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GOTHIC TRADITION OF THE MYSTIC EXPERIENCE TRANSFORMATION IN EUROPEAN LINGUOCULTURE

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The presented studies may help to view and analyse the mystical not only as a conceptual category, but also from a functional and semantic perspective, providing the opportunity to distinguish certain verbal characteristics of literary artistic texts as non-fiction sacred sources originated from different epochs of human cultural development. This study aims at disclosing cultural and functional specifics of the mystical in the English Gothic prose as a genre feature, compared to the Ukrainian mystic literature in its traditional explication and transformational period of a new era. The research methods are based on a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach to the study of semantic entities united by the common categorical content. The method of contextual analysis is focused on the immediate context of the linguistic phenomenon, descriptive, content and discourse analyses were applied for systematisation and generalisation of functional and culturally-biased pragmatic specifics of the above-mentioned conceptual category. The synthesis of the Gothic and English literary tradition determines the functioning of verbalized representations of the mystical as a central category of philosophical and aesthetic world perception. Each nation has its own unique "flavour" of mysticism and its recognisable features. The appearance of a new hybrid genre, namely bizarre literature, provides an opportunity to highlight the importance of language means in creating a resistant tool of human mind and transforming cognitive mechanisms of a newly coined world perception. In Ukrainian literature it obtained the features of a distinctive phenomenon, genetically-rooted in the culture of popular laughter and focused on deliberate discrepancy between the content and the form to be of the utmost importance in the modern world.

Key words: conceptual category, Gothic novel, cognition, mystery, genre, folklore study.

Галич О. Б. Готична традиція трансформації містичного досвіду в європейській лінгвокультурі.

У статті містичне осмислене не лише як поняттєва категорія, а й у функціонально-семантичному аспекті, що дає змогу виокремити специфічні вербальні характеристики художніх текстів як сакральних нехудожніх джерел, створених у різні епохи культурного розвитку людства. Метою дослідження є виявлення культурно-функціональної специфіки містичного в англійській готичній прозі як жанрової домінанти у зіставленні з українською містичною літературою в її традиційному вияві та з урахуванням трансформаційних процесів новітньої доби. Методологія дослідження ґрунтується на комплексному міждисциплінарному підході до аналізу семантичних утворень, об'єднаних спільним категоріальним змістом. Застосовано метод контекстуального аналізу, спрямований на вивчення безпосереднього мовного оточення досліджуваного явища, а також описовий, контент- та дискурс-аналіз для систематизації й узагальнення функціональних і культурно зумовлених прагматичних характеристик поняттєвої категорії. Синтез готичної та англійської літературної традиції зумовлює функціонування вербалізованих репрезентацій містичного як центральної категорії філософсько-естетичного світосприйняття. Кожна нація має свій унікальний «колерит» містицизму та власні характерні риси. Поява нового гібридного жанру, а саме жанру химерної прози, дає змогу підкреслити важливість мовних засобів у створенні надійного інструменту людського розуму та трансформації когнітивних механізмів нового сприйняття світу. В українській літературі містичне набуває ознак самотнього феномену, генетично вкоріненого в культурі народного сміху, з акцентом на свідомій невідповідності між змістом і формою, що набуває особливої актуальності в сучасному культурному контексті.

Ключові слова: *концептуальна категорія, готичний роман, містичне, пізнання, жанр, фольклористика.*

Introduction

For a long time mysticism and the mystical have been viewed within the framework of philosophy, cultural or religious studies, and literature. Linguistic investigations of these phenomena are not numerous: the concept of mysticism as a fundamental principle of irrational cognition belongs to the philosophical trends that emerged in the late XVIII and early XX centuries. During this era the irrational worldview became widespread in Europe due to the aggravation of social crisis symptoms. It contributed to role of anthropological and historical constants of rational and irrational are subjected to radical revision. The 20th and 21st centuries are marked by a renewed interest in the global and local mystical traditions for those not indifferent to the problems of human and society's spiritual life. An important factor in the growing interest in this problem is the context of the 21st century, when mysticism has left the boundaries of religious doctrines and moved into different spheres of everyday consciousness. The lack of knowledge about the true nature of mysticism in most people gives rise to fear or inexplicable fascination with this phenomenon.

The unity with the world is not so much a result of cognition as an act of self-consciousness. The leading role in it belongs to the subjective interpretation of the irrational, to which the concept of mysticism belongs. An attempt to limit this field of research to the synchronic approach is obviously unproductive. The multidimensional approach to the linguistic, cultural and genre investigation of fundamental conceptual categories remains a focus of scholars' attention.

Theoretical background

The scientific analysis of the nature of the mystical was initiated by C. Jung. According to his conception, understanding the essence of the mystical occurs on the edge of the conscious and the unconscious and requires the involvement of both the highest spiritual and the material foundations of the psyche. Comprehension of the profound meaning of existence shows the limited knowledge about it, which "does not explain existence" (Otto, 2003, p. 54). Being in its inner content is much richer than the object world, and a person, contrary to scientific explanations, begins to believe in the world of the supra-subject, whose distinctive feature is mystery. Irrational forces that elude rational cognition are the basis for being (Mudragey, 2002, p. 57). According to A. Schopenhauer, no matter how irrational the world is, there are three ways to understand it: art, mysticism and philosophy (Schopenhauer, 1995, p. 635). The unity with the world is not so much a result of cognition as an act of self-consciousness. The leading role in it belongs not to reason, but to the subjective interpretation of the symbols of the supernatural world, intuition, which in its integrity of spiritual being asserts a specific, unique sphere – the sphere of the irrational (Iliin, 2004, p. 4), to which the concept of mysticism belongs.

In most encyclopaedic editions the interpretation of the concept of mysticism is divided into several groups:

- a set of phenomena that facilitate human connection with secret beings or forces;
- various forms of occultism, such as magnetism, magic, theurgy, mediumistic or spiritualistic phenomena;
- the doctrine of the inner unity of the human spirit with the absolute Spirit as an adequate knowledge of the ontological basis of the world through the individual experience of spiritual self-assessment.

The explanation of this concept in the Encyclopaedia Britannica is also illustrative: "To define is to limit. No definition can cover all aspects of mysticism" (Britannica, 2010, p. 707).

In the Ukrainian literary artistic and philosophical discourse, the mystical has traditionally been interpreted as a religious phenomenon. Thus, I. Franko pointed out the irrationality and inexplicable nature of mysticism as a phenomenon, and claimed that love for God and people is its main driving force (Franko, 1980, p. 40). The same view is held by I. Kachurovsky, who sees mysticism as a sense of the individual's unity with the Absolute (Kachurovsky, 2008, p. 676). In the contemporary Ukrainian worldview and literature in particular, the mystical insight, being a means of self-expression, is transformed into a formal artistic device. It rather explicates a hidden deception, irony, and, quite often, implied sarcasm. According to ethnographic research, the mystical creatures of Ukrainian folklore tend to evoke mixed feelings in Ukrainian-speaking recipients.

Thus, despite the intuitive approach to understanding the concepts outlined, an attempt to interpret them does not yield the desired result. Instead, the definitions of the mystic become vague and blurred.

Methodological notes

The research methods are based on a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach to the study of semantic entities united by the common categorical content. The method of contextual analysis is focused on the immediate context of the linguistic phenomenon, descriptive, content and discourse analyses were applied for systematisation and generalisation of functional and culturally-biased pragmatic specifics of the above-mentioned conceptual category.

The data of the study embraces 14 novels by the most prominent representatives of the English Gothic literature of the XIX century (H. Walpole "The Castle of Otranto", A. Radcliffe "The Italian", M. G. Lewis "The Monk", W. Godwin "St. Leon", etc.) and 10 Ukrainian stories belonging to folklore mystery genre (XIX – XXI century) selected by the method of continuous sampling.

A comprehensive analysis of the semantics of any category is impossible without the use of dictionaries based on historical principles. Let us focus on the etymology of the adjective "mystical" in order to have a clear idea of the origin and stages of development of the corresponding concept in the English language: 1275-1325 c.e.-English *mystik* < Latin *mysticus* < Greek *mystikós*, 'mysterious', 'secret'; cf. also *mýst(ēs)* 'involved in a sacrament', 'initiated'; *myein* 'to close (eyes, mouth)',

'to be ready to enter a trance' + *-ikos, -ic* (OED). In addition, a core feature of the mystical lies in its practical, empirical nature. For instance, M. Eliade stated that the experience of mystical ecstasy is incorporated into the human essence. A person has a psychological need for mystical experiences that accompany any experience of the Sacred. Such experience is unified in its sense, however, with the change of culture and religion, its interpretation and evaluation change. In this context, the typology of mysticism by W. Stace, who identified five of its universal characteristics, is in the focus of our scientific interest:

- 1) a sense of objectivity, or reality (that which is provided by experience);
- 2) a sense of bliss, joy, happiness, satisfaction;
- 3) awareness of the holiness, sanctity, divinity of what is perceived;
- 4) paradoxical experience, contradiction;
- 5) impossibility of its expression (Stace, 1960, p. 132).

This list, fully or partially, is represented in scholarly works of researchers of mystical experience (Almond, 1990; Blum, 2009; Katz, 2004; Otto, 2003). It is worth recalling that for a long time mysticism and the mystical have been considered within the framework of philosophy, cultural and religious studies, and literature. It is for this very reason linguistic studies of these concepts are few and far between, because the concept of mysticism as a fundamental principle of irrational cognition belongs to the philosophical trends that were formed in the late 18th and early 20th centuries. During this era, the irrationalist worldview became widely spread in Europe due to the exacerbation of crisis symptoms in the development of society. It is about changes in the placement of accents, when the place and role of anthropological and historical constants of the rational and irrational are subjected to reconsideration.

It should be noted that the 20th and the 21st centuries are marked by renewed interest in the mystical traditions of the world, which are of interest not only to scientists but also to all those who are not indifferent to the problems of the spiritual life of man and society. An important factor in the growing interest in this scope is that in the context of the 21st century, mysticism has left the boundaries of religious doctrines and moved into different spheres of everyday consciousness. The lack of knowledge about the true nature of mysticism for most people creates fear or an inexplicable fascination with this phenomenon. The main problem analysing the mystical in a text concerns the contradictions surrounding the possibility of verbalizing this concept. Based on the definition of apophaticism (from the Greek *αποφατικός* – negative; the doctrine that the Supreme Reality in its

ultimate depth is incomprehensible and indefinable by means of human language and concepts, scholars argue that mystical experience is an exclusively internal phenomenon, so any verbalization is only an interpretation (Stace, 1960, p. 29-30). In our opinion, mystical texts are aimed at the formalised reproduction of certain information, but at the reader's involvement in the sphere of the unreal, using primarily emotional rather than rational strategies of influence. Such texts, due to their experimental nature, are composed to the reader's ability to understand what is being said, at least on an intuitive level, to cause excitement, reaction to the object of perception to feel mystical experience.

An attempt to limit the acknowledgement of the specifics of the mystical to the synchronic aspect seems to be unproductive. A more perspective approach to understanding the nature and originality of the conceptual ground of the mystical in terms of its genesis and development allows us to perceive and understand both early and later realizations of the mystical in philosophy, literature and language, taking into account various forms of its transformations.

The spiritual history of mankind demonstrates two fundamental positions regarding human relationship to the invisible reality. The first way is magical, the second is mystical. Mysticism can also be seen as a form of magic, based on the technique of penetrating into the secret supernatural world. However, the definition of mysticism, which is associated with spiritualistic and magical phenomena, requires a clear distinction between occult science and mysticism itself. Magic and mysticism are opposite vectors of human activity, oriented towards immersion in spiritual reality. The fundamental difference between them lies in the ultimate goal, namely: magic seeks to gain knowledge of the spiritual world for the purpose of pragmatic application (Shabanova, 2005). Mysticism, on the other hand, through apophaticism as a necessary condition of the mystical orientation, rejects pragmatism and seeks to overcome subject-object distinctions. Magic as a complex spiritual and socio-cultural institution with a history dating back tens of thousands years history, is in close connection with various aspects of human activity: economic, social, and spiritual. The study of magic is of great theoretical interest as an independent problem, since, having emerged at the initial stage of social development and having passed through centuries and millennia, magic continues to exist as a specific phenomenon with its own structure and its numerous functions in society.

Magic can be seen as a special kind of energy or force that acts similar to physical energy, but, due to its specific nature, requires certain conditions for its

perception, observation or use. Magic is also seen as a set of practical actions, that serve as a means to gain a specific result. All such actions are actually a representation or affective expressions. At the same time, the magical is a property of a thing, or a property of the connection between a person and a thing, because magic has always been intended for humans, although it was not created by them. Traditionally magic has existed as a person's belonging, received from a human being or human-like creature.

In all its forms, magic contains three key ingredients. In a magical act magic always embraces certain words, performs a certain ritual action and refers to a person performing the ritual. Therefore, the main components of magic are formula, ritual and performer. A magical act is not emerged of an abstract idea of a universal power that is consistently and independently applied in specific cases in different real-life circumstances. Each type of magic appears out of its own situation and its moral spirits, determined by the spontaneous course of thought and human reaction.

The mystical, which in a certain way represents the forms and organisational principles of the thinking activity, is viewed as a result of generalising the experience of the historical development of cognition and social practice that reproduces the relationship between being and consciousness. It should be noted that during the evolution of ethnic culture and its cognition, there are shifts in the categorical cognitive mechanisms. Based on the philosophical and cultural studies of mystic-magical participations (Cavendish, 1990), we note that, despite the correlation of mystical practices with shamanic and orgiastic cults of ancient communities, mystical experience arises only when religious knowledge approaches the concept of the transcendent absolute, and the development of logic provides the possibility of a conscious distinction between the logical and the mystical. For this very reason mysticism flourished in countries with a high level of philosophical culture - India (Upanishads), China (Taoism), Greece (Platonism). Later, the appeal to mystical cults was observed in Europe (especially at the turn of the century), and also marked periods of social crisis, changes in ideological and artistic guidelines, in the cultural and social life of the country, which was manifested in the national language and literature.

Culture and language enable us to dominate the world through concepts. However, this domination requires the integration of conceptual insight with creativity, so called "thinking activity modeling". After all, creativity is a process in which the content of a priori unconscious archetypes develops and passes into

consciousness. Therefore, throughout the historical period of its existence, mysticism has acquired various forms of embodiment in numerous art forms, serving as a tool for the realisation of aesthetic and creative tasks. Mystical images, having emerged at the level of archaic thinking, where they were almost the only means to explain the origin and essence of objects, natural phenomena and social life, with the development of mythological consciousness, acquire the status of a defining characteristic of the mythopoetic type of thinking. It is noteworthy that, along with religious, philosophical and cultural studies, the analysis of the nature of the mystical was carried out in close connection with folklore and mythology (the legends of King Arthur, Celtic and Scandinavian mythology, etc.) It should be noted that scholarly research focused on the irrational perception of ancient communities, due to the objective process of transformation of their cultural environment with the confrontation of two antagonistic forces: pagan beliefs and Christian dogmas (Buniyatova, 2003, p. 155-174). The problem of determining the conceptual basis of the mystical in the process of irrational cognition has become relevant in the study of the specifics of large-scale artistic systems. In this aspect a special attention should be drawn to the peculiarities of the Medieval worldview, which had a significant impact on the development of the Gothic perception in England:

- the dominant role of the church in society;
- the spread of anti-realist ideas;
- spiritualism (from Latin *spiritualis* – spiritual) - an objective and idealistic doctrine according to which the spirit (soul) is the fundamental ground of the world;
- appeal of art to the sphere of the unreal;
- the subjectivity of mystical experiences and the belief based on them (the possibility of direct human communication with the supernatural);
- limited logical thinking;
- a tendency to fatalism.

The model of the world in this dimension is a kind of code, and its role is to concentrate and generate meaning. In our opinion, the generation of a new content is the prerequisite for defining the mystical as a genre feature of Gothic fiction.

Thus, let us turn to the achievements of literary studies. A selective analysis of the trends in the development of the European literary process makes it possible to identify the peculiarities of the genre specifics of prose works of the period under study, which greatly contributes to the establishment of the conceptual basis and

functional status of the mystical in English early Gothic novels. The emphasis is on Middle Age literature, where representations of the mystical are manifested mainly by the chivalric epic, and its elements provide the basis for the deployment of "artistic time and artistic space". The manifestation of elements of the mystical worldview is implicated by fatalistic motives associated with the loss of a beloved one, personal wanderings, the destruction of social ties, and the approach of an inevitable eschatological catastrophe. Examples of such literature include the Old Germanic heroic epic, Icelandic sagas, troubadour lyrics, and chivalric novels of the Breton cycle.

According to O. Matvienko, the most productive and organic synthesis is that of the Gothic principle with Romanticism and Neo-Romanticism. Romanticism fully unfolds the mythopoetic potential of the classical Gothic, making a large-scale mythological revolution, that involves not only traditional images and motifs of Christian and medieval legends, but also ancient, Jewish and other mythological themes with their radical reconsideration (Matvienko, 2000, p. 17). The Romantics were also attracted by the metaphysical profoundness of the Gothic, its strict moral pathos, its focus on the psychological dimension of existence, and the infernal theme, which in the Romantic interpretation is supported by the apology of the Godhead. Developing the interest of Gothic literature in the shadow side of the psyche, Neo-Romanticism opens up the sphere of the subconscious, explores the mechanism of its work, and the connection between the images generated by the subconscious and reality.

The eighteenth-century era of rationalism was doomed to create horrors, looking for new ways to stimulate the imagination and influence the senses. Therefore, it is relevant to study and analyse the mystical in the context of one of the national forms of Romanticism, namely, English fiction, since the nature and creative aspect of the mystical in it originates in the English national tradition – the pre-Romantic Gothic novel. It is within this literary trend that the mystical becomes the central category of philosophical and aesthetic perception of the world.

The religious abstraction of good and evil is frequently replaced by a mysterious and sophisticated, poeticised and fantastic world of supernatural beings – elves, ghosts, spirits, powerful, but not omnipotent, immortal, but open to passions and suffering, and the most significant, not subject to an unambiguous moral assessment in terms of traditional criteria of good and evil. These beings are

strangely related to humans: they can communicate with them and even subordinate them to their own will, at least for a while.

Another source of the mystical, along with the mysterious, is fear. The analysis of the philosophical, social and psychological aspects of this emotion allows us to reflect on its universal conceptual basis: fear is a long-term or short-term emotional experience inherent in any person, regardless of their cultural background. In the English Gothic prose of the 18th century, fear is perceived as a feeling of a higher level: "The feeling that the majesty of nature arouses in us, takes possession of us and is called astonishment; and astonishment is a state of our soul when all its movements freeze in anticipation of horror. None of the feelings can deprive our brain of reason and the ability to act to the extent that fear is able to" (Burke, 1998, p. 57-58).

The need for this emotion evokes as a necessity to abandon the "trivial" reality. Mystery is associated with fear. The perception of potential danger and the anxiety it engenders are crucial to the aesthetics of the horrific. The disclosure of a mystery determines the tension of the development of a dramatic Gothic plot,

where fear is its driving force. The mystical in the Gothic was associated with the instruction to experience horror when confronted with the world as a manifestation of universal Evil.

It should be noted that the emphasis on the mental and emotional states of the characters is not accidental. It is aimed at achieving a certain aesthetic impact on the reader. In our view, novelists deliberately turn to mystical imagery to create the desired effect. This setting fully reflects a new perception of nature as aesthetic experience, which is explicated in the works of the famous English publicist E. Burke (Mishra, 1994, p. 19-44).

In other words, the move towards various kinds of mystifications, the irrational and unreal, the violation of the sense of proportion and the boundaries between the natural and the supernatural, which is determined by psychological perception, defines the specifics of the Gothic novel genre, allowing the reader to clearly distinguish it from other literary lines.

Results and Discussion

Each nation has its own unique "flavour" of mysticism and its quite recognisable features: in Britain it is gloomy horror and hopelessness, in France – a medieval background and a tendency to symbolism, and in Germany this genre of literature is philosophical and metaphysical. As for the Slavic ethnic groups in

general and Ukrainians in particular, their attitude to mystical events is ironic and sometimes humourous, which is not conducive to the creation of Gothic prose in Britain. However, Ukraine did not lose interest in mysticism, although literary works of this genre appeared quite late – in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries and had a tangible ‘taste’ of symbolic nature. In this context, it is worth mentioning the works of Ivan Franko, Stepan Vasylychenko, Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko, and Panteleimon Kulish. It is clear that the development of socialist realism in Ukrainian literature during the Soviet era vigorously excluded any step towards mysticism. Therefore, the main achievements of Ukrainian writers in this field are represented mainly by works from a century ago, which are occasionally compiled into anthologies and rarely re-read.

The works of Mykola Hohol, "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors" by Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi and "Forest Song" by Lesia Ukrainka stand apart from the others. The further development of folklore mysticism in Ukrainian literature can only be discussed from the twenty-first century perspective. Oksana Zabuzhko's novel "The Tale of the Viburnum Flute" (2000) was the pilot project. Literary critic Yaroslav Holoborodko defined this work as a myth story, a metaphor story, performed in a "pre-folklore" way with the use of vast folklore material.

The next significant work written with knowledge and respect for Ukrainian folklore was "Kobzar 2000" (2015) by brothers Vitalii and Dmytro Kapranov. About "Pesyholovets" (2025) by Oleksandr Zavara, "Lakhmitnyk" (2010) by Oleksiy Zhupansky and "Prisoners of Darkness" (2007) by Natalka and Oleksandr Shevchenko are currently known only to literary critics. It is quite challenging to buy these books even in Kyiv.

The works of contemporary Ukrainian "gothic" authors present two parallel worlds – each with its own inhabitants, laws and rules that must be followed to maintain the balance. People and various mystical characters, such as an angel, a witch, a mavka, a domovyk, a werewolf, a two-headed chaser coexist in that literary space. V. Shevchenko noted that works of contemporary Ukrainian Gothic literature have strange and ambiguous plots, intricate narration, mystical heroes and unexpected endings. All of that is added to the sarcastic or grotesque, but sometimes, conversely, to lyricism’ (Shevchenko, 2015, p. 299). The novels of many contemporary Ukrainian authors are based on mystical events and are full of national flavour. All of this gives grounds to assert that chimerical (bizarre) prose and its genre varieties occupy one of the leading positions in the literary process of the 21st century. Bizarre prose is a subgenre of prose that manifests incredible

events, where the real is combined with the fantastic, the conventional with ironical, grotesque with the elements of folklore and mythological poetics (Herasyenko, 2017; Kobylko, 2021; Shevchenko, 2017). In the 'chimerical' works amazing metamorphoses occur, shifting events in time and space. Bizarre prose is genealogically close to the magical realism developed in Latin America. At the same time, however, it is intertwined with the Ukrainian literary tradition, primarily through its purely Ukrainian humour and folklore.

This trend in literary studies cultivates the "horrible in the ordinary", focusing on psychological tension and the idea of the sublime. Thus, the term "Horrid in Natural" was introduced by the American scholar J. Murray (Murray, 1972) and his English colleague M. Ware (Ware, 1963) in their English Gothic prose studies.

Conversely to the sentimental Gothic of A. Radcliffe, M. Lewis launched the so-called frenetic (from the French *frenetique* – frantic, furious) Gothic with its ostentatious naturalism and shocking frankness in the reproduction of images related to the phenomenon of death. Despite the repulsiveness of some scenes, the Gothic novels by this author are of particular interest: the mystical of M. Lewis is no longer subject to rational interpretation. Instead, the writer asserts the supremacy of The Demonised Horrid, cruel and sometimes even psychologically distorted, thus destroying the tradition of A. Radcliffe and expanding the boundaries of Gothic prose. Thus, there are two opposite vectors of the genre's development, based on the category of the mystical, which is grounded on the trinity of mystery – fear – a state of anxious expectation (suspense):

- the rationalistic technique of the "explained supernatural", where the feeling of fear as an aesthetic category is combined with pleasure, which saturates and enriches human emotions and is capable of elevating the soul by awakening thoughts of beauty;

- frenetic Gothic, which allows for the real existence and open manifestation of supernatural, strange phenomena with an accumulation of shocking horrors, where the reproduction of mystery is intended to cause only panic and wild, oppressive fear (Dread).

Magical realism, gothic romance, fantasy, horror, and psychological thriller retain an atmosphere of mystery and draw on elements of myths and folklore. Thus, Ukrainian bizarre prose has evolved and continues to develop even in wartime, emphasizing national resistance to evil.

Conclusions and Perspectives

The conceptual category of the mystical has a complex hierarchical semantic structure, represented by two subcategorical features: "mysterious" and "fear". Each of these features varies according to the complex of its semantic components in culture, language and literature. This conceptual category is a unity of interconnected semantic components that act as direct and vivid explications of the norms of consciousness and connect the linguistic material with the organisational principles of the thinking process, receiving particular cultural realisation. This category is characterised by a number of differential features: phenomenalism, irrationality, non-agency, emotionality, symbolism and sacredness.

Consequently, after analysing a number of modern encyclopaedic and lexicographical sources, carrying out a number of etymological and cultural studies, and taking into account a rather peculiar field of the study (the Gothic novel), we define the mystical in English fiction as a genre feature associated with the motif of mystery, belief in the supernatural, irrationalism as a certain way of cognition of reality based on the creation of an atmosphere of fear aggravation of the unknown.

Ukrainian mystic literature is based on the three-fold model of Christianity. Its components – the irrational, the mystical, and the religious – are interdependent. Mysticism is the interpretation of individual mystical experience with a transcendent beginning that belongs to the irrational sphere of consciousness. However, in contemporary Ukrainian literature the mystical as a kind of fantastic meta-genre is not a presentation of the mystical experience, but a fictional image of the mystical, which, due to the existing variety of meta-genres (mystical thriller, love story (novel), mystical detective, adventure mysticism, etc.), acquires a different form and content. The strategy of reader's hesitation and tension in creating the mystical modus of the text that has proved to be the most productive over centuries, does not remain the only relevant in the era of postcolonial perception. It acquired the features of a "weird, but successful conglomeration" of the Ukrainian demonological Pantheon with its traditionally scary framework and burlesque as a type of writing, genetically rooted in the culture of popular laughter and focused on the deliberate discrepancy between content and form. This unparalleled ability of the Ukrainian mind and mentality proves of the utmost importance in war and post-war periods.

The attitude of Ukrainians to mystical events, especially during the last years when the existence of the Universal Evil is indisputable, conveys ironic and

sometimes sarcastic implication. It has resulted in the appearance of a new hybrid genre, namely bizarre literature. This provides an opportunity to highlight the importance of language means in creating a resistant tool of human mind and transforming cognitive mechanisms of a newly coined world perception.

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