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**LINGUO-COGNITIVE MECHANISM OF REPRESENTATION OF  
“HORDE TOPOS” IN HISTORICAL DISCOURSE**

Dmitriy Bychkov (a)\*, Diliara Gainanova (b), IAKh Umadkereeveva (c)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Astrakhan State Technical University, 16, Tatishchev street, Astrakhan, Russia,  
dmitriybychkov@list.ru, 8-905-481-84-90

(b) Kazan State University of Architecture and Engineering, 1, Zelenaiya street, Kazan, Russia,  
dilyara2701, 8-937-282-29-85

(c) Chechen State University, 32, Sheripov street, Grozny, Russia,  
y.umad@mail.ru, 8-928-290-70-38

***Abstract***

The article analyzes the structure of the space of a literary work representing the space of the Golden Horde from the perspective of linguistic and cognitive science. The “Horde Topos” is interpreted as a set of objects, related to each other. The present work analyzes the ideological modelling of the «Horde Topos» in the novel «Sergius of Radonezh» by Dmitrii Balashov. The analysis showed that, for the modern recipient the language of spatial relationships becomes the main means of understanding it. Historical and national-language spatial models serve in an artistic work as the organizing basis for creating a “picture of the world”, which is an integral ideological model inherent for the modern type of perception. In the present work we have paid special attention to the most important topological attribute of space - the border and its main property - impenetrability: the way the text is divided by the border is essential. The internal structure of each of the subspaces appears to be different. The article proves that the spatial structure of a literary text belonging to historical discourse implements spatial models of a more general type (works of a certain writer, a particular literary movement, a particular national or regional culture). It always not only represents a variant of the common system, but also conflicts with it in a certain way, de-automatizing its language. The essential feature that organizes the spatial structure of the “Horde Topos” is its open character, endowed with “alien”, “hostile”, “deadly”, etc.

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**Keywords:** Representation, discourse, topos, setting, cognitive mechanism.



## 1. Introduction

The first decades of the 21st century are characterized by the philologists' scientific interest in imagology - science, the object of study of which is the city as an explication of cultural meanings. The study of the problem of the representation of urban space by linguistic cognitive means of artistic literature is one of the priorities of contemporary Russian literary criticism. Philologists explore imagological themes from phenomenological positions as a methodological basis for analyzing and interpreting the image of space in a literary work. The question of the phenomenological potential of representation in the literary text of the image of a city that no longer exists in reality is a specific problem for philological analysis. The present study fits into the paradigm of the generalization of the cognitive approach to the study of human life, outlined in the latest publications of European and American scientists (Thagar, 2007). The article proposes a methodological model of the literary analysis of the "urban" text on the example of the "Horde topos" centered around the urban toponymes of the Golden Horde, which is the polar opposite to the "Rus' land" in fiction (due to the historical-geographical and sociocultural differences between the two regions).

## 2. Problem Statement

Representation is a polysemantic interdisciplinary notion used as a term in linguistics, literary criticism, philosophy, psychology, sociology, etc. The most common definition of representation corresponds to the representation of one object in the other one and through the other one. The methodological aspect of the understanding of representation through the concept of "presentation" was emphasized by phenomenology, first of all, by the German philosopher E. Husserl, who defined the task of phenomenological analysis as an unconditional description of the experience of the cognitive consciousness and the identification of its essential features (Gritsanov, Rumiantseva, & Mozheiko, 2002). The presentation (understood as present, directly perceived, primary, represented without distortion by symbolic means in representation) is considered in the phenomenological approach as impossible to analyze. "Presence" in this context can be defined as a representation resulting in the expression and "occurrence" of the social and natural world. Reality, understood as being accessible to cognition only through the prism of its possible representations, is determined from the difference between these representations. Whether representation is adequate or not depends on whether it correlates with other representations or not (Kuznetsov, 2004).

The reality, towards which the reader is a cognizer immersed in historical discourse, is determined by the entity of the described topos, that is historically and mentally distant from modernity, for example, the Golden Horde topos. Writer displays the representation of a no longer existent space with the help of linguo-cognitive means in the discourse of identity. It allows the reader to get the opportunity of "repeated" observations, i.e. of comparing personal experience and the characters' behavior. On the other hand, the discourse of historical narration is based on the principle of identity, i.e. it permits the perception of the described objects or phenomena as intersubjectively "same", that is, identical in the set of perceptions. Thus, the author overcomes the dualism of external, physical, and internal, mental, reality in a work, which is centered around a historically distant space. It lets the author of the historical novel to express the diversity of the experience of a single reality and the ways of (ее полагания). The circumstances under which sample

formation takes place in the mind of the recipient has not been fully understood in cognitive science yet (Stewart, Chandler, & Paolacci 2017). Thus, on the basis of our observations, it can be affirmatively noted that the artistic world recreated in historical prose acts as a correlate of consciousness, that is, appears as always conscious in some way. Thus, according to our observations, we can affirmatively note that the artistic world recreated in historical prose is a correlate of consciousness, that is, appears as always being perceived by consciousness in some way. It means the appearance of a new subject and a new methodology of philological cognition, related to the study of language, sign, knowledge, life world, construction of social reality, intersubjectivity and other phenomena. Scientific interest in the study of these phenomena was stimulated by the interpretation of the concept of representation as a methodological principle.

The solution of the stated problem determines the relevance of the linguocognitive (cognitive-discursive) approach to analyzing and interpreting the experiences of modern writers in representing historically and mentally distant topoi, such as the “Horde” topos, since the original interpretation in a work of art acquires the space of an “unreal” city: The perception of the plot is in some way determined by the involvement of the reader.

The solution of the stated problem determines the relevance of the linguo-cognitive (cognitive-discursive) approach to analyzing and interpreting the experiences of a representation of historically and mentally distant topoi (such as Horde topos) by modern authors. It is due to the fact that the space of an “unreal” city acquires a peculiar interpretation in a work of art: it should be kept in mind that the perception of the plot is in some way determined by the involvement of the reader.

### **3. Research Questions**

The subject of the article is linguo-cognitive means of representing the “Horde topos”, which, in the functional set, represents a unified mechanism of the verbal expression of the reception of the foreign (alien) space. We have selected the historical novel Balashov's (2009) “Sergius of Radonezh” as an object of our research. Representation of the “Horde topos” conveys in «Sergius of Radonezh» the point of view of the character (and the author), the expression plan of which is fundamentally different in phraseological, axiological sense from the perception of the area inherent in its representatives, which corresponds to a person's ability to mimicry (as cited in Chartrand & Baaren, 2009). In order to present the reader with the object of our research, let us quote from the analyzed novel, in which the described color of the “Horde topos” space represented by the author is visible:

*...the wide-open Volga shores, still wild, with sparse decorations of the towns over scree-covered slopes, vast thickets of reeds along the canals of the Volga mouth. KHadzhi-Tarkhan is near, the boat will soon reach Sarai. Young Vasilii Dmitrich is arriving here as a hostage, having yet very little understanding of the complex game of the political forces encountered here. (Balashov, 2009, p. 87)*

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this article is a theoretical and methodological substantiation of a cognitive-discursive approach, known for the Russian philology, to the decoding and interpretation of literary works of the historical prose genre recreating the artistic image of the “Horde topos”. The present study allows us to analyze the mentally alien imagery of works of art that represent the era of the Golden Horde in Russian literature.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The presented literary study is based on the scientific rationale of the analytical philological interpretation and is of complex character. Semiotically, each historical city is endowed with textual texture, has its own semiotic system and variable semantics (Lotman, 2010). The semantics of the city can be analyzed and interpreted by the linguo-cognitive approach, which consists in revealing the mechanism of representation of the image of a historical city through the prism of the cognitive processes of the author and the reader. The analysis of the functionality of the linguistic-cognitive mechanism of the author's representation of city image implements the following tasks:

- identifying the content of the notion “historical city” and the criteria for the historicity of the city in a cultural context;
- the study of the textuality and contextuality of the historical city as an integrator and generator of cultural texts;
- a semiotic analysis of the text of a historical city: interpretation of its possible figurative incarnations, consideration of its memorial, architectural, artistic, ethnographic and archaeological aspects;

In solving the problems posed by the analysis of the linguo-cognitive mechanism of representation of the image of a historic city, the following methods are used:

- semiotic, contributing to the analysis of the historical city as a special kind of text with its syncretic language, semiotic system, variable semantics, constantly added with new semantic shades;
- historical, giving the opportunity to trace the genesis of the concept of "historical city", the stages of evolution of its reception;
- comparative-analytical, allowing to identify common and different features in the cultural texts of different cities, of "native" and "alien" elements.

#### **6. Findings**

Western and Russian researchers of the second half of the 20th century, have introduced the concept of “historical city” in order to draw attention to the analysis of the spatial environment in which modern man exists (including the reader immersed in the artistic space). Researchers consider historical city to be a special kind of text, or an integrator and at the same time a generator of cultural texts. It has the following properties: integrity, structure, sign nature, connectedness, delimitation, and dialogical nature. The latest publications prove the idea of the correlation between stratified bundles and understanding of space (Sun, 2019). It is becoming relevant for humanities (in particular, literary criticism) to carry out a multidimensional study of the image of a city as a historical category, as an integral semiotic space with

cultural texts embodied in it, which makes it possible to endow the cities with content, even in those numerous cases where the city no longer exists in modern times, i.e. is historically and mentally distant from the modern recipient (Veselova, 2009).

Thus, a “historical city”, represented in a literary text, is understood as an integral multidimensional semiotic phenomenon that fits within a certain time period, in which space material artifacts and spiritual concepts of the past find their reflection. Therefore, it possesses cognitive, memorial, cultural and aesthetic value for the author and the reader. The image of the city is created in historical discourse with the help of linguo-cognitive means, functioning as a representation mechanism. The linguo-cognitive analysis of the image of a historical city as a semiotic space, makes it possible to identify and interpret its textural texture. At the same time, its verbal representation is constantly updated with new meanings, associations, symbols, with various folklore-mythological, philosophical and other interpretations and evaluations. Thus, the urban space, embodying diverse temporal and cultural meanings, gives rise to imaginative associations, different in emotional and semiotic coloring: cosmological, mythological, anthropomorphic and religious. These features are fully extended to cities that no longer exist, for example, to the Golden Horde topoi.

The Horde topos is a kind of an organized context in the form of a textually embodied history, structured according to the laws of the game: it is formed by characters, a story happening to them or on their initiative events, incorporating everything that falls into its scope, unexpected or repetitive events, characters who begin to interpret these events, etc.). What is the cognitive mechanism of textual reconstruction of the artistic image of the “Horde topos” as a space distant in time?

Literary creation, as we know, represents the results of the game of imagination. According to that, the “Horde topos”, constructed by the representing subject, is indirectly dependent on the setting of the artistic work (on the space where the action takes place). The term “setting” can be used to designate the time, conditions, framework, material environment in which the space is perceived, which appears to be “alien”, and, in some sense, surreal for the foreign subject. It is determined by the psychological laws of perception, social identity of the subject of speech and his confidence in “Alien” (Üth, Levati, & Ploner, 2008). Thus, a particular case of the setting is the “fictional universe” (for example, J. Tolkien's “Middle-earth”). The fictional setting can include its own cosmology, geography, history, culture. However, the setting can be not only fictional, but also historically real, for example: “Kievan Rus”, “Medieval European City”, “Jerusalem”, “Atil - the capital of the Khazar Khaganate”, etc., including the setting are such geopoetic topoi of modern Russia, as the “Golden Horde”. In studies of the space of a historical city, the need for the notion of “setting” adequate for postmodern aesthetics results from the vagueness of the notion “picture of the world” in modern philological science and the relevance of a culturological approach to solving the problem of space representation. To a certain extent, the setting is a network as it is explored in cognitive science (Baroncelli, Ferrer-i-Chancho, Pastor-Satorras, Chater, & Christiansen, 2013). The setting of the historical narrative, in our opinion, is an a priori condition for the effective functioning of the cognitive mechanism of representation of the historical space.

The setting of a historical work describing the capital of the Golden Horde determines the plot and its plot realization. A literary work, scenery in which in some way recreates a “multi-plot” setting, allows generalizing several types of combining situations that do not exhaust, however, the creative function of representing subjects who overcome the cognitive-discursive framework (setting) of a stereotypic matrix.

Thus, the stereotype of perception becomes the basic law of the cognitive mechanism of representation, to put it more terminologically, the scenario. The setting determines, in particular, the behavior of the characters, makes it, on the one hand, stereotypical, and on the other, stimulates new behavioral reactions in the process of perceiving a “foreign”, “alien” space. This circumstance is explained psychologically: social interaction (including in the communicative space of literature) is based on accepting another as an object of reception (Rilling & Santfey, 2010).

Cognitive linguistics understands scenarios as structures of consciousness that describe stereotypical scenes of events. Unlike the frame, which is the structure for the declarative presentation of knowledge about a typified situation, the scenario is a “conceptual structure for the procedural presentation of knowledge about a stereotyped situation or a stereotyped behavior”. Cognitive structures play a significant role in the perception of a historical city: they help to establish the text coherence, provide interpretation of contextual expectations, which allow (to the reader as well) to predict future events based on previously encountered events that are similar in structure. The basis of the cognitive mechanism of the representation of the alien space topos is the principle of switching cultural reception codes. Being relatively stable, generalized structures of past experience, cognitive structures (in particular, scenarios), make it possible to anticipate changes in objects, the order of development of events, their content and internal communication. The elements of the script are combined into a single whole according to certain rules. Each of the components of the script can be meaningfully interpreted in the specific conditions of its environment, expressing the relation of the sign to the phenomenon, object, situation denoted by it. We present a fragment from the novel by Balashov (2009) illustrating our observations:

*Tackles squeaked, the ship swayed, <...> distant green shores were stretching, slowly passing by. Desert! <...> After the Tatar pogroms frightened Nizhny Novgorod rusichi did not risk, as before, show up (вылезать на глядень), were fleeing into the forests, hiding behind the swamps, on small rivers. And nevertheless, this life stubbornly fought through all the pillars, strengthened and climbed, irresistibly turning the Tatar river Itil into the Russian Volga ... (p. 103)*

The question of the structure and number of the scenarios is important for identifying the properties of the “Horde topos” space. The basis of the scenario as a propositional model is the structural diagram of the path: source - path - goal, where the source is the initial state, goal is the final state, and events between them are considered as points along the way.

The scenario is produced as a result of text interpretation, when key words and ideas of the text create thematic (“scenario”) structures extracted from memory based on standard, stereotypical values assigned to terminal elements. Thus, in the “Astrakhan text” one can single out the following levels of the scenario:

- superficial semantic frame of the scenario structure, including the meanings of words associated with the action;
- qualifiers and relationships associated with participants, tools, movement patterns and strategies, goals, effects and associated effects);

- thematic frames (scenarios related to the representation of a topos, activities, portraits, environments);
- narrative frames (skeletal forms of typical stories, explanations and evidence, allowing the listener to construct a full thematic frame containing conventions on how the focus changes, information about the main characters, the form of the plot, the development of the action, etc.).

Thus, it is the scenario that gives integrity to the representation of space. Scenario has a plot character and represents a clear sequence of episodes in time, for example, about visiting and representing the sights and landmarks. The scenario is a sequence of stereotypical episodes with signs of movement, development. Physical movement and landscape perception also exemplify the scenario variability:

*We with the prince went to the city. We gazed at the steppe warrior riding their shaggy short horses, crushing the grass, raising clouds of brown dust, gazed at these inexhaustible flocks moving as if being born out of the grass, and thought: overstrain, Rus, gather all you can gather, break in the new Don battle these innumerable hordes.* (Balashov, 2009, p. 179)

The operational units of memory — frames (stereotypical situations, scenarios), concepts (a set of all meanings captured by a word), gestalts (integral subconceptual images of fragments of the world) become operating units in perception and interpretation of space, representing the setting of “Horde topos” as a text. It can be concluded that the range of cognitive tools studied by linguists (Alefirenko, 2013), along with the means of representation (ambivalent phenomenon of simultaneous representation of an object), conceptualization (classification and structuring), categorization (integration into discharges), conventions (objectification of thought) and interpretation (realized understanding) includes another, no less important means, which, following the Russian philosopher Golosovker (2012), we propose to call - imagination (the mechanism of imagination, which is understood as inherent human power, both creative and cognitive).

## 7. Conclusion

Throughout the ages of Russian literature evolution, the “Horde topos” belongs to those super-saturated realities recreated by the authors of historical works and, therefore, is already inseparable from myth and the whole sphere of symbolic content. “Reading” culture as a “text” and interpreting literary works as an expression of the ideas of another person, living in different time, about the world and about themselves, and relating them to the cultural and mental experience of modernity, the recipient better understands themselves today. In this relation to the historical experience of the location, for example, the city as a symbolic image of culture, is the important landmark in the geographical, social, spiritual, historical space: it is represented in the national consciousness as a symbol of the nation, history and culture. These ideas, as well as the cities themselves, testify to the qualities of culture, its “languages”, its “structure”, its political and economic, spiritual, religious, moral characteristics and can be considered as the most important structural element of spiritual history and security. In this aspect, the literary understanding of the representation of loci intersects with the theories of the city in cultural studies and social psychology.

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