



BIBLIOTEKARZ PODLASKI
3/2024 (LXIV)
<https://doi.org/10.36770/bp.943>
ISSN 1640-7806 (print) ISSN 2544-8900 (online)
www.bibliotekarzpodlaski.pl



Eliane Fitzé*

Uniwersytet we Fryburgu, Szwajcaria // University of Fribourg, Switzerland

ORCID: 0000-0001-7281-313X

A Female Poetics of the Imperial: Vera Inber's Literary Conceptions of Odesa

Abstract: The present article examines Vera Inber's literary conception of Odesa. The writer and poet (1890–1972) wrote about her hometown in an autobiographically inspired *povest'* called *Mesto pod solntsem* (1928), and she mentions Odesa also in her writing during the Leningrad siege, both in her collection of poems *Dusha Leningrada* (The Soul of Leningrad, 1943) and in her diary *Pochti tri goda* (Almost Three Years, 1943–45). The article explores how Inber's conception of Odesa is shaped by a Russian-imperial approach to understanding space and how her notion of Odesa constantly takes shape against the backdrop of the Petersburg text. These questions are examined in regard to how Inber writes the spaces of Ukraine, of Russia, of the Empire, and how she refers to the notions of province and center. One key moment consists of Inber's attempt to 'feminize' narrations of belonging to cities and states, both in regard to Odesa and in regard to Leningrad. Inber's imperial coloration of understanding space the article contextualizes with respect to her marginalized biographical position. It seems that through creating a 'female' poetics of the imperial Inber makes the imperial narrative her own and shapes her own belonging to it in a way that makes it meaningful and accessible to her.

Keywords: Odesa text, Vera Inber, Russian Imperialism, Jewish Literature, Jews in the Soviet Union, Jews in Ukraine.

* Eliane Fitzé – dr, pracuje w Institute of Slavic Languages and Literatures na Uniwersytecie we Fryburgu, autorka m.in. artykułu *Städtisches Dorf, dörfliche Stadt: Die Gartenstadt-Idee und vier frühsowjetische Utopien: Karelin, Čajanov, Kirillov, Ciolkovskij* (2022).

Eliane Fitze, *A Female Poetics of the Imperial: Vera Inber's Literary Conceptions of Odesa*

In 1941, the writer and poet Vera Inber finds herself in besieged Leningrad and writes a poem called *Obrashchenie k Odesse* (An Address to Odesa). It starts:

Овеянная черноморским ветром,
Оправленная в пенистый прибой,
Две тысячи... нет, больше километров,
Одесса, разделяют нас с тобой¹.

The lyric subject, who here places herself in a personal relationship with Odesa, notes the distance that separates her from the city on the shores of the Black Sea. She goes on, underlining Odesa's natural beauty and calling it her "home", *rodina*:

Степная воля и морская сила.
Простор, влекущий в дальние края, –
Таким тебя мне память сохранила.
Чудесный город, родина моя².

After which she describes Odesa further, referring also to the city she finds herself in, which the reader already knows from the title of the whole collection the poem is published in, *Dusha Leningrada* (The Soul of Leningrad):

Сейчас, под небом севера угрюмым,
Твои я вижу южные черты:
Твой ясный кругозор, твой светлый юмор,
Твой горизонт высокой красоты.

Before she calls out to the city:

¹ V. Inber, *Dusha Leningrada* (Moskva: Goslitizdat, 1943), 9.

² Ibid.

Ты слышишь ли меня? Из Ленинграда
Я шлю тебе дочерний свой привет [...]
Вокруг тебя пальба и канонада
И так же, как и здесь, погашен свет³.

We find the two aspects I want to highlight in the present article in these lines. The first is not immediately obvious, but by putting Odesa and Leningrad into a context of common belonging – they suffer the same fate, even though one is bright and southern, the other is gloomy and northern – Inber's lyric subject conceives them as part of an imperial entity and links the tradition of the Petersburg text with the tradition of the Odesa text. The two text traditions, as I will elaborate later, are both profoundly imperial, and while they are distinct from each other, the Odesa text depends on the Petersburg text. The second aspect is the way Inber's lyric subject makes sense of these concepts of belonging through markers of femininity; here through creating a mother-daughter relationship with her hometown.

The lines above, accompanied by an entry into her war diary *Pochti tri goda* (Almost Three Years, 1945⁴), are Vera Inber's (1890–1972) first literary reference to her city of origin in more than a decade of having been reluctant to mention her Odesan connections⁵. After Odesa had been an important reference point in her 1928 *povest' Mesto pod solntsem* (A Place Under the Sun), which takes place to a large extent in a city recognizable as Odesa, Inber had gained widespread fame as a Moscow writer – having moved to Moscow in 1922 – and later as a sort of literary correspondent from within Leningrad under siege. The reasons for Inber's silence on Odesa during the 1930s are obvious: She was born into a Jewish bourgeois family in Odesa; she was the first cousin of Lev Trotskii, about whom

³ Ibid.

⁴ Written 1941–1944, published 1945; for the publication history and the differences between Inber's first drafts and the published versions cf. A. Peri, "The Art of Revision: How Vera Inber Scripted the Siege and Her Self during World War II," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 19, no. 1 (2018): 143–74.

⁵ The only comprehensive biography of Vera Inber to date was published over 60 years ago [I. Grinberg, *Vera Inber: Kritiko-biograficheskii ocherk* (Moskva: Sovetskij pisatel', 1961)]; a biography that also factors in the aspects of Inber navigating her biography during the restrictions imposed by the state is still outstanding.

she had written appraisingly in her early twenties⁶; and her first husband, Natan Inber, had fled the country after the October Revolution.

The present article is dedicated to an analysis of Inber's literary conception of the city of Odesa. I will examine both her 1928 *povest'* and the poems and diary entries from the 1940s and take a closer look at how Inber writes about the concepts of Ukraine, of the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union; how she draws Odesa's cityscape; and how the tradition of the Petersburg text seems to be a constant backdrop to how Inber narrates Odesa.

These texts, as we will see, manifest a stereotypically Russian-imperial view on Odesa and on Ukraine. I locate the reason for these imperial claims in Inber's biography: What I call her female poetics of the imperial – or her poetics of the female imperial – is a performative appropriation of imperial hegemony. As Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern observed regarding the Jews in Ukraine, the Jewish diaspora was usually found among the strongest supporters of empires, because the rise of the early modern states had significantly improved their previously marginalized and stigmatized position⁷. He sums it up: "In a word, the more imperial the culture, the better for the Jew"⁸. The way Inber feminizes her conceptions of national and imperial belonging must be seen as a literary strategy to negotiate a meaningful existence as a writer within these contexts, being marginalized through femininity, Jewishness, and provinciality.

Imagining Russia, Ukraine, the Empire

Mesto pod solntsem appears 1928 in Berlin and 1929 in Kharkiv, while Inber had already been living in Moscow for a few years. The story takes place "в южном городе, осенью, в год гражданской войны"⁹, as it is set in the very beginning. The city is never called by its name, but it is easily recognizable as Odesa at the latest in the beginning of the second chapter, when the story describes the cityscape in detail. Inber's first-person narrator is a young woman from the former upper middle class, who tries to navigate day-to-day life during civil war,

⁶ J. Rubenstein, *Leon Trotsky: A Revolutionary's Life*, Jewish Lives (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 5–6, <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300178418>.

⁷ Y. Petrovsky-Shtern, *The Anti-Imperial Choice: The Making of the Ukrainian Jew* (Yale University Press, 2009), 2–3, <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300156072>.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹ V. Inber, *Mesto pod solntsem* (Berlin: Petropolis, 1928), 1.

together with her little daughter. She ends up leaving her home and moving to Moscow.

There are obvious autobiographical parallels between Inber and her narrator, with a couple of gaps in the very places where it was certainly smarter for Inber not to go into detail with an autofictional character: The narrator is not attributed to any ethnicity and appears to be simply Russian; and there is a conspicuous absence of a husband and father to the narrator's daughter. Men are generally absent from the story, or they come and go as secondary characters that enter and leave the life of these women. Traditionally connotated femininely are also the first attempts of Inber's narrator to earn a living: She lectures on fashion, she weaves slippers, she tries to bake and sell pies, or she imagines herself selling hats in Paris. Inber here writes a sort of female history of the civil war and the NEP period, describing a woman's scope of action.

The imperial setting is already present in the constellation of characters: The nanny is Latvian, as the narrator speaks of her "светлые латышские волосы" (Inber 1928, 12) and mentions that she comes from Riga. A Latvian and a Russian – or, considering the autobiographical parallels, a possibly Russian-Jewish – household in Odesa represents an imperial setting par excellence; or, rather, describes how any Odesan setting is an imperial one in the first place.

The notion of the empire is, moreover, addressed directly in the beginning of the story. The narrator, during the chaos of the city that is about to be captured by the Red Army, runs into an old acquaintance. She describes him as a Russian professor from St. Petersburg, a specialist in Greek antiquity, who is joining the masses of people who are leaving the country. He calls out to her: "Империя погибла [...] – Варвары наступают"¹⁰. This scene, and this quotation in particular, are important in two ways through the way they interact with the literary tradition of the Odesa text¹¹. Firstly, the reference to 'barbarians' creates an analogy between

¹⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹¹ The 'Odesa text' has so far been studied in particular by Rebecca Stanton, Mirja Lecke, and Tatjana Hofmann; cf.: R. Stanton, "Identity Crisis: The Literary Cult and Culture of Odesa in the Early Twentieth Century," *Symposium: A Quarterly Journal in Modern Literatures* 57, no. 3 (2003): 117–26; R. Stanton, "From 'Underground' to 'In the Basement': How Odesa Replaced St. Petersburg as Capital of the Russian Literary Imagination," in *American Contributions to the 14th International Congress of Slavists, Ohrid, September 2008*, vol. 2: Literature (Bloomington: Slavica, 2008), 203–16; M. Lecke, "The Street: A Spatial Paradigm in Odessan Literature," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 95, no. 3 (2017): 429–57, <https://doi.org/10.5699/slaveasteurorev2.95.3.0429>; T. Hofmann, ■

the Russian Empire and the Hellenistic Empire. This analogy goes all the way back to Pushkin's "Otryvki iz puteshestviia Onegina" (Fragments from Onegin's Travels, 1830¹²). In this appendix to his novel-in-verse, Pushkin's narrator/lyric subject repeatedly refers to the Greek heritage in the region of Crimea and Odesa, which construes the Russian Empire as a logical successor to the ancient model and thus seems to create a sense of legitimacy for Russia's rule of the northern Black Sea region. In Inber's story, the notion of 'barbarians' destroying the civilization that was brought about by the empire is, however, adapted to the context of Civil War: the 'barbarians' are the Red Army. This marks them as 'other', as a barbaric threat to the civilized self; and it marks the imperial self as the one who had brought civilization to a previously non-civilized place. Secondly, the Odesa text repeatedly conceives Odesa as the southern pendant to St. Petersburg, also already as early as in Pushkin's "Fragments"¹³. In Russian cultural imagination, Odesa has functioned as St. Petersburg's mirror image¹⁴. The two cities share the features of having been built on the seaside, at the margins of the Empire, in regions that had been recently incorporated into the state; their very origins are linked with Russian imperial expansion. While St. Petersburg, however, is described as hostile, uncanny, and as the embodiment of the forced process of Europeanization of the Russian Empire under Peter I, the port city of Odesa has been conceptualized as 'positively' European, as in modern, easygoing, with a sort of Mediterranean *joie*

☞ "Odessa-Poetiken als Identitätsressource in Umbruchszeiten. Von Isaak Babel' zu Boris Chersonskij," in *Umstrittene Räume in der Ukraine. Politische Diskurse, literarische Repräsentationen und kartographische Visualisierungen*, ed. Sabine Löwis, 2019, 98–124. In regard to the Odesa text, the set characteristics that describe and shape the city include the aspects of 'southernness', 'Europeanness', of multinationality and -culturality; accordingly, the Odesa text is also written in dozens of languages, most notably in Russian, Ukrainian, Yiddish, or Hebrew, determined by the city's multicultural demographic structure as well as its location as a transit point for international travel. Central themes are the Odesans' humor, but also the criminality that rules the city, usually described in idealizing terms, most famously by Isaak Babel'. In terms of geographical semiotics, the Black Sea, on whose shores the city is located, is an inseparable part of the Odesa text, and often also the steppe that surrounds the city.

12 A.C. Pushkin, "Evgenii Onegin: Roman v stikhakh," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 16 t.*, vol. 6 (M.; L.: AN SSSR, 1937), 201–5.

13 Cf., e.g., K. Hokanson, "'Barbarus Hic Ego Sum': Pushkin and Ovid on the Pontic Shore," *Pushkin Review / Pushkinskii vestnik* 8/9 (1006 2005): 75.

14 R.J. Stanton, *Isaac Babel and the Self-Invention of Odessan Modernism*, Northwestern University Press Studies in Russian Literature and Theory (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2012), 17; Lecke, "The Street," 429.

*de vivre*¹⁵. Inber links the two cities as she sets a St. Petersburg professor who loves the northern White Nights into the setting of Odesa; and she links the two cities more poignantly in the 1940s, which we will take a closer look at later.

In the *povest'*, the city of Odesa is undoubtedly ascribed to Russia. After saying goodbye to her acquaintance, the narrator comments: "Он исчез, а я осталась. [...] Мысли мои были здесь, в России, в родной стране, которая теперь перекраивалась наново"¹⁶. She thus refers to the place she finds herself in as "Russia" and as her "homeland". Similarly, the narrator mentions Odesa as part of Russia a second time during the story, when she describes the life of a 1905 revolutionary who had fled and returned to Odesa after the October Revolution: "[...] возвращение, но уже не в Россию, а в Союз Социалистических Республик"¹⁷. These formulations narratively create Odesa's belonging to Russia.

The concept of Ukraine has little to do with Odesa in the story, but it is nevertheless present. Its first appearance is a linguistic one, when the narrator prophetically describes her attempt to trade in an antique, probably valuable watch for lard (*salo*). The *baba* she approaches says: "Да хiba-ж это часы? Да чого-ж вони скоротились? Ни"¹⁸. The literal speech sounds pseudo-Ukrainian and creates an effect of amusement and belittlement, in contrast to the well-spoken Russian-speaking narrator.

As soon as the narrator leaves Odesa and travels to Moscow, she finds herself in Ukraine. The train the narrator and her daughter take passes through Kharkiv and it simultaneously serves as a freight train: "Поезд вез в Харьков, в столицу Украины, украинские деньги, карбованцы, напечатанные у нас в городе"¹⁹. This emphasis and juxtaposition – *Ukrainian* money printed in *our* city – shows a certain distance between the conception of Odesa in the text and the concept of Ukraine. During a first longer stop, the narrator observes an idyllic evening landscape with a family of geese. She describes: "камыш там рос, задумчивый и певучий, как Тарас Шевченко в юности", and she adds: "Мы стояли так

15 W. Koschmal, "Ein Russischer Traum von Europa? Petersburg, Odessa Und Andere," *Nordost-Archiv. Zeitschrift Für Regionalgeschichte* XII: Metropolen im russischen Vielvölkerreich. Petersburg und Odessa seit dem 18. Jahrhundert (2003): 43–70; Lecke, "The Street," 429.

16 Inber, *Mesto pod solntsem*, 9.

17 Ibid., 80.

18 Ibid., 11.

19 Ibid., 99.

долго, что успело совершенно стемнеть, гусиное семейство отправилось спать, закат кончился и большие украинские звезды пырнули в камыш”²⁰. Ukrainianness is poetically filled with rural-idyllic and folkloric imagery, as Taras Shevchenko is part of the natural landscape, and even the stars are “Ukrainian stars”. These descriptions of Ukraine correspond to the stereotypical view of Ukraine in Russian literature and cultural imagination²¹.

During the train scene, the notion of Ukraine also appears in a different position: its vastness and peripheric nature possesses the power to level out all notions of geography and city spaces. The narrator describes: “На первом же полустанке, где мы остановились, нам показалось, что нашего города не было, что нет нигде никаких городов”²², and afterwards, she observes: “Москва словно утонула, растаяла словно, в этом раздолье страны”²³. The vastness of the Ukrainian countryside makes Odesa disappear, as well as Moscow, or all cities as such; the periphery – an inherently imperial notion²⁴ – appears as a potentially dangerous power through its sheer vastness. The expression “раздолье страны” is left unmarked, but likely refers to the Soviet Union rather than to Ukraine. Nevertheless, it is Ukraine’s vastness in which the narrator loses herself in, and where the periphery’s ruralness seems to overwhelm the center, while notions of nation and state are left ambiguous.

Odesa’s Cityscape and Catherine II

Inber gives detailed attention to Odesa’s cityscape as well as the city’s surroundings. *Mesto pod solntsem* starts, as partly quoted above: “В южном городе, осенью, в год гражданской войны, наступили прекрасные дни, когда море неомраченно синело, и ветер спал свернувшись, как якорный канат”²⁵.

²⁰ Ibid., 103.

²¹ Cf., e.g., L. Decourt, “Representations of Ukraine and Its Inhabitants in Russian-Language Literature during the 19th Century,” *Revue des études slaves* 93 (2022): 565–79. or M. Shkandrij, *Russia and Ukraine: Literature and the Discourse of Empire from Napoleonic to Postcolonial Times* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 76.

²² Inber, *Mesto pod solntsem*, 103.

²³ Ibid., 104.

²⁴ Michael W. Doyle defines the empire as “a system of interaction between two political entities, one of which, the dominant metropole, exerts political control over the internal and external policy – the effective sovereignty – of the other, the subordinate periphery” M.W. Doyle, *Empires* (Cornell University Press, 1986), 45.

²⁵ Inber, *Mesto pod solntsem*, 1.

The sea, the south, the wind, typical features of the Odesa text, set off the story. As the narrator later sits in an airplane for the first time in her life, she daydreams: “Теперь мне предстояла лететь высоко над линией рек, далеко на юг, увидеть сверху родные степи у моря, где я родилась”²⁶ – mentioning southernness, the steppe, as well as her personal connection to the sea as her place of origin.

The view from above is a typical feature of Russian eighteenth-century imperial poetry, as Harsha Ram noted: the movement up the vertical line creates the possibility to overlook the vastness of the empire, which creates a sense of an “imperial sublime”²⁷. Indeed, the way Inber writes about Odesa in *Mesto pod solntsem* is somewhat reminiscent of the Russian tradition of panegyric poetry when the narrator starts giving a detailed description of the statue of Catherine II. Chapter two starts as follows:

Почти у самого бульвара, дома расступились плавным полукругом, давая место площади, посвящённой Екатерине Великой. Перед императрицей, в пролёте зданий, синел и зеленел лучший кусок порта, где бросали якорь лучшие корабли. Над ней синел и зеленел лучший в городе кусок неба, куда, как в гавань, заплывали на закате облака. Что касается земли, то на ней, по краям площади, было множество греческих лавок, каждая из них пахла фруктами, орехами, вином и морем, словно лодка контрабандиста²⁸.

The narration first describes the important and privileged position where Catherine II stands: the whole square carries the name “Catherine the Great”, and it is the most beautiful place in the whole city. Then the narrator describes the statue in more detail:

Екатерина была поднята на цоколь из красного гранита. На ней были все ее ленты и ордена. Ее шлейф бесконечный, как ее империя, падал пудовыми складками. Пухлой и властной рукой она указывала на город, на степную и морскую Новороссию,

²⁶ Ibid., 133.

²⁷ H. Ram, *The Imperial Sublime: A Russian Poetics of Empire*, Publications of the Wisconsin Center for Pushkin Studies (Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 5–6.

²⁸ Inber, *Mesto pod solntsem*, 19.

распростертую во все концы. У ее ног, окружив ее чугунным кольцом, стояли ее сподвижники, любовники и генералиссимусы: Потёмкин, Орлов и другие²⁹.

Catherine II is, essentially, not described as a statue, but it is “Catherine” or the “imperatrítsa” herself that is captured by the narrator’s gaze, and she is described as impressive, massive, commanding, ‘imperious’. Orders, ribbons, granite, the royal train symbolize worldly power – Catherine II looks out over and points toward the steppes and the sea of ‘New Russia’, the region conquered under her; her royal train falls ‘like her empire’. The men at her feet suggest sexual power. The founder of Odesa appears here as a female ruler who holds a position of incredible might. The narrator’s ekphrastic gaze therefore visualizes power as female and imperial, and locates the city of Odesa within this imagined empire.

The description of the statue and its semantics mirror the literary descriptions of the statue to Peter I in the Petersburg text³⁰. Just as Peter I is himself part of the cityscape of the place he founded, Catherine II is present in ‘her’ city.

The atmosphere of positive might surrounding Catherine II, however, disappears in the next paragraph:

На этот цоколь, на этот темно-красный монолит было решено поставить Карла Маркса. Торжество открытия памятника состоялось в зимний день, когда туман ключьями носился по городу и за углом площади разрушался дом, из которого были вынуты все деревянные части для топки. Здесь же, на площади, лежала дохлая лошадь чугунного цвета и чугунной тяжести, словно Потемкин Таврический, стоявший раньше у ног Екатерины³¹.

While Catherine II was not referred to as a statue, Marx’ monument is named as such. Opposed to Catherine II’s greatness is this bleak imagery of the city: it is misty, cold, there is a dilapidated house, even a dead horse lying in the

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ For an analysis of the works dedicated to the statue, such as the poems by Adam Mickiewicz and Aleksandr Pushkin’s *Mednyi vsadnik* (The Bronze Horseman, written 1833, fully published 1837), cf., e.g., A.M. Schenker, *The Bronze Horseman: Falconet’s Monument to Peter the Great* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 297–315; N.V. Riasanovsky, *The Image of Peter the Great in Russian History and Thought* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 87–97. Notably, the statue to Peter I in St. Petersburg had been erected upon the orders of Catherine II in 1782.

³¹ Inber, *Mesto pod solntsem*, 19–20.

middle of the square. This dead horse symbolizes the fall of the empire, as an extreme contrast to the horse the monumental Peter I rides; or generally to the equestrian statues as a marker of imperial status since (Roman) antiquity. The reference is obvious through the double emphasis of the horse's cast-iron color and heaviness. The scenery around the new monument is one of dilapidation and decay. This, again, is a parallel to St. Petersburg. Nikolai Antsiferov described post-civil-war Petrograd in his nominal work *Dusha Peterburga* (The Soul of Petersburg, 1922), a book that was certainly available to Inber, in a remarkably similar way: "Деревянные дома, воспоминания о 'Старом Петербурге' [...] теперь сломлены, чтобы из их праха добыть топливо для других домов"³². Another parallel to Antsiferov's description of Petrograd: "Зелень делает всё большие завоевания. Весною трава покрыла более не защищаемые площади и улицы"³³ is mirrored in Inber's formulation: "Да еще трава лезла из каждой скважины, из каждой трещины тротуара [...]. На главной улице, на мостовой, почти нетревожимой колёсами, выросли одуванчики"³⁴.

The scene of the replacement of the monuments continues: "Памятник был закрыт парусиной. Наконец, холодные и злые трубы и волторны [sic.] заиграли Интернационал" – again, the 'cold' and 'vicious' instruments add to the gloomy atmosphere –

[...] и мы, стоящие внизу, увидели Великого Карла. Действительно он был велик, даже огромен. Памятник состоял из одной головы, как богатырь, с которым сразился Руслан. У Маркса не было ни плеч, ни шеи. Каменная волна сливалась с бордой, плоскости щек были квадратны, потому что скульптор был кубист³⁵.

While the statue of Catherine II is depicted as classicist, and Inber's description of it focuses on details of her clothing and her posture, the statue of Marx is abstract, cubistic, cold, bodiless. The Tsarina majestically points toward her empire, which places the city in an imperial setting; Marx does not even have arms. Interestingly, the narrator calls Marx "Great Karl", in an analogy to "Catherine the Great", and the

³² N.P. Antsiferov, *Dusha Peterburga* (Peterburg: Brokgauz-Efron, 1922), 222.

³³ Ibid., 222–23.

³⁴ Inber, *Mesto pod solntsem*, 43.

³⁵ Ibid., 20.

narrator tries to 'Russify' Marx by comparing him to the *bogatyr* Ruslan had fought against in Pushkin's *Ruslan i Liudmila* (Ruslan and Liudmila, 1920). However, the narrator's identification with Marx stays obviously superficial. While Catherine II and the world of the Russian Empire she personifies is mighty and enchanted, Marx and the Soviet world he brings about lack any positive imperial might.

Odesa the Periphery, Moscow the Center

Inber's narrator in *Mesto pod solntsem* repeatedly describes the beauty of her hometown, but seems to be disillusioned by the dilapidated state the city finds itself in during and after the Civil War. She places Odesa within an imperial setting also when she refers to it as a provincial town and starts turning toward the center. As she begins considering moving to Moscow, she reflects that "Москва это сердце страны: У сердца всего тёплое. Там легче жить"³⁶. She elaborates:

В то время повсюду говорили и думали о Москве. Москва это была работа, счастье жизни, полнота жизни, всё то, о чем люди так часто мечтают и что редко сбывается. [...] Москва светила и горела, как лампа, поставленная на пол. Вся страна тянулась к этим лучам [...]. А Москва? Она наполнялась приезжими, она расширялась, она вмещала, она вмещала. [...] Городу было суждено вместить еще легионы провинциалов, этого жадного племени, непобедимого в бою. Их было много, они наступали со всех концов, летели роями на свет лампы.

Провинция в это время жила, склоняя: в Москву, Москвой, о Москве³⁷.

The first-person narrator calls Odesa part of the concept of the "province" – a deeply colonial and imperial concept – and describes the center's attraction metaphorically (lamp) and through a metonymic personification ("Moscow took in, took in"), as well as with intertextual reference to Chekhov's *Tri sestry* (Three Sisters, 1901). The provincial people are described as a "greedy tribe", through animalistic, even parasitic imagery (as insects), obsessed with Moscow.

Overall, Inber's description of Odesa in *Mesto pod solntsem* does not appear to be too positive. Odesa is, as already mentioned, not even called by its name, while Moscow is named at least 42 times throughout the story. Her distancing

³⁶ Ibid., 96.

³⁷ Ibid., 96–97.

herself from her hometown is astonishing, considering the importance of Odesa for Inber's early life and literary career. For her early writing, Odesa and Ukraine are definitely a creative focal point, a cultural center, not peripheral: she was part of the lively literary circles in her youth³⁸; some of her works were printed in Odesa – e.g. her poetry collection *Brennye slova*³⁹ (Perishable Words), and even the first domestic publication of *Mesto pod solntsem* was printed in Kharkiv⁴⁰. Her relationship with the Ukrainian language is hard to retrace, though: She did translate Taras Shevchenko into Russian, but also many other poets whose language she could not all have spoken⁴¹. A remark in a 1938 short story called “O moem ottse” (About my Father) reveals some connections to the Ukrainian language when Inber's first-person narrator recalls her parents: “[p]едко, очень редко, сидя в сумерках без огня, они пели вдвоем украинские песни”⁴². However, this connection also remains superficial and reduced to folk culture.

Revisiting Odesa: Inber's Odesa Text of the Early 1940s

The way Inber revisits her hometown in her writing during the Leningrad siege further highlights how the way she writes about Odesa takes shape in relation to the political, geographical, and biographical circumstances she finds herself in. The autobiographical impetus we found in *Mesto pod solntsem* is even more evident in her diary, as the genre itself suggests. Moreover, the diary repeatedly refers directly to the poems in *Dusha Leningrada*. These commonalities invite the reader to read the narrative voices in the three texts – the *povest'* *Mesto pod solntsem*, the diary *Pochti tri goda*, and the collection of poems *Dusha Leningrada* – as closely connected to each other. Moreover, *Pochti tri goda* is not a mere personal

³⁸ She published in the same circles Viktor Shklovskii did; cf. A.P. Chudakov, “Dva pervykh deiatel'nosti: Vstuplenie,” in *Gamburgskii schet: stat'i, vospominaniia, ésse (1914–1933)*, by Viktor Shklovskii (Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1990), 24. Shklovskii mentions her in his essays; cf. Viktor Shklovskii, *Gamburgskii schet: stat'i, vospominaniia, ésse (1914–1933)* (Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1990), 297, 299, 472.

³⁹ V. Inber, *Brennye slova: Tret'ia kniga stikhov* (Odesa: R.V.Ts, Gosud. tip. Sturdz, 1922).

⁴⁰ V. Inber, *Mesto pod solntsem: Liricheskaia khronika* (Khar'kov: Proletarii, 1929).

⁴¹ Her translations include works written in Uzbek, Bulgarian, Hungarian, German, Romanian, Serbian, Czech, Italian, and French V.M. Inber, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 1 (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1965), 519–67.

⁴² V.M. Inber, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 2, *Sobranie sochinenii v chetyrekh tomakh* (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1965), 295.

diary. Inber became increasingly famous during the siege, was constantly invited to radio broadcasts, managed to get printed even while the city was still besieged; indeed, it seems that “[p]rofessionally at least, Inber was in the right place at the right time” in besieged Leningrad, as Alexis Peri observed⁴³. She also revised her diary substantially before publication⁴⁴. The text is thus an interesting access point to examine the way Inber attempted to shape her own situation as a writer, and discussed her belonging to urban, national and imperial communities.

Inber moved to Leningrad after the beginning of the siege, joining her husband, who ran a clinic there. The way she writes Leningrad's cityscape is determined through the severe limitations imposed by the siege, by the shelling, by the shortages, by death that surrounds her. Notably, her writing is constantly marked by two other cities: Moscow and Odesa.

Moscow is prominent throughout the whole diary, e.g., when Inber's diary self recalls a radio speech: “мне хочется передать вам привет от Москвы, от моего города”, calling Moscow “her town”, and speaking of both Moscow and Leningrad in gender metaphors: “Москва и Ленинград, как сестра и брат, подают друг другу руки, говоря: ‘Победа – за нами!’”⁴⁵. These quotations transmit the patriotic message omnipresent in the diary, which contradicts the critical overtones toward Soviet power in her 1928 *povest'*, but which is also a logical result of the imminent danger her country finds itself in.

While her Odesan connection remained somewhat strangely obscure in *Mesto pod solntsem*, the diary narrator refers back to Odesa as her hometown several times. Once she refers to a woman as “моя землячка, одесситка”⁴⁶. Another time she reflects on choosing the nationality of characters in a story she writes: “Теперь будет белорус, украинец, армянин и еврей. Хочу, чтоб это был мой земляк – одессит. Но как он будет себя чувствовать в этой сугубо ‘русской’ главе – это вопрос”⁴⁷. This is interesting because she links her own origin to Odesa and the Jewry, and because she reflects on the relationship between Russianness and

⁴³ Peri, “The Art of Revision,” 144.

⁴⁴ cf. Peri, “The Art of Revision.”

⁴⁵ V. Inber, “Pochti tri goda (Leningradskii dnevnik),” in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3 (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1965), 136.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 151.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 221.

Jewishness. Notably, however, she still does not refer to her own Jewish origins, but just to the well-known general fact that Odesa is inhabited largely by Jews.

The diary narrator's personal link to Odesa becomes most explicit in the entry on October 15, 1941:

Жестокие бои под Одессой. Я так давно оттуда! Мне казалось, что она для меня – как все другие города. Я уже почти не ощущала ее родной. А теперь чувствую, что она по-прежнему дорога и близка мне. Написала стихотворение “Обращение к Одессе”. Вероятно, завтра будут транслировать его по эфиру, чтобы и в Одессе услышали меня⁴⁸.

In this entry, Inber's diary self describes a previous temporal and emotional distance to the city, which she now perceives again as “родн[ая],” seemingly a completely new experience. This is an interesting parallel to the elusive relationship to the city in *Mesto pod solntsem*. But most importantly, the diary entry invites the reader to read her poem “Obrashchenie k Odesse” through the same lens, in direct connection to this voice that wants to be perceived as the author's own.

This gender aspect in relation to Inber's ‘city texts’ deserves a closer look. In her diary, Inber describes Leningrad as “мужествен и тверд”, “Ленинград, город носящий имя Ленина, краса и гордость страны”⁴⁹. In *Dusha Leningrada*, the poem “Edinyi put’”, which follows directly after “Obrashchenie k Odesse” mentions “Петербург-красавец”⁵⁰, and the first poem of the collection, “Bessmertie”, dismantles the name of the city: “Град Ленина”⁵¹. These formulations emphasize a masculine gendering of the city Leningrad.

Of course, the feminine or masculine connotation of a city text is due to a large extent to the grammatical gender of the toponyms: Odesa in Inber's diary is “она”, the narrator “почти не ощущала ее родной”, “она по-прежнему дорога и близка мне”; in the poem, the city is “Овеянная черноморским ветром,” “Оправленная в пенный прибой”. In “Edinyi put’”, the lyrical self speaks of “Москва... Она не русской быть не может”⁵², and Leningrad's male connota-

⁴⁸ Ibid., 158.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 136.

⁵⁰ Inber, *Dusha Leningrada*, 11.

⁵¹ Ibid., 3.

⁵² Ibid., 11.

tions are certainly at least partly owed to the city's grammatical masculinity. At the same time, the male connotation of the Petersburg/Leningrad text and the female connection of the Odesa text are part of the literary conventions of these city texts. St. Petersburg was founded by Peter I, Odesa was founded by Catherine II; the monument to Peter features in the Petersburg text, the monument to Catherine receives detailed attention in Inber's description of Odesa's cityscape.

The Female Soul of Leningrad

Inber's narrators can easily identify with Odesa and Moscow through the narration of femininity: Odesa is the city of Catherine II, and the city she calls herself the *daughter* of; Moscow is the *sister* of Leningrad. Leningrad itself, however, remains somewhat strange to Inber's narrating voices. There is, however, one way in which Inber finds and creates a female side to the city of Peter or Lenin, which is shown in the title of her collection of poems, "Dusha Leningrada". This title reminds of Nikolai Antsiferov's *Dusha Peterburga* but what Inber means by the "soul" of the city is not its 'essence', the entirety of its 'character traits', but the women who inhabit the city. The second poem in the collection carries the same title. It is a propaganda poem, meant to uphold the morale of the city's female inhabitants. It starts with a reference to the siege of Madrid: "Их было много, матерей и жен, / Во дни коммуны, в месяцы Мадрида", and thus links the fate of the Leningrad women with their Spanish counterparts that were also defending socialism. It goes on describing the hardship of managing day-to-day life in a besieged city, and the lyric subject calls out, *pars pro toto*, to the woman of Leningrad: "В историю вошла, вступила ты", calls her, the "советск[ая] патриотк[а]", the soul of Leningrad: "Душою Ленинграда ты была, / Его великой материнской силой, / Которую ничто не подкосило"⁵³. The heroes, or heroines, of socialism are not only the ones (mostly men) who are fighting at the front, but also the women who run the city. The lyric subject ascribes the woman a decisive role in history, as mothers and caregivers.

Conclusion

As we have seen, Inber's literary conception of her hometown Odesa is shaped by a Russian-imperial approach to understanding space, but her biographical

⁵³ Ibid., 4.

background strongly suggests that the appropriation of the imperial narrative must be at least partly due to her intersectionally marginal position as a female writer from the province, who was related to the most prominent enemy of the state in the late 1920s. Most interestingly, Inber seems to find a way to 'feminize' narrations of belonging to cities and states. In regard to Odesa, the cityscape is defined by the mighty empress who founded the city as part of her expanding empire. In regard to Leningrad, the narrating voice puts the women of the city at the center of attention. The factor of femininity seems to be the decisive way in which Inber managed to make the imperial narrative her own and to shape her own belonging to it.

This article shed light on Inber's contribution to the corpus of the Odesa text. Moreover, it also highlighted the way in which the Odesa text constantly takes shape against the backdrop of its Petersburg counterpart. And finally, it contextualized Inber's narrative selves within her complicated biography.

References

- Antsiferov, N.P. *Dusha Peterburga*. Peterburg: Brokgauz-Efron, 1922.
- Chudakov, A.P. "Dva pervykh desiatiletiia: Vstuplenie." In *Gamburgskii schet: stat'i, vospominaniia, ésse (1914–1933)*, by Viktor Shklovskii, 3–32. Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1990.
- Decourt, Laetitia. "Representations of Ukraine and Its Inhabitants in Russian-Language Literature during the 19th Century." *Revue des études slaves* 93 (2022): 565–79.
- Doyle, Michael W. *Empires*. Cornell University Press, 1986.
- Grinberg, I. *Vera Inber: Kritiko-biograficheskii ocherk*. Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1961.
- Hofmann, Tatjana. "Odessa-Poetiken als Identitätsressource in Umbruchzeiten. Von Isaak Babel' zu Boris Chersonskij." In *Umstrittene Räume in der Ukraine. Politische Diskurse, literarische Repräsentationen und kartographische Visualisierungen*, edited by Sabine Löwis, 98–124, 2019.
- Hokanson, Katya. "'Barbarus Hic Ego Sum': Pushkin and Ovid on the Pontic Shore." *Pushkin Review / Pushkinskii vestnik* 8/9 (1006 2005): 61–75.
- Inber, Vera. *Brennye slova: Tret'ia kniga stikhov*. Odesa: R.V.Ts, Gosud. tip. Sturdz, 1922.
- . *Dusha Leningrada*. Moskva: Goslitizdat, 1943.
- . *Mesto pod solntsem*. Berlin: Petropolis, 1928.
- . *Mesto pod solntsem: Liricheskaia khronika*. Khar'kov: Proletarii, 1929.
- . "Pochti tri goda (Leningradskii dnevnik)." In *Sobranie sochinenii*, 3:129–389. Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1965.

Eliane Fitze, *A Female Poetics of the Imperial: Vera Inber's Literary Conceptions of Odesa*

Inber, V.M. *Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 1. Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1965.

———. *Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 2. *Sobranie sochinenii v chetyrekh tomakh*. Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1965.

Koschmal, Walter. "Ein Russischer Traum von Europa? Petersburg, Odessa und andere." *Nordost-Archiv. Zeitschrift Für Regionalgeschichte* XII: Metropolen im russischen Vielvölkerreich. Petersburg und Odessa seit dem 18. Jahrhundert (2003): 43–70.

Lecke, Mirja. "The Street: A Spatial Paradigm in Odessan Literature." *The Slavonic and East European Review* 95, no. 3 (2017): 429–57. <https://doi.org/10.5699/slaveasteurorev2.95.3.0429>.

Peri, Alexis. "The Art of Revision: How Vera Inber Scripted the Siege and Her Self during World War II." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 19, no. 1 (2018): 143–74. <https://doi.org/10.1353/kri.2018.0006>.

Petrovsky-Shtern, Yohanan. *The Anti-Imperial Choice: The Making of the Ukrainian Jew*. Yale University Press, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300156072>.

Pushkin, A.C. "Evgenii Onegin: Roman v stikhakh." In *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 16 t.*, 6:1–205. M.; L.: AN SSSR, 1937.

Ram, Harsha. *The Imperial Sublime: A Russian Poetics of Empire*. Publications of the Wisconsin Center for Pushkin Studies. Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003.

Riasanovsky, Nicholas V. *The Image of Peter the Great in Russian History and Thought*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Rubenstein, Joshua. *Leon Trotsky: A Revolutionary's Life*. Jewish Lives. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300178418>.

Schenker, Alexander M. *The Bronze Horseman: Falconet's Monument to Peter the Great*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003. <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300128949>.

Shkandrij, Myroslav. *Russia and Ukraine: Literature and the Discourse of Empire from Napoleonic to Postcolonial Times*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.

Shklovskii, Viktor. *Gamburgskii schet: stat'i, vospominaniia, ésse (1914–1933)*. Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1990.

Stanton, Rebecca. "From 'Underground' to 'In the Basement': How Odessa Replaced St. Petersburg as Capital of the Russian Literary Imagination." In *American Contributions to the 14th International Congress of Slavists, Ohrid, September 2008*, 2: Literature:203–16. Bloomington: Slavica, 2008.

———. "Identity Crisis: The Literary Cult and Culture of Odessa in the Early Twentieth Century." *Symposium: A Quarterly Journal in Modern Literatures* 57, no. 3 (2003): 117–26.

Stanton, Rebecca Jane. *Isaac Babel and the Self-Invention of Odessan Modernism*. Northwestern University Press Studies in Russian Literature and Theory. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2012.

BIBLIOTEKARZ PODLASKI

NR 3/2024 (LXIV)

**Kobiece obrazy, maski i twarze Odessy –
literatura, kultura, historia**

Female Images, Masks, and Faces of Odesa –
Literature, Culture, History

 KSIĄŻNICA
PODLASKA
im. Łukasza Górnickiego w Białymstoku

BIBLIOTEKARZ PODLASKI

RADA REDAKCYJNA / EDITORIAL BOARD

Łukasz Zabielski – Książnica Podlaska im. Ł. Górnickiego w Białymstoku, Polska – Redaktor naczelny / Editor-In-Chief
Dariusz Piechota – Uniwersytet w Białymstoku, Polska
Kamil K. Pilichiewicz – Książnica Podlaska im. Ł. Górnickiego w Białymstoku, Polska – Sekretarz
Patryk Suchodolski – Książnica Podlaska im. Ł. Górnickiego w Białymstoku, Polska
Halina Turkiewicz – Uniwersytet Witolda Wielkiego w Kownie, Litwa

REDAKTORZY TEMATYCZNI / SPECIAL ISSUE EDITORS

Bibliotekoznawstwo – dr hab. **Anna Nosek**, prof. UwB, Uniwersytet w Białymstoku, Polska
Nauki o literaturze – dr **Michał Siedlecki**, Książnica Podlaska im. Ł. Górnickiego w Białymstoku, Polska
Historia – dr **Iwona Kulesza-Woroniecka**, Uniwersytet w Białymstoku, Polska

REDAKCJA JĘZYKOWA / LANGUAGE EDITORS

Język polski – dr hab. **Anetta Strawińska**, Uniwersytet w Białymstoku, Polska
Język angielski – dr **Anna Sańczyk-Cruz**, Uniwersytet w Białymstoku
Język rosyjski – dr **Robert Szymula**, Uniwersytet w Białymstoku
Język ukraiński – dr **Kateryna Chorzewski**, Kijowski Narodowy Uniwersytet im. Tarasa Szewczenki, Ukraina

RADA NAUKOWA / ADVISORY BOARD

prof. **Jarosław Ławski** – Katedra Badań Filologicznych „Wschód – Zachód” Uniwersytet w Białymstoku – Przewodniczący / President
prof. **Andrzej Baranow** – Akademia Edukacji w Wilnie Uniwersytetu Witolda Wielkiego w Kownie (Wilno, Litwa);
Uniwersytet w Białymstoku (Białystok, Polska)
prof. **Piotr Biłos** – INALCO (Paryż, Francja)
prof. **Mariya Bracka** – Kijowski Narodowy Uniwersytet im. Tarasa Szewczenki, Ukraina
dr hab. **Piotr Chomik**, prof. UwB – Biblioteka Uniwersytecka im. Jerzego Giedroycia w Białymstoku, Polska
prof. **Margreta Grigorova** – Wielkotypnowski Uniwersytet im. Świętych Cyryla i Metodego, Bułgaria
prof. **Małgorzata Komza** – Instytut Informacji Naukowej i Bibliotekoznawstwa, Uniwersytet Wrocławski, Polska
dr hab. **Urszula Kowalczyk**, prof. UW – Uniwersytet Warszawski, Polska
prof. **Natalia Maliutina** – Uniwersytet w Białymstoku, Polska
dr **Sigitas Narbutas** – Biblioteka im. Wróblewskich Litewskiej Akademii Nauk, Wilno, Litwa
prof. **Jarosław Poliszczuk** – Uniwersytet Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Polska
prof. **Rostyslav Radyshevskiy** – Kijowski Narodowy Uniwersytet im. Tarasa Szewczenki, Ukraina
prof. em. **Jadwiga Sadowska** – Uniwersytet w Białymstoku, Polska
prof. **Feliks Shteinbuk** – Uniwersytet Komeńskiego w Bratysławie (Bratysława, Słowacja)
prof. **Brigita Speičytė** – Uniwersytet Wileński, Wilno, Litwa
prof. **Włodzimierz Szturc** – Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Kraków, Polska

Wersją referencyjną „Bibliotekarza Podlaskiego” jest wersja papierowa.

Lista recenzentów artykułów naukowych publikowanych na łamach „Bibliotekarza Podlaskiego” jest podawana na stronie internetowej czasopisma: <https://bibliotekarzpodlaski.pl>

„Bibliotekarz Podlaski” jest czasopismem wydawanym przez Książnicę Podlaską im. Łukasza Górnickiego w Białymstoku oraz Wydział Filologiczny Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku

Copyright by Książnica Podlaska im. Łukasza Górnickiego w Białymstoku

Kwartalnik, nakład 300 egz.

ISSN 1640-7806

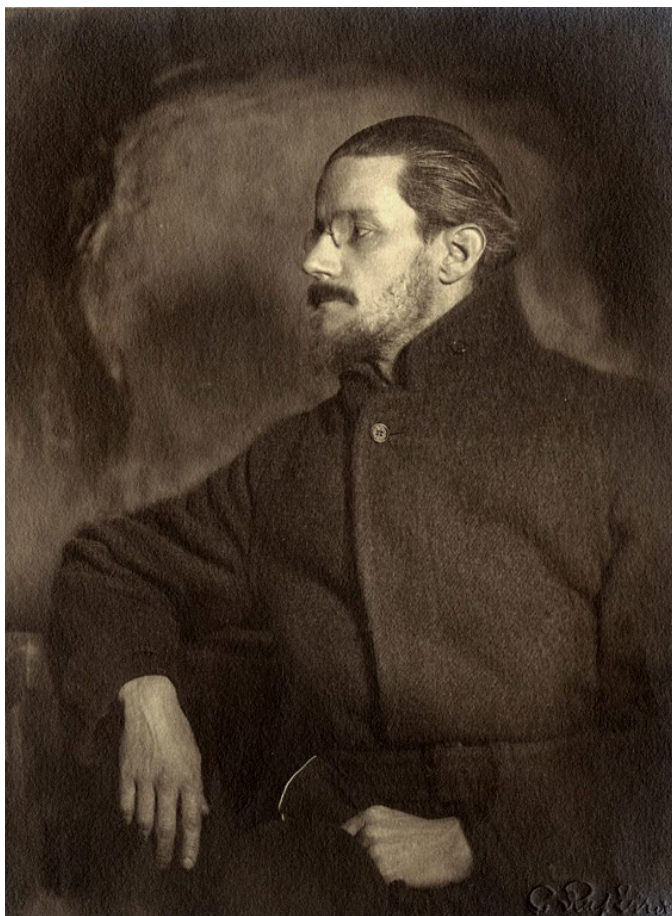
Adres redakcji:
KSIĄŻNICA PODLASKA im. Łukasza Górnickiego
ul. Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej 14A
15-097 Białystok
bibliotekarz.redakcja@ksiaznicapodlaska.pl
<https://bibliotekarzpodlaski.pl>

Skład: Przemysław Wierzbowski

Druk: Partner Poligrafia Andrzej Kardasz
ul. Hurtowa 19, 15-399 Białystok

 **KSIĄŻNICA
PODLASKA**

 **Wydział
Filologiczny**
UNIWERSYTET W BIAŁYMSTOKU



Camille Ruf, *James Joyce*, ok. 1918

REDAKTORZY NAUKOWI NUMERU

Natalia Maliutina
(Uniwersytet w Białymstoku)

Natalia Kondratenko
(Uniwersytet w Białymstoku)



Ministerstwo Kultury
i Dziedzictwa Narodowego

Dofinansowano ze środków Ministra Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego
pochodzących z Funduszu Promocji Kultury

Wszystkie publikowane w niniejszym numerze artykuły objęte są licencją
Creative Commons Uznanie autorstwa-Na tych samych warunkach 4.0
Międzynarodowe (CC BY-SA 4.0).

ang.: Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Treść licencji: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en>





I. Kobiecte obrazy, maski i twarze Odessy

1. Anna Lebet-Minakowska, *Panie Potockie z Odessy – słów kilka o portretach ze zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie* _____ 9
2. Artur Malinowski, *Топологічна рефлексія, або поетичний тривелог Лесі Українки (цикл «Подорож до моря» як динамічна цілісність)* _____ 33
3. Lucyna Aleksandrowicz-Pędich, *Linguistic identity of female characters in Vladimir Jabotinsky's Odesan novel "The Five"* _____ 53
4. Jarosław Poliszczuk, *Białystok, Kijów, Odessa... Aleksandra Ekster jako kobieca postać ukraińskiej awangardy* _____ 63
5. Natalia Kondratenko, *Концептосфера містичного художнього дискурсу: авторські світи Олени Блаватської та Віри Желіховської* _____ 81
6. Eliane Fitzé, *A Female Poetics of the Imperial: Vera Inber's Literary Conceptions of Odesa* _____ 97
7. Alena Yavorska, *Одесские поэтессы 1917-1920 годов (Зинаида Шишова, Аделина Адалис, Эмилия Немировская, Анта Дуничевская, Елена Кранцфельд)* _____ 115
8. Iryna Nechytalyuk, *Та, що зберігає пам'ять та завбачає майбутнє: образ головної героїні у мікроромані письменниці-одеситки Ганни Костенко «В епіцентрі глухої невідомості»* _____ 133
9. Robert Szymula, *Nazwy mieszkańek i mieszkańców Odessy na tle zasad tworzenia formacji habitacyjnych w języku polskim* _____ 145
10. Galyna Yarotska, *Українська ідентичність сучасних одеситок: міф чи реальність?* _____ 159

II. Varia literaturoznawcze i kulturoznawcze

1. Marek Rutkowski, *Opis podróży cara Mikołaja I do Kalisza oraz uroczystości z jego udziałem na rosyjsko-pruskich manewrach wojskowych w roku 1835 w świetle informacji zawartych w „Tygodniku Petersburskim”* _____ 177

2.	Olga Smolnytska, <i>Українские и польские авторы в отдельных фондах Кантональной и Университетской Библиотеки Лозанны (избранные издания XIX–XX вв.)</i> _____	199
3.	Wojciech Gruchała, <i>Fachowcy, wynalazki i postęp społeczny</i> _____	219
4.	Olena Yufereva, <i>Oriental Rhetoric and Image of the USSR in J.N. Darling's Travelogue "Ding goes to Russia"</i> _____	231
5.	Grzegorz Supady, <i>Powieść „Pod wulkanem” Malcolma Lowry’ego a wątki niemieckie</i> _____	249
6.	Maria Velychko, <i>Онтологічні та суспільно-політичні проблеми в малій прозі Тауфіка аль-Хакіма</i> _____	263
7.	Piotr Prachnio, <i>„Difficult fun”. Komentarze prasowe do pierwszego polskiego tłumaczenia „Ulissesa” Jamesa Joyce’a</i> _____	277
8.	Marek Kochanowski, <i>Podlasie we wczesnych reportażach Edwarda Redlińskiego</i> _____	297
9.	Olena Bondareva, Artur Bracki, <i>Pociąg Moskwa–Majdan, czyli trasy postkolonialnego zbioru nieświadomości w „Dialogach o ojczyźnie” Anny Jabłońskiej</i> _____	315
10.	Oksana Pukhonska, <i>На кордонах війни, або Поколіннявий та еміграційний виміри травми в романі Катерини Бабкіної «Мам, пам’ятаєш?»</i> _____	331

III. Recenzje naukowe

1.	Robert Suski, <i>Zaćmienie umysłu. Catherine Nixey i chrześcijaństwo</i> _____	351
----	--	-----

IV. Sprawozdania i komunikaty

1.	Małgorzata Burzka-Janik, Jarosław Ławski, <i>Ogólnopolska Konferencja Naukowa „Romantyzm industrialny”, Pałac w Rybnej – Zabrze, 27–28 października 2023 r.</i> _____	357
2.	Anna Janicka, <i>Prezentacja edycji i jubileusz Autorki: Aleksandra Nowacka, „Smak akacji. Obrazki z Kazachstanu. Pisma literackie”, Białystok 2023. Białystok, 15 Listopada 2023 r.</i> _____	365
3.	Jarosław Ławski, <i>Symposium popularnonaukowe „Rabin Mohylewer wraca do Białegostoku”, Białystok, 17 listopada 2023 r.</i> _____	371

I. Female Images, Masks, and Faces of Odesa

1. Anna Lebet-Minakowska, *Ladies Potocki from Odesa – a Few Words about Portraits from the Collections of the National Museum in Krakow* _____ 9
2. Artur Malinowski, *Topological Reflection, or Lesya Ukrainka's Poetic Travelogue (the Cycle "Journey to the Sea" as a Dynamic Whole)* _____ 33
3. Lucyna Aleksandrowicz-Pędich, *Linguistic Identity of Female Characters in Vladimir Jabotinsky's Odesan Novel "The Five"* _____ 53
4. Jarosław Poliszczuk, *Białystok, Kyiv, Odesa... Aleksandra Ekster as a Female Image of the Ukrainian Avant-Garde* _____ 63
5. Natalia Kondratenko, *The Conceptual Sphere of Mystical Artistic Discourse: Author's Worlds of Elena Blavatsky and Vera Zhelikhovskaya* _____ 81
6. Eliane Fitzé, *A Female Poetics of the Imperial: Vera Inber's Literary Conceptions of Odesa* _____ 97
7. Alena Yavorska, *Odesa Poetesses of 1917–1920 (Zinaida Shisova, Adelina Adalis, Emilia Nemirovskaya, Anta Dunichevskaya, Elena Krantsfeld)* _____ 115
8. Iryna Nechytalyuk, *The One Who Preserves Memory and Foresees the Future: The Image of the Main Character in the Micronovel "At the Epicenter of Deaf Obscurity" by Hanna Kostenko, a Writer from Odesa* _____ 133
9. Robert Szymula, *Names of Residents of Odesa Against the Background of the Tules of Habitative Formation in Polish Language* _____ 145
10. Galyna Yarotska, *The Ukrainian Identity of Modern Odesans: Myth or Reality?* _____ 159

II. Varia. Literary and Cultural Studies

1. Marek Rutkowski, *The Description of Tsar Nicholas I's Journey to Kalisz and the Ceremonies with His Participation at the Russian-Prussian Military Maneuvers in 1835 in Light of Information from "Tygodnik Petersburski"* _____ 177
2. Olga Smolnytska, *Ukrainian and Polish Authors in the Chosen Funds of the Cantonale and University Library of Lausanne (the Selected Editions of the 19th–20th Centuries)* _____ 199

3.	Wojciech Gruchała, <i>Experts, Inventions, and Social Progress</i> _____	219
4.	Olena Yufereva, <i>Oriental Rhetoric and Image of the USSR in J.N. Darling's Travelogue "Ding goes to Russia"</i> _____	231
5.	Grzegorz Supady, <i>Malcolm Lowry's Novel "Under the Volcano" and the German Topics</i> _____	249
6.	Maria Velychko, <i>Ontological and Socio-political Problems in the short Prose of Taufik al-Hakim</i> _____	263
7.	Piotr Prachnio, <i>"Difficult Fun": Press Comments on the First Polish Translation of James Joyce's "Ulysses"</i> _____	277
8.	Marek Kochanowski, <i>Podlasie in the Early Reportages of Edward Redliński</i> ____	297
9.	Olena Bondareva, Artur Bracki, <i>The Moscow–Maidan Train: Routes of the Postcolonial Collective Unconscious in Anna Jabłońska's "Dialogues about the Homeland"</i> _____	315
10.	Oksana Pukhonska, <i>On the Borders of the War, or Generational and Emigration Dimensions of Trauma in Kateryna Babkina's Novel "Mom, Do You Remember?"</i> _____	331

III. Scientific reviews

1.	Robert Suski, <i>Eclipse of the Mind. Catherine Nixey and Christianity</i> _____	351
----	--	-----

IV. Reports

1.	Małgorzata Burzka-Janik, Jarosław Ławski, <i>National Academic Conference "Industrial Romanticism," Rybna Palace – Zabrze, October 27–28, 2023</i> ____	357
2.	Anna Janicka, <i>Presentation of the Edition and the Author's Jubilee: Aleksandra Nowacka, "The Taste of Acacia. Pictures from Kazakhstan. Literary Writings", Białystok 2023. Białystok, November 15, 2023</i> _____	365
3.	Jarosław Ławski, <i>Popular Science Symposium "Rabbi Mohylewer Returns to Białystok," Białystok, November 17, 2023</i> _____	371