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**REALIA ‘WEDDING’ AS THE BASIS OF LANGUAGE  
AND CULTURE INTERACTION OF LITHUANIAN  
NATION IN THE TEXT OF THE NOVEL  
‘LITHUANIAN CLAVIERS’ BY GERMAN WRITER  
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(Received 2 October 2014, revised 13 October 2014)

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**Abstract**

The article is devoted to the question of culture and literature interaction. Relevance of research is established by the need of learning the basics of the language world-image in general and the role of individual cultural concepts such as ‘wedding ceremonies’ in the formation of world-images in the language. National-cultural identity of the people of linguistic culture is vividly reflected not only in their customs, traditions and way of life, but also in the texts of literary works. In the novel ‘Lithuanian claviers’ Johannes Bobrovsky echoes the Lithuanian past – the poem of K. Donelaitis ‘Seasons’, his poetry rich in folk art - music, folklore, language, traditions and customs.

*Keywords:* Johannes Bobrovsky, text’s poetics, ‘Lithuanian claviers’, wedding rituals, cultural linguistics

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**1. Introduction**

Each ethnic group perceives reality in its own way, creating its vision of the world rituals and traditions through the light of time. The attention of scientists is attracted to the study of culture and polylingual interaction. Common to these concepts are ways of forming linguistic world-image, where image perception of ritual collocations by representative of a particular cultural community plays the important role [1].

The significance of the research undertaken is without any doubt, as linguoculturological surveys that affected an aspect, which has a phenomenally critical meaning for modern scientific paradigm, like a wedding, family, relationships between relatives [2]. Nowadays, when there is an evidence of formalization and universalization both of different nations’ wedding

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celebrations in and texts of speeches, sounding at weddings, that's why tendency to look at the origins, philological environment of this sacred action are the main objectives of this study.

The significance of research is also supported by the necessity of studying the basics of the linguistic world-image in general and the role of separate cultural concepts such as 'wedding ceremonies' in the formation of world images in the language.

## **2. Discussion**

The study of linguistic units, describing the wedding rites, is particularly interesting, as the wedding traditions that are observed during the wedding ceremony from antiquity and are among the most important and significant customs of every nation, every human being [3]. These peculiar linguistic units allow to simulate fragments of linguistic world-image of sociocultural community, to identify the specifics of national linguistic consciousness, on the basis of which is constructed the language behaviour of its speakers. Mini-ritual texts, being a part of any culture claim to universality, which is reflected in the allocation of basic notions and concepts, refracted different forms and means in the lexical system of different structural languages.

Language is the basis of human's being in culture. G.R. Derjavin said that "language is the key to nature and knowledge, in the word of all creatures contains the image" [4]. One of the central problems in linguistics is interaction of language and culture. The language is the direct reflection of reality and the culture is an essential component of this reality, with which an individual is faced, consequently, the language is the direct reflection of culture. In the process of changing the reality, comes the replacement of cultural-national stereotypes, so the language changes itself [5]. Language, from the one hand, being the element of culture, inherited from ancestries and the prime of the cultural phenomena, the main instrument of perception the world by mankind and the storage of individual and social experience on the other, reflects the mentality of exact ethnocultural community. Accordingly, "conceptual understanding of culture may be implemented by means of native language" [5]. Taking into consideration that native speaker is simultaneously a culture bearer, we suppose that language signs serve as a mean of fixation of the main cultural attitudes and national-cultural inheritance, playing the role of cultural signs [6].

The notion 'language' is inseparably tied with the term 'world-image', since individual perceives surrounding elements of the reality by means of language. Originally the notion 'word-image' was formed at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century and one its founders is considered to be the German scientist I. Gerder. In the Humboldt's proceedings, the founder of 'philosophy language', are also presented the first conclusions that nothing as language is able to unravel the mystery of individual and national identity and "human being lives with things the way the language presents them... And each language circumscribes its nation in the circle, and the individual leaves it only for entering in another

language's circle." [7] At the present time the notion 'world-image' and especially such notions as conceptual and language world-image are investigated in the works of H.F Arsentieva [6].

We understand the reflection of the world in human's consciousness and his presentation of the environment as conceptual world-image. The language world-image is the information of environment and individual, which is fixed and worked out in the language.

Kornilov gives his own typology of the world-image, basing on the "different kinds of consciousness", emphasizing that "the result of realizing of the world by each type of consciousness is fixed in language's matrix, serving that kind of consciousness" [8]. He offers to subdivide the world-image on scientific (a form of collective scientific consciousness), national (national scientific form of consciousness, represented in the language science of one or another national language), lingual (linguistic consciousness form of a linguistic community), national language (a form of linguistic consciousness of a particular ethnic group), individual national lingual (a form of linguistic consciousness of the individual – the speaker of a particular language) [8].

Considering the concept of 'linguistic world-image' as a representative of all levels of the language system of a particular ethnic group, we take it as the basis of our research.

Linguistic world-image is the mental-lingual formation. This is why the language is capable in displaying cultural-national mentality of its speakers, as different people see the world from a different angle, through the prism of national understanding. It allows emphasizing its universal structure and national distinctive elements of the content that undoubtedly affects the outlook system of the people. In particular, we can note the following factors: geographical and climatic conditions of the nation, its lifestyle, type of management, beliefs, traditions and customs, so the understanding of reality of one nation differs from other [9].

In the traditional sense of its culture the most important in personal and family life of every nation are such steps as birth, marriage and death [10]. Each rite is embedded with its content, but it represents a conditional action, which aims to express in symbolic form concrete representations and certain social ideas. Rite established as an expression of the spirit, habits, traditions, way of life of the community, it reflects real human life, its communication and relationship with society and other people.

The first elements of rituals emerged long before the advent of the Christian religion according to the needs of people in a joyful and sad moments of life to come together in a certain way and to express their feelings engulfed: variety of ties and relationships of people in community, ties, not only connecting man with his contemporaries, but also combining him with the ancestors [11]. This is the nature of socio-psychological rituals.

Wedding rites passed a difficult way of development, changing with the social relations. However, ceremonial institutions, including wedding, have a high degree of conservation, whereby as part of ritual complex saved many vestigial phenomena that don't meet the socio-economic conditions of the time.

The most vivid expression of the nature of the worldview is manifested in the lexicon, as through the formation of this language is possible the 'division' of reality, the selection of certain objects to which attention of native speaker is aimed. Linguistic picture of the world is based on linguistic resources such as a word, idiom, proverb or saying, as well as text, which contain all sorts of background knowledge and the way these values are reflected in the national language world-image of a particular ethnic group.

National-cultural identity of the nation is vividly reflected not only in their customs, traditions and way of life [12], but also in the texts of literary works. Thus, a systematic analysis of the poetics of Bobrovsky's novels with special artistic organization of the describing material makes it possible to talk about a number of visual techniques of the author, which characterizes his novels as original, unique ones: a reflection of the image elements of people's life, work and creativity, through a singular narrative technique and images, words. In the novel 'Lithuanian Claviers' [13] echoes tales of Lithuanian past: poem of K. Donelaitis, his poetry and rich folk art – music, folklore, language, traditions and customs.

The theme of art, folk art and folklore sounds like the embodiment of the rich spiritual world of the author of the novel, his historical views and worldview. It's impossible to express own true views on life without a clear citizenship. The decisive role plays the historical world of the writer. Complexity of the historical writer's worldview determines the specificity of his 'short fiction' where a significant place is given to the historical theme. German writer tells his contemporaries about the dark hidden depths of the distant past, reveals the spiritual power of the people which is capable of resisting 'the forces of unreason and evil'.

School of hard knocks in town, of such German humanists as I. Kant, I.G. Gerder, I.G. Gamann, also traditions of humanistic school 'Altstadt kneiphof', the process of learning that focuses on the study of old languages of XVII-XVIII centuries – all these initiated the formation of the historical worldview of Johannes Bobrovsky. Knowledge of Greek, Latin languages and following learning of the rough eastern-Prussian peasants' dialect, firm grasp of 'elegant' and at the same time, the spoken language of the peasants of Eastern Prussia made it possible to use it in his prose works, fully comprehend the historical monuments as ancient and national literature, the possibility of a deeper understanding of Germany history. The realization that the distortion of nation's history took place already for centuries came, starting with the 'deeds of the Knights of the Teutonic Order', and continues in modern fascist Germany. That is why Bobrovsky said, "How much innocent blood was shed in the years of war, already in the XIII century in the campaigns of the German knights, took its

origin tragedy of the German people ... The truth of it was silent or has been significantly distorted for centuries in favour of the existing power" [14].

An active life position of the young Bobrovsky is confirmed by the fact that during the years of study in Königsberg he made friends within the circles of Christian Anti-Fascist resistance and shared the views of the Lutheran 'opposition', representatives of which expressed their disagreement with the 'racial laws of the third empire', with a scorn of human rights. Königsberg period of life is the time of effective citizenship of young Bobrovsky, which over the years of intense spiritual quest has developed into a mature outlook of the writer, a citizen with his own beliefs and historical views. Life itself gave him comprehensive answers to the questions of his youth, pointed to the creative path that passed I. Bobrovsky.

Course of writer's life and his artistic explorations - this is one integration, fuelled by a complex, contradictory historical outlook, taking its origins from the border, the German-Polish soil.

Creative career of the writer is time period consisting of thirteen-odd years. Bobrovsky came in the literature already, can be said, as a mature man. It should not, of course, be forgotten his youthful poetic work during school years, and on Ilmen lake near the walls of Novgorod, on Russian soil.

The fact that Bobrovsky in the years of Soviet captivity kept thinking about literary works, says his recollection: "... In captivity, I read for the first time a poem by Peter Huhel in a newspaper,... And in 1952 I met with him, having sent first poems; he was the first to recognize my poems and gave me confidence." [15]

The long-term German fascists' propagation of hatred for the Polish, Russian and Lithuanian people had done its work. The younger generation of Germans was unfamiliar with the history of the relations between the German and Slavic peoples, and the poet was trying by the means of verse to awaken the sympathy of his fellow-countrymen to the people of Eastern Europe. He points to even to the indirect guilt of the German people in relation to the Lithuanians, Russian, and Polish.

An artistic interpretation of history, holding semantic threads from modern time in the past, and vice versa, as well as a combination of different elements and a fantastic manner of storytelling (along with actual historical materials follow mythological, folk elements, and, by the way, in an interesting combination, unusual, almost imperceptible transitions), an organic fusion of literature and Folklore (the desire to capture people's view of history, the desire to integrate folkloric elements in the art system) - all these intertwined unusually in prose of the writer. There is no sequence of the plot in his novels, the action in them is interrupted by unexpected 'failures', shifting the reader into a different historical era, the side scenes, suddenly gain greater independence, too. Only gradually it becomes clear that all these departures - as often as shift of reality and fiction - enrich, deepen the basic concept of Bobrovsky's novels: the story of a dramatic page in the social struggle of his people, his deep affinity with his spiritual world. All these suggest that Bobrovsky anticipated many quests and

achievements in the field of modern Western fiction, including the field of art historical prose [16].

Being familiar with the Slavic languages and Slavic poetry, Bobrovsky reports Germans new knowledge about the cultural traditions of other nations. But it is, in the words of the writer, does not meant to influence the reader by a lot of reviews and articles of literary criticism, but drawing on personal experience, to tell about the Slavic culture and its traditions, which I. Bobrovsky makes. He sees his purpose to be the mediator between the Slavic and German culture. He was convinced in the help of the Lithuanian, Latvian, Russian, Polish songs, poems of Slovak poet Peter Bezruk, Serbian poet Jakub Bart, creativity of Lithuanian priest K. Donelaitis who wrote his idyll using Lithuanian hexameters before Klopstock, whose identity is unique and speaks about acquaintance for the contemporaries of Bobrovsky.

Humanistic traditions, as the writer believes, live in people, they do not die and, moreover, they help to stand against those who go against the natural way of life. History confirms this, and Bobrovsky 'dig' for it in the era of Donelaitis (XVIII century), in the poem ('Seasons') in which Lithuanian folklore is considered to be an expression of national consciousness and ideals. Establishment of 'lajms' and 'ulajms', Lajma and Patbelis personifying happiness and unhappiness in Lithuanian folklore, says that the nation tolerates evil and enjoys good for centuries. Such frequent using by Bobrovsky text of the poem says that Donelaitis' poetry is an important part of nation soul's life, which gives the right to call the novel 'Lithuanian Claviers' deeply common.

According to the author's intention, artistic union of professor Foigt, accompanist Gaven and Lithuanian teacher Poshka, which was passionately working at creating of 'Singer of his nation' opera, is the continuator of Lithuanian culture's traditions of K. Donelaitis' epoch.

On the basis of historical Poshka the author creates an artistic image of young Lithuanian, Dionizas Poshka, who was the popular Lithuanian culture figure of the beginning of XIX century. The common teacher Poshka, collector of folklore songs, lives in Vil'kishkyai settlement, which is situated on the boundary of tilsit and ragnit dialects.

There are many of the author's biography facts gathered in the hero of Poshka, as life journey and creativity have something common with Foigt's biography. Thus, Poshka is the young Bobrovsky, while Foigt as experienced man, with a big mental vocabulary of his own worldview principals, represents the matured poet and writer Bobrovsky. Foigt-Bobrovsky follows the people's tradition, where the script reminds the free, spontaneously arising popular conception: Tolminkemis peasants of the village, the bride and groom, their parents and friends, kjuster Seligman, pastor Donelaitis, his wife Anna Regina, the musicians playing the violin and harp, the girls' song, etc.

K. Donelaitis himself, his poem 'The Seasons' in its subject matter is the description of the nature, the plot was an expression of general literary tendencies of the age (XVIII century), opening perspectives for the understanding of the ideological and artistic innovation of K. Donelaitis.

Surprise for the literary background of epoch in the poem was the interpretation of feudal estate from peasant and satirical point of view. Literary influence was not affected here, but observation of reality and personal experience of the poet. With the help of the contrasts between the estate and the village, progressive ideas are looming: the natural equality of all people, the origin of inequality due to different social status of people. So does Bobrovsky and in another of his novel 'The Mill Levin' [17]. "Sympathy of the author is at the side of the people, a motley blending of Poles, Jews, Gypsies, who for centuries have lived in this area and worked as traders, farmers, millers, artisans, horseman, and also the village musicians, magicians, circus actors" - says K. Zukmayer [15, p. 100].

'The Seasons' is characterized by rich ethnographic-household flavour. Folk customs and traditions are reflected in the harvest festival scenes. Especially there are a lot of ethnographic details in the detailed description of country-side's wedding, which occupies most of the 'Good autumn' (the third part of the poem).

One of the main and culminating rituals in wedding ceremonies is considered the wedding feast, describing of which we find in the poem's text. Physical-geographical and climatic conditions, economical, religious instructions, customs, traditions and many other factors formed notion of 'ethnic cuisine' [18]. For instance, in countries, bordered by seas and oceans, sea products are especially popular: here, as Salzburg's settlers say, "in villages, which are in the north of Tolminkemis settlement, cabbage is soured, trampled by clean and bare feet and buried; they eat sea slugs from the plain moist shells and dirty fish caviar" [17, p. 103]. In districts, which are situated in forest-steppe regions, dishes from products of cattle breeding – 'farrow three cows', 'two bull-calves', 'pigs and sheeps weren't counted', 'hens and geese', 'whole geese in fat', 'bowls of soup', 'pans with roast meat', 'bowled giblets', 'fresh tripes' [K. Donelajtis, *Seasons*, from the poem Good autumn, [www.lib.liim.ru/creations/d-108/d-108-08.html](http://www.lib.liim.ru/creations/d-108/d-108-08.html), accessed on 02.02.2013]. This is the specificity of the Lithuanian wedding feast.

National markedness is also apparent in the style of clothing of the guests present at the feast.

"To the guests or to the banquet gathering: married are recognized -

Caps on their heads, and also homespun shawls,

Heads of unmarried with colourful wreath are decorated.

Old sisters, do not think about girlish wreaths at all

Girls, I say to you, do not be seduced with woman's caps." [17, p. 105]

But Bobrovsky is not limited only with the establishment of rhyming Lithuanian song elements, he gives a description of the Lithuanian national dress "festive women dresses, shawls and Lithuanian bonnets, aprons decorated with ribbons" [17, p. 105].

Also the description of the protagonists ceremony is especially interesting - bride and groom, we note, the author gives the appearance image of the newlyweds, without highlighting the features of their attire, in contrast,

emphasizing the similarities of festive dress and behaviour of the bride, the bride's mother, best friend's, mother-in-law's, "lips folded as heart ... hair combed back from the temple, have to sit careful not to crush puffed sleeves and ribbon draped over the shoulders and many of colourful scarves and skirts". He makes the same in the case of the groom, the groom's father, father-in-pals: "shoes, black stockings made of black sheep's wool, coat buttoned both buttons, wide trousers, embroidered belts, shaggy beards".

### 3. Conclusions

All the examples, described earlier, confirm the idea of language world-image of this or that nation having much common in universal human values, on the one hand, and in national-cultural specifics – from the other.

All prosaic creativity of German writer is permeated with Gerder's nationality idea. Bobrovsky knows languages of border region well (German, Lithuanian, Polish), where he spent his childhood and he is familiar with its culture (folk songs, life, rites). Bobrovsky based on the popular tradition in 'Lithuanian claviers', the reader being faced with distinctive national, free from any imitation, folk art.

So, as the analysis of factual material showed, linguistic units functioning in the studied text, which are related to the realia of 'wedding', act as short ethno-cultural mini-texts and reflect the linguistic world-image of the Lithuanian people.

Phenomenon of multicultural 21<sup>st</sup> century leads to the need to acquire not only basic levels and categories of language, but also a kind of information given in the language, which is dictated by the desire to avoid disharmony in communication of different cultures, which may manifest socio-cultural imbalance and nonidentical subjective world-pictures or ideological conflict.

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Realia "wedding" as the basis of language and culture interaction of Lithuanian nation in the text of the novel "Lithuanian clavier" by German writer Johannes Bobrovsky. Article. Dec 2014. G.T. Gilfanova. D.A. Salimzanova. The article is devoted to the question of culture and literature interaction. Dick Davis (1992 & 2006) as well as other scholars whose names are brought in the paper made translations of the book, lately. Worthy of mention as translators to other European modern languages are: Jules Mohl (1831-1868) into French, Count Adolf Friedrich von Schack into German (1851) and I. Pizzi into Italian in 8 volumes. They are among world-renowned translations of Firdausi's epic.