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**ARTISTIC PICTURE OF THE WORLD
IN EUGENIA KONONENKO NOVELS: PHILOSOPHICAL AND
PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS (BASED ON THE MATERIAL
OF ‘THREE WORLDS’ COLLECTION)**

Eugenia Kononenko is a modern Ukrainian writer whose works include novels, stories, short stories, essays, children’s books, literary translations from French and English, cultural studies, journalistic articles.

Eugenia Kononenko’s works has been studied from different angles, first of all in the context of modern Ukrainian literature in general and female prose in particular. Among the researchers there are A. Bila, N. Hersamenko, N. Zavertaliuk, O. Zabuzhko, L. Kitsak, Yu. Kushneryuk, S. Filonenko, R. Kharchuk, V. Khristo. As scientists rightly point out, ‘the works of Eugenia Kononenko represent modern literary space, aimed at opening the female worldview’ [3, p. 316]. However, a man is often the subject of speech in stories and short stories of Eugenia Kononenko. Thus, in the opinion of A. Bila, ‘the conflict deepens between the perception of another one and yourself in the intricate world of social roles, where feminine and masculine is thrown to shore or transformed into a porous androgynous mass. At the same time, such a narrative form offers a number of artistic perspectives. Taking over the psychosexual identity of the hero, the author allows the character to ‘uncover’ and to ‘identify the world around’ [1].

Eugenia Kononenko’s short prose is represented by several collections: ‘Prostitutes Also Get Married’ (2004), ‘Novels for Unkissed Girls’ (2006), ‘Three Worlds’ (2006), ‘The bookshop ‘Shock’ (2010) and is of considerable interest to literary critics. In the aspect chosen, writer’s novelty was not the object of the study, which reflects its relevance.

In the short stories of the ‘Three Worlds’ collection the artistic picture of the world is presented multilaterally, but the chronotop of the characters’ world is limited and usually has its own coordinates. It is mainly an apartment, where there is often a misunderstanding between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law (‘Early Sunday’), mother and son (‘New Stockings’), mother and daughter (‘Kiss in the

Buttocks'), husband and wife ('Outstripped'). In the short story 'Early Sunday' the world appears as 'gone mad' through the prism of the mother-in-law's view [2, p.13]. In the story 'Lamp above the Bed', the main female character escapes the nets of everyday life to see the bigger world, while she is constantly forced to make a choice.

In the short story 'Outstripped' the basis of the artistic picture of the world lies in the opposition 'women's world vs. men's world', 'small world vs. the bigger world'. According to the protagonist, 'the trajectory of the life journey is an '8'. Small circle is everyday life. Large circle is the world. Man should rotate in a large circle, while woman – in a small one' [2, p.101]. All the time the hero strives to escape the 'small circle', because 'this cluttered room with a high baby feeding chair has become the most terrible place in the whole world for him' [2, p.100]. However, ironically, the small world completely absorbs the hero, because his wife, unable to withstand such 'tied' life, left her husband and a child (hence the poetics of the novel's title 'Outstripped'). There was a change in gender roles, and in husband's opinion, 'configuration change' of the world.

In terms of interpreting the artistic picture of the world there is an interesting, same-named novel of 'Three Worlds' collection, which, according to Anna Bila, takes 'second place judging by 'prestige' and printing frequency' [1]. The image of the world appears in two main dimensions: the macrocosm – outer world and the microcosm – the world of an individual. These worlds in turn split into several levels. The external world is depicted through the prism of the main character's outlook. A young boy who believes that there are three worlds in human existence (hence the poetics of the title): the middle, the lower and the upper one. Each of them has its own cultural, moral and ethical, psychological dimensions and own characteristics.

The lower world is a marginal society, where 'ones sleep on dirty mattresses in the basements or in the attic. People are gambled away there, there are prisons, detention units, everyone is used to facers, bruises' [2, p. 8].

All ordinary inhabitants of shared apartments are characterized by the main character as living in the medium world: '...we stand in lines, or if we do not stand... We go in traffic... We do something to earn our daily bread, sometimes we visit friends with a biscuit cake...' [2, p. 8].

Third world, higher world, the world of culture: ‘Shakespeare is read there! In the original! Without a dictionary! People gather to read poetry and listen to music <...>. They realized something in being, understood something...’ [2, p. 9].

Each of these worlds has its chronotopic parameters. Thus, the middle world where the protagonist resides is ‘a non-square room with a narrow window looking into a steep inner courtyard. From the corridor window there opened an unprecedented panorama of the City’ [2, p. 7].

The higher world is depicted as a room of a lawyer Mykola Markiiianovych, whom everyone in the communal kitchen call ‘professor’. Closed faux leather door is a significant artistic detail – an obstacle, the inability to get into the world behind it by ordinary inhabitants.

The common kitchen with ‘loud Zinka’ is a point where two worlds meet – an intermediate space between the middle and higher worlds.

Worlds constantly interact with each other. The following is noted in the text of the novel on this subject: ‘He knew that the worlds are interwoven and there are people from the higher world in the chasms of the lower one [2, p. 11]. Therefore, the protagonist writes down into his notebook: ‘Belonging to the higher world gives an opportunity to remain human in the terrible lower world. But how can one get to the third world from a non-bloody dirt of gray everyday?’ [2, p. 11]. This philosophical question, in our opinion, remains unresolved. And the artistic details of ‘Loud Zinka got imprisoned’ [2, p. 12]; ‘We’ve shup that window with the boards, we will make shelves for conserves’ [2, p. 12] are an indication that it is simply impossible to get to the higher world for some characters. The fact that protagonist along with his mother moved to a separate apartment, and later he settled there with his young wife, does not mean that he moved to the higher world, because he continues its everyday existence. And if, in his opinion, he moved, it does not mean that he is happy there. He constantly feels the sadness because he ‘will never enter his former apartment, will not look at the city through the window above the sill’ [2, p. 11].

The inner world of the main character is his psychological space, which turns out to be split. Thus, another one world is outlined – the world of the character’s conceptions about the desired (ideal) existence, the world of his illusions. The artistic detail of ‘petals white and pink’ is not accidental, because white color in psychology symbolizes frustration, while pink symbolizes romanticism.

Thus, the artistic picture of the world in Eugenia Kononenko's novels is multifaceted and reflects the important problems of nowadays: moral, ethical, gender, existential and philosophical. At the center of the author's attention there are the problems of the modern family crisis, the change of gender roles, the search for self and harmony in the world. At the same time, there is deep immersion to the characters' inner world. In light of this, further research on the above-mentioned topic is relevant, as it will help to grasp the ideological and issue-related dominants, stylistic and poetic peculiarities of the writer's small prose.

References

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ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННАЯ КАРТИНА МИРА В РОМАНЕ Ю. АНДРУХОВИЧА «МОСКОВИАДА»

Творчество Юрия Андруховича в современной украинской литературе – яркое и неординарное явление. Об этом свидетельствуют многочисленные рецензии и исследования (Т. Гундоровой, Р. Харчук, Н. Бедзир, И. Бондарь-Терещенко, Н. Зборовской, А. Бойченко, Ю. Запорожченко и др.), в которых рассматриваются различные аспекты: поэтика писателя, постмодернистские принципы его художественного метода, своеобразии жанровых форм его художественных текстов, проблема «московского текста» и т. д.