspond with the general political situation: "*You cannot understand now whose checkpoints are here*" (p. 53) and to people: "*It is unknown who they are, there are no flags, you cannot distinguish the emblems on the car and Pasha is not good at recognizing emblems anyway; dark, wary, holding weapon in their hands, soldiers stand there and look directly at them…*" (p. 58). Indefiniteness stimulates fear, especially in the context of contact between civilians and troops, with the latter at times described as people in "*incomprehensible clothes with unknown chevrons*" (p. 187). The culmination of indefiniteness is a sort of non-existence: local civilians behave shily and calm to remain invisible. The central character uses the same strategy, "*Pasha answers, as always, reluctantly that it does not concern him; that nobody satisfies him; that he is not on anyone's side*" (p. 124). Therefore, indefiniteness as a stylistic device appears to turn into a style of absence, "*…apartments without voices, streets without lights, squares without birds*" (p.125). The protagonist even rejects the war itself: "*Nobody is fighting against me, – Pasha denies drily because he already tired of this talk. – I am not on anybody's side*" (p. 159). Koval'ov explains that Zhadan tries to depict the emotions of war victims by using a feeling of uncertainty in his descriptions: "Perhaps, evil and enemy are so blurred for expressing the condition of a man fleeing from the war, going through the gluttonous fingers of death, for whom everything is hostile and alien, and fear is the only authority".[12]

In one of his interviews, while reflecting on the novel, Zhadan explicates, "First of all, it is the representation of the war from the point of view of the civilian population. It is an attempt to show this war not through

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[12]   D. Koval'ov, *Otočene ditinstvo: recenzìâ na "Ȉnternat" Sergìâ Žadana*, http://timeua. info/post/kultura/otochene-ditinstvo-recenz-ya-na--nternat-serg-ya-zhadana-08748.html, [30.08.2017].

the lens of soldiers, journalists or politicians, but to present it from the perspective of the ordinary Ukrainians who live near the frontline".[13] The writer also describes the main themes of his novel, remarking that "it is about their choice and their lack of choice, their position and the lack of their position, the need to take responsibility and the lack of habit to take responsibility. It is about this whole complex of extremely complicated and painful issues, which disturb and bother many people".[14] Thus, the primary resistance in the novel is not the Ukrainian army versus the Russian army (plus pro-Russian separatist combatants), but civilians pitted against the opposing militaries. Troops are alien to civilians, no matter on whose side they are fighting, what country or authorities they defend and represent, "…*nobody trusts the militaries here* …" (p. 18); "…*they do not expect any-thing good from the militaries here*" (p. 239). Therefore, it is not an easy task for the reader to understand what conflict party is being described, though certain lexical markers would help. The lexeme *army* is used to describe the Ukrainian soldiers since it includes semantic components of regular military units. Another lexical marker, which is used to define people is *local*. It will not necessarily tell the readers something about the political views of the individuals but at least decreases the level of indefiniteness to a point. When you are local, somebody should know something about you. The locals show a kind of resistance to anyone who is not native to the region, no matter whether they are a civilian, soldier, journalist, or international observer, "*Behind green metal gates, **some local** is looking out – frightened, brutal, he is looking at the newcomers with suspicion: **who are you and why did you come here? And the main question is – will you shoot again?**" (p. 250).

The divisions between locals are also not clear, often redefined and renewed in dialogues. In conversations between locals and the military, a game of pronouns, "ours" and "yours", not only displays their political alignment but can carry dangerous consequences. These short, often absurd dialogues appear to be the novel's essential symbols– finding a solution means talking about problems. Finally, the most notable concept of the novel is "ours" (to be exact the Ukrainian lexeme *svoii* that has no di-

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[13]   D. Kuriško, *Žadan pro "Ïnternat": prìvodâči vìjnu u dìm, ti rizikueš vtratiti bagato*, https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-42185504, [06.12.2017].
[14]   *Ibidem*.

rect equivalent in English). Ours serves as a code that helps to go through checkpoints; it is a core element of identity, and finally, the reason to fight.

Dichotomy "Friend or Foe" in Literary Reportage from the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) Zone

The anthologies *Veni, vidi, scripsi: the history LIVE* (2015) and *Veni, vidi, scripsi: War. Life defacto* (2016) have also been chosen as material for this research. Each of the books contains ten examples of literary reportage from the 3rd and 4th all-Ukraine literary contest "Samovydets" ("Self-publish books") dedicated to the Revolution of Dignity and the war in Ukraine. Among the authors are beginners and famous journalists alike from all over Ukraine. Each of them was affected by this war in some way: some fought in volunteer militias or in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, some lost their relatives, others were forced to leave their home behind. A Polish journalist Piotr Andrusieczko points out that war as a theme attracts journalists because "literary reportage allows one to not only analyze the causes and the course of the conflict, but it allows one, as well, to realize what is happening with the people who, in most cases not of their own free will, found themselves dragged into the whirlpool of the war and fell victim" (2016, p. 260). These pieces of literary reportage – are an attempt to understand what life *de facto* looks like, at a time when the country has found itself in a state of an unannounced war, with some of its territories annexed, and the real state of things versus the government's account one are completely different. "Here you can find texts about missing soldiers and their mothers' desperate searches for them; about the daily life and atmosphere in Crimea and the Donetsk region; about battle operations, as well as what it feels like to fall into the hands of separatists; how people learn to live life 'afterwards', whereby such phrases as 'leave home' and 'return home' acquire a totally different meaning," – says the project's curator Olesia Iaremchuk.[15]

The choice of terms in the analyzed examples of reportage (*a war between the countries, [military] occupation, a war conflict, a hybrid war* etc.)

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[15] *Almanach "Veni. Vidi. Scripsi. Vijna. Žyttâ de facto"*, https://litcentr.in.ua/news/2016-11-19-5119, [10.12.2018].

results in certain plot and interpretation schemes that determine the contesting parties (adversaries and allies, friends and enemies, locals and refugees, partisans and collaborators, and finally "fiends" and "foes") and the nature of their relations.[16] Thus, the Russians (citizens of Russia) are the enemies fighting on Ukraine's territory; along with them – the members of the DNR (Donetska Narodna Respublika/Donetsk People's Republic) and the LNR (Luhanska Narodna Respublika/ Luhansk People's Republic), illegal armed groups, the militants and separatists in their employ, and finally, collaborators. The residents of Donbas, those Ukrainian citizens who refused to leave and found themselves on the temporarily occupied territories, risk falling into the collaborators' group should they demonstrate allegiance to the so called DNR-LNR. One of the character's in Aliona Shevchuk's exposé "Crimea. Russia. Forever." talks precisely about the traitors and collaborators who became his greatest disappointment, and later – his enemies, "*Nariman says, everywhere you find both patriots and traitors. The neighbors, the Shevchenkos – are devoted 'vatnyks', another family – ethnic Russians, who have been running away from their Motherland, and in the end, it kept catching them*, and, one can, likewise, find collaborators among the Crimean Tatars" (2016, p. 200).[17] The latter are treated by the character with the greatest disdain because a 'friends' betrayal hurts the most, "*They are unworthy bastards to me. I can't breathe the same air with them*" (2016, p. 200).

The oppositional "friend or foe" is linked to the category of possessiveness and is verbally represented by the possessive pronouns and lexical units whose semantics point to belonging, kinship, ownership, or estrangement, as well as stylistic figures of speech. For example, "*And a bit later, near Donetsk – OURS! It's the kind of feeling when after two months you see the Ukrainian flag!*" (2016, p.16) Sentences with exclamation marks convey emotional expressiveness at the speech level. A formula distinguished by O. Selivanova which manifests this semantics of possessiveness through

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[16] H. Âvors'ka, *Mova jak skladnik konfliktu* [v]: *Media Studies: Meždisciplinarnie issledovaniâ media. Materiali naučno-praktičeskoj konferencii 16 maâ 2016 hoda*, Charkiv 2016, s. 105.

[17] Since analyzed anthologies had not been translated into English, L. Pidkuimukha translated all quotations from the Ukrainian original text. The first number is the year when anthology *Veni, vidi, scripsi* was published, the second one is the page number.

"a possessive pronoun indicating the attitude of a certain possessor + a noun as an object of possessiveness"[18] has become the basis in the category of "possessiveness". For example, *our artillery*. At times, the authors just state the pronoun *OUR [people]*, however the context makes it clear who is meant. In the Ukrainian-language mindset, referring to objects as "ours" is well-established and can be either distinctly positive or neutral. By the same token, the attitude of Ukrainians to "*not ours*" can be negative or neutral. The following emotional and evaluative lexical units have been used in the texts to refer to enemies, triggering clearly expressive imagery: *scum, animals, bandits*, etc. For example, "*I've absolutely no idea where all this scum came from*" (2016, p. 29). "*Serhii wants to build a concrete wall to cut off Donbas. "Only those animals who are for the 'DNR' have remained there*" (2015, p. 117).

Even more semantic shades of scorn are added through the usage of the determiners – *this, that, these, those* etc. – *this scum, those animals*. Adversaries are identified through the usage of the following lexemes: *savages, terrorists, terrorists-Russists, rebels-terrorists*, etc., which clearly outlines them as enemies. For example, "*Not far, near the occupied building of the town's prosecutor's office, some camouflaged savages were hanging around and emotionlessly watching their henchmen fire shots at the neighboring district*" (2016, p. 13). The definition of an enemy as a military adversary is always connected with the external threat to the country. The lexeme *enemy* is often used with such lexical units as: *the war, a battle, an attack, an adversary, victory* etc. At the same time, some background knowledge helps recipients understand what enemy is being referred to, even if they are not explicitly mentioned. For example, "*You coldly watch them go, and suddenly remember the time, when during a night watch you caught the enemy's group with the thermal imager*" (2016, p. 91).

The choice of lexeme becomes a sign of belonging to either side of the conflict. This is how the semiotic mechanism works, whereas the semantic meaning is of a lesser importance. In fact, it is not quite as important whether a person calls the members of the conflict party "vata" or "siepar", although certain connotational and semantic differences can

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[18]   E. Selìvanova, *Possesivnost': verbalìzacìâ ì kohnicìa* [v]: "Movoznavčij visnik. Zbìrnik naukovich prac'", vip. 14-15, 2012. s. 267.

be observed here. What is of a greater significance is the fact that the person does not refer to those DNR-LNR members as *rebels*. And, vice versa, those who choose to use the word *rebels* demonstrate their position in the following way: he/she is among those supporting the DNR-LNR, who embody "friends", while Ukrs [Ukrainians], fascists are "foes".[19] Because of this, the lexeme "rebels" is written in quotation marks in the analyzed texts to demonstrate whose side the narrator has taken. "*A '"rebel' with a Kalashnikov steps from behind the booth as we're having a conversation.*" (2016, p. 210) Hence, quotation marks serve as a means of creating different semantic and stylistic shades of the sentence. Evaluative words and lexical units with a negative connotation have been used to create a "friend/foe" image. In the analyzed pieces of reporting, the enemies are depicted as degenerate and lumpen elements of society. "*Unfortunately, Donbas has never been short of drug addicts. Most of them are now supporting the enemy*" (2015, p.280). According to the authors, this "status" dictates the separatists' behavior.

A "friend" is somebody who not only takes part in certain activities along with the possessor, but is also linked by a common task, shares their views, has the same target, is a like-minded person, a supporter, a companion, an ally, a team-mate, a brother. These are the lexical units used to identify a friend: *a sworn brother, a countryman, a friend, a bratishka* [little brother/bro]. For example, "*After Petrivtsi, the sworn brothers sent me to Slovakia for medical treatment, and when I returned, me and Diukha, a countryman of mine, decided to join the volunteer troops. A company commander V. wanted to get the car, so he took his friend Gruzyn*" [a Georgian] (2015, p. 163). The semantic nucleus of the lexical units used to identify a "friend" in the analyzed texts is automatically accompanied by positive information. Adjectives such as *honest, aspiring, noble*, which act as epithets and carry a positive evaluation in their semantics, contribute to an additional character reference: "*He's the most outstanding person of the last decade. He is more than just a human to me […] He's so close to us, he is an equal, and won't act as a generalissimo. A true commander. Biletskyi is like*

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[19]   H. Âvors'ka, *Mova vijny âk skladova konfliktu (šlâchy transformacïï ukraïns'koho medìjnoho diskursu)* [v]: *Stratehìï transformacïï i prevencïï prikordonnich konflìktìv v Ukraïni. Zbìrka analityčnich materìalìv*, L'viv 2015, s. 382.

a regiment's father. Honest, aspiring, noble" (2015, p. 126). However, there were cases when brothers, friends, and relatives found themselves on different sides of the war and that is when they became "foes". One of the characters recollects: "*I had a brother on the other side. [He] used to go to those separatists' meetings. After one of the beatings on the square, he said I should be happy I was alive. And I said, I no longer had a brother*" (2016, p. 30). This is when family relations undergo transformations that are built on the kinship of spirit and not blood. The attributes referring to the dichotomy "friend or foe" are manifested through the antonyms accordingly *light [bright]-dark, clean-dirty.* For example, "*He stayed in Urzuf for a few more days watching on the Internet the videos and pictures of a freed Kramatorsk, which was washing off the dirt of the occupation in the summer rain. On the bright day of July 15*th*, 2014 [I] got on a bus to Berdiansk-Kramatorsk*" (2016, p. 17). Moreover, the universal nature of relations in the ambivalent pair "friend or foe" is expressed through a tight connection with such antagonistic notions as good/evil, power/freedom, enemy/hero, allegiance/betrayal, honor/corruption, etc.[20]

In most of the analyzed examples of literary reportage, the line between "friend" and "foe" is clearly marked via a string of negative descriptions of "foes" or "not our" [people], and positive images of the Ukrainian soldiers. However, in Mykyta Mai's "Donetsk Shadows" the line between "friends" and "foes" is blurred. The journalist does not deny the fact that there are violent people fighting on the side of the so-called DNR/LNR, who at times cannot control themselves and act unpredictably: "*The scariest thing was that you couldn't negotiate with such people because they heard nothing*" (2016, p. 2016). Interestingly, such characters primarily use rude and obscene language. In contrast, there is another character introduced by the author, a supporter of the DNR/LNR, who apologizes for the behavior of his "boys" and acts rather politely. The author resorts to humanizing the enemy yet again when describing another "rebel" named Abdula: "*After meeting Abdula things suddenly became much more cheerful and quiet. Originally from Afghanistan, he was a rather polite, intelligent and interesting person who often helped people like us*" (2016, pp. 231-232). Mykyta Mai is

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[20]   H. Nasmnìčuk, *Svìj-čužìj v romanì "Čornij voron" V. Šklâra* [v]: "Fìlolohìčni nauki", vip. 14-15, 2015, s. 45.

originally from Donetsk region and it is assumed this fact gave root to his ambivalence towards members of the so-called DNR – the author does not divide the fighting parties into good or bad, black or white.

Obviously, in their daily lives, residents of Donbas speak Russian, which has been put in the text through a phonetical approach, i.e. Russian words, or rather, the way they are pronounced, are spelled using Ukrainian letters. This approach is also used to demonstrate that whoever is speaking is a stranger, and their opinion is different from the author of the materials. This is colorfully illustrated in an excerpt from Marta Barnych's text "The Happy Must Stay at Home". "*In the Soviet Union, Ukraine used to be the richest and the finest […] It's all because of zapadentsi* [people from the western parts of Ukraine], *they are to blame for all of this, [I] hate them… Why is Parashenka* [the way a surname Poroshenko would be pronounced in the Russian language] *killing people?*" (2015, p. 270) It is worth mentioning that it is only the pro-Russian people, those reminiscing about the Soviet past, who speak Russian in the analyzed pieces of literary reportage. All the rest – those patriotically-minded residents of the Donetsk region – are Ukrainian speakers.

The correlation between the Russian and Ukrainian languages is addressed in the report by Mariia Pedorenko "New Life by Old Rules", which describes life in Crimean villages after the annexation. The author's text is written in Ukrainian, whereas the characters' direct speech is in Russian conforming to the current spelling rules. In this case, it is impossible to draw a line between "friends" and "foes" based solely on the language distinction. Despite the fact that most soldiers who take part in the military actions in Donbas speak Ukrainian,[21] here is a high proportion of those who use Russian. This factor makes it impossible to draw a "friends/foes" line based on the language of communication. However, ideological differences are of a more significant importance in these instances. Alla Pushkarchuk, author of the report "Turn Right", leaves the phrases by her Russian speaking "sworn brothers" unchanged, although she herself speaks Ukrainian and does not switch to Russian when addressing them.

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[21] For details see *Konsolidacìâ ukraïnskoho suspìl'stva: šlâchi, vikliki, perspektivi. Informacìjno-analityčni materìali do fachovoï dikusiï 16.12.2016.* Kiïv, http://razumkov.org.ua/upload/Identi-2016.pdf, [19.11.2017].

This resulted in the bilingual dialogues in the text. Russian-speaking military men fought as well in the volunteer militia, and a contingent came precisely from the Donetsk region. The author even highlights a special "Donetsk charm" of their speech: *"[He] spoke Russian with a Donetsk hue, flavoring his speech with the words like 'korotche' [to cut a long story short], 'chista' [really], 'kankretna' [truly], 'vse diela' [not a big deal] and 'vashce' [in general]* (2015, p. 115).

To summarize, in the analyzed anthologies we come across examples of literary reportage penned by members of the military actions as well as civilians or military correspondents. With regard to this fact, different variations of the 'friends/foes' opposition emerged. For the military men, the fighters of the adversary units, the so-called DNR and LNR, are their enemies; for the civilians, their enemies are military units on either side; for the right-winged – the left-winged, for the nationalists – the liberals, etc. As it constitutes a way for a writer to share their outlook, the dichotomy between "friend or foe" may become a leading tool in resolving the problem of an individual and national identity. Division into friends and enemies is carried out not according to language or ethnical-national principle, or even blood relations, but rather through the criteria of ideological kinship, mutual views, and a social position.

Conclusion

The dichotomy of "self" and "other" is an integral part of any ethnic community, which allows outlining its ethical and moral boundaries. Moreover, this universal cognitive opposition is considered a key factor that determines the structure and mentality of a particular group. The line between "us" and "them" becomes more perceptible in times of extreme conflicts or wars. Whereas different types of texts – fiction and non-fiction literature about the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war in the Donbas region – have been chosen for analysis, the peculiarities of the representations of "ours" and "yours", "friends" and "enemies" in both kinds of texts have been expanded upon. In Serhiy Zhadan's novel *Internat* (2017) the war is shown from the civilians' perspective. That is why the main opposition seems to be between civilian inhabitants of the region and the soldiers,

but not between the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Russian army or pro-Russian separatists. In contrast to Zhadan's depiction of the conflict, the collective volumes of non-fiction reportages – *Veni, vidi, scripsi: the history LIVE* (2015) and *Veni, vidi, scripsi: War. Life defacto* (2016) described the war through the lens of militants and journalists. According to these reports, the Russian troops and the illegal armed groups of the so-called DNR and LNR are considered to be on the other side of the barricades. Furthermore, collaborators of the illegal groups as well as the residents of Donbas who live in the temporarily occupied territories are also referred to as enemies. While in Zhadan's novel there are no clear-cut definitions of the war parties, the border between "friends" and "foes" is specifically marked in most of the aforementioned anthologies. There are negative descriptions of the "enemies" and "them" and positive images of "friends", namely the Ukrainian militaries. In both the selected fiction and non-fiction literature, "friends" and "foes", "we" and "they" are divided rather by ideological differences than by language issues or blood relation. For instance, in the series of literary reportages, the bilingual Russian-Ukrainian dialogues between soldiers on the same side of the barricades are depicted. Moreover, there are pro-Ukrainian residents of Crimea, who exclusively speak Russian. On the other hand, the phrases of pro-Russian locals and separatists have been expressed in the text through a phonetical approach that depicts the speaker as a stranger and "other". Since the protagonist in Zhadan`s *Internat* is a linguist by profession, he thinks in linguistic terms. Moreover, the author also makes meta-linguistic comments concerning Russian as well as Ukrainian speakers. In this novel, linguistic details serve as the markers of identity. Whereas the Ukrainian speakers could be perceived as the "other" by the separatists and Russian troops, they occasionally have to disguise their identity and switch to Russian.

Thus, it is important to highlight that the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war has significantly influenced Ukrainian literature, both in fiction and non-fiction, and triggered a search for new topics and forms of expression. The discursive strategies and linguistic realizations analyzed in this article were chosen by the authors and provided them with an opportunity to describe the images of "self" and "other" in the clear distinction between "friends" and "enemies".

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"Us" versus "Them": the Image of Self and Other in Ukrainian Fiction and Non-fiction Literature about the Ongoing Russian-Ukrainian War

Summary

The article is devoted to the depiction of the "self" and "other" images in fiction and non-fiction literature about the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war. The sources chosen for the study consist of coverages by Ukrainian journalists and the novel "Internat" by Serhiy Zhadan. The focus has been placed on the analysis of the discursive strategies and linguistic realizations the authors had chosen to draw a line between "us" and "them". In both types of texts, "friends" and "enemies" are not divided by blood relations or language issues, but by ideological differences. Therefore, the article introduces a discussion about the portrayal of "self" and "other" as a dichotomy in different types of texts. In our future research, we intend to concentrate on the comparison of the aforementioned dichotomy in other discourses and genres (films, social media texts, news, interviews, and legislative texts). The comparison of these depictions in different cultures and historical era could also be fruitful for further investigations.

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