

## SECTION 21. PHILOLOGY AND JOURNALISM

---

**Aliona Matiychak**

Department of Foreign Languages for Humanitarian Colleges  
*Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Ukraine*

---

### **IMPERIAL DISCOURSE IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL GLOBALIZATION: LITERARY RECEPTIVE ASPECT**

Despite rather developed conceptual framework for receptive analysis of the historical phenomenon of imperial discourse [4; 5; 6], the problem of reading the imperial code in fiction remains open. An indisputable argument in literary studies is the fact that such notions as empire, metropolis, province and periphery have passed into metaphysical, culturological categories. This idea allows to expand the perspective of research, in particular to consider the complex issues of relations between the new European metropolis with its peripheral parts in the context of cultural globalization, which has covered all spheres of modern life including fiction and art. After all, preconditions of the current cultural globalization began to appear in the 19th century with the incipience of imperialism. Among the colonial states the British Empire was the most powerful and not only in Europe but all over the world with colonies in all major continents, although the role of other states (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, China, Japan, etc.) and empires (including Dutch, Russian, Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian) in this process should not be underestimated.

Interestingly enough, even with the collapse of the world colonial system, the entrenched imperial consciousness continued to view former colonies and remote provinces only as objects of cultural and economic dependence on the ruling metropolis, as it was eloquently demonstrated in British literature. The impact of the heyday of the British Empire with its peculiar imperial vision and philosophy can be traced in the works of such "imperial" writers as Rudyard Kipling and Rider Haggard, who touched upon the problems of Empire and colonization in their works. The "imperial" poetry was written by Sir Henry Newbolt (1863-1938), Alfred Austin (1835-1913) and Alfred Noyes (1880-1958). Besides echoes of Empire are to be found even in the fiction by such 19th century authors as Joseph Conrad, Robert Luis Stevenson and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Predominantly in the Victorian novel (Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins and others) imperial themes were virtually silenced, as the primacy was given to the metropolis.

It is quite clear that a receptive response to such a pronounced imperial discourse appeared; it was the desire to dispel the myth of the "savagery" of all non-Europeans, their eternal backwardness and inability to accept the achievements of modern civilization. In this context, the attempts of modern writers to "break the code" of imperial culture, to prove that the periphery is also worthy of making a significant contribution to the cultural development not only of the metropolis but also of world literature and eventually get rid of the inferiority stigma.

Currently, the concepts of province and empire lose their original meaning and in a complex system of interactions merge into an information conglomerate, "global network derivation" [1]. In particular, British fiction of the first decade of the 21st century is represented by a new generation of postcolonial cosmopolitan writers with multicultural experience and genre diversity,

challenging traditional notions of postcolonial literature by creating new multicultural narratives and overcoming imperial stereotypes. With the development of globalization, the concept of the center in relation to the former metropolises is significantly blurred, decolonization affects the culture of the newly independent states, but the imperial theme does not disappear, it is only reduced to artistic interpretations of writers from colonial or peripheral regions who write in imperial language and reflect Western culture in their own way.

Among these writers are many second-generation emigrants, such as Monica Ali (b. 1967), a British writer of Bangladeshi origin, author of the socio-psychological novel "Brick Lane" (2003), which reveals the theme of national and gender identification of emigrants. The author presents to the reader the so-called "slice of life" of a girl from Bangladesh in English society. Another British writer of Indian descent, whose mother is from Jamaica - Zadie Smith (b. 1975) wrote five novels "White Teeth" (2000), "The Autograph Man" (2002), "On Beauty" (2005) and "NW" (2012), "Swing Time" (2016); she also addresses the theme of alterity and multiculturalism, which is gradually changing the "face" of old Britain, filling it with linguistic polyphony and a new mentality, through the mixing of cultures by emigrants from India, Pakistan, Jamaica etc. In particular, broad subject matter of "White Teeth" by Zadie Smith touches upon much deeper issues than those caused by the British Empire's colonial policy, including social rationalism, extremism, and Islamic fundamentalism. However, scholars and critics agree that this novel is nevertheless full of "a sense of humor, a genuine psychological analysis, lively, witty dialogues, authentic love stories and unobtrusive historical digressions" [3]; it "consolidates peace and tolerance" [2], asserts the desire to live and create a new history. By the way, the novels of these writers were shortlisted for the Booker Prize awarded to authors from the Commonwealth, which includes almost all of its former dominions, colonies and protectorates, for the novels written in English (Monica Ali "Brick Lane" and Zadie Smith "On Beauty"). Apparently, the combination of history and the present time realities, the cultural pluralism of these and many other writers not only enrich the literary tradition of Britain, but also reveal new horizons of purely British culture.

It should be noted that British multiculturalism is not only the coexistence of many different cultures in British society, but also the desire of the British themselves for a deep understanding of other peoples, cultural rapprochement, passed through their own subjective experience. The vast majority of contemporary authentic British writers have gained this experience by living in African, Arab, some European and other countries around the world, teaching English or working as volunteers. In particular, Patrick Neate (1970), having spent an academic year in Zimbabwe, returned to Africa in his epic trilogy "Musungu Jim and the Great Chief Tuloko" (2000), "Twelve Bar Blues" (2001) and "Jerusalem" (2009), rethinking the British experience of colonization of African countries. By the way, acquaintance with other cultures also inspired such novelists as Tom McCarthy (Czech Republic), China Miéville (Egypt, Zimbabwe), David Mitchell (Italy, Japan, Ireland), Susanna Clarke (Italy, Spain).

A new vision of the historical perspective in the plane of fiction distinguishes Philip Hensher's novel "The Mulberry Empire" (2002). In his novel, Philip Hensher (1965) raises the issue of the disgraceful defeat of the British Empire in the First Afghan War (1839-1842), which was not very pleasant for the British. Reproducing the colouring of the Muslim world in the first half of the 19th century, using the images and stylistic devices of the adventure novel, Hensher imitates and even parodies the manner of such masters of adventure genre as Haggard and Kipling, and, thus, creates his literary pastiche. Literary and historiographical allusions, in particular to the "Big Game" – a geopolitical rivalry between the British and Russian Empires for prepotency in South and Central Asia in the 19th – early 20th centuries, and quoting R. Kipling emphasize the genre-style imitation. The past events of real history depicted in the novel reflect the present and possibly the future, giving the novel a timeless quality. Hensher's pastiche is an integral attribute of a literary experiment aimed at revealing immanent resources of the text, expanding its stylistic and genre boundaries.

After all, the change of historical projection in understanding of Empire as a culturological category is reflected in British literature through metamorphic genre forms and original themes. Currently the proclivity of contemporary British fiction to the processes of cultural and artistic exchange, now reach such a level that many ethnic factors make up a single cultural substrate. It is obvious that globalization leads to denationalization i.e., reducing the role of nation-states in a broad cultural context, where a global information space – decentralized and virtual – is deprived of belonging to a certain territory (metropolis or periphery), but in which national cultural specificity does not disappear; it acquires a new sound and meaning, enriching the world cultural treasury of mankind.

#### References:

1. Gorelov A.A. Globalization as an objective tendency of world development [Electronic resource]: Age of Globalization. 2009. No. 1. Pp. 79–90. URL: <https://www.socionauki.ru/journal/articles/129906/>
2. Hrytsenko H. Tsikavi kul'turni doslidy / Hanna Hrytsenko. URL: [https://vsiknygy.net.ua/shcho\\_pochytaty/review/1093](https://vsiknygy.net.ua/shcho_pochytaty/review/1093).
3. Trofymenko T. Zadie Smith / Mul'tykul'turni «Bili zuby» / Tetyana Trofymenko. URL: <http://artvertep.comnvertep.artvertep.com/news/8818>.
4. Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, eds. New York: Columbia UP, 1994. – 570 p.
5. Edward Said. Culture and Imperialism. New York: Vintage, 1993. – 380 p.
6. Prem Poddar, David Johnson. A Historical Companion to Postcolonial Thought in English. Columbia University Press, 2005. – 574 p.