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PUBLIC LECTURES ON THE NOVEL OF G. GAZDANOV
“AN EVENING WITH CLAIRE”

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Abstract

Public lectures aim to transfer knowledge, to learn to operate it, help to broaden horizons. The article under discussion deals with the preparing of a public lecture devoted to the narrative time in G. Gazdanov's novel "An evening with Claire". The author of the article proposes a coordinate system based on the binary time/eternity opposition, where the intersection point is the focus of the whole plot action. The initial marker in the interpretation of the narrator's strategy is the word "rebirth". In his memory-imagination the principal character of the novel is passing through a self-perfecting ordeal by war, has had his carnal knowledge of a female, and embarks on the vital path of "true light". The image of the autobiographical protagonist, unlike other characters of emigrants in Russian émigré literature is a person, not only independent of life circumstances, but also voluntarily striving for "a new", for "the Other" (G. Gazdanov) as an opportunity to become a whole person and to reveal his hidden abilities in extreme circumstances. When preparing the public lecture, we use a relatively new approach in literary studies, associated with the study and the use of ancient archaic matrices in modern mythmaking. We find it appropriate in the format of the public lecture to convey to the audience how archaic codes work in the modernist text.

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Keywords: Eternal feminine, G. Gazdanov, mythopoetics, public lecture, symbolism, the concept of time.



1. Introduction

Educational, or public lectures are organized in educational institutions and leisure centers in order to promote academic knowledge. Important goals of public lectures are to unleash listener's creative potential, to develop his/her value orientations and moral qualities in professional, social activities and in personal life.

The public lecture on Gajto Gazdanov's novel "An Evening with Claire" was worked out for students of the humanities departments, but it will be interesting to any audience, as the Russian reader knows little about the author, who is one of the key figures of Russian émigré literature together with Nabokov, Aldanov, Osorgin (Matveeva, 2016; Dieni, 1982).

In addition to the artistic merits his works are conceptually original. This is due to the writer's fate line. The phenomenon of Gazdanov could be explained by his multicultural origin: he was a Russian-speaking Ossetian, who had lived most of his life in France. All his life he sought to reconcile the contradictions, to search for the marriage of the things that seem incompatible. He was not a cosmopolitan when it came to the neglect of his roots, on the contrary, he was trying to discover the genetic code of human spiritual world in the phenomena which seem to be heterogeneous. The Russian Civil War, studies at the Sorbonne, the difficult life of an emigrant – that's his principal experience artistically implemented in his works.

2. Problem Statement

The aim of the public lecture under discussion is to offer a holistic idea of the concept of time in G. Gazdanov's first novel "An Evening with Claire". "The convergence of historical and biographical time in the narrator's perception and memory takes place due to his peculiarity to perceive his memories as though it's a reality". When preparing the lecture, we need to find the way of presenting such a diverse topic as time in a literary work. At the first stage, it was important to analyze the protagonist *specific feature* not to live in the objective reality entirely, but rather partially. It seems that he is passing through a momentary time of 'here-and-now-reality'. His time feeling does not coincide with the dynamic characteristics of the outside world (Shmyrova, 2013). Moreover, the hero of the novel realizes this dissonance as a pathology of his own personality, and the reader gradually understands that the time discrepancy between the subjective and objective worlds, expressed in the form of the time lag, indicates the problems in society and reflects a healthy, correct response, a kind of the hero's consciousness immunity to external challenges (Ivanov, 2017).

At the second stage, our attention is shifted to the sphere of realization of the author's idea of the "rebirth" of the hero which is seen as a cosmogonic act in terms of the micro-macrocosm. This *necessitated the need to view the concept of time, suggested by the author, as a dynamic structure*. The functional model of time in the novel is the coordinate system, the horizontal vector of which is the dramatic interaction of the subjective and objective time of the protagonist, and the vertical one is his desire to overcome the phobia of the finiteness of human life and to gain a spiritual and metaphysical perspective. The top and the bottom intersection is realized by the protagonist in connection with the image of Claire – the main heroine of the novel. Claire represents a combination of carnal transience, which must be learned and overcome, and the

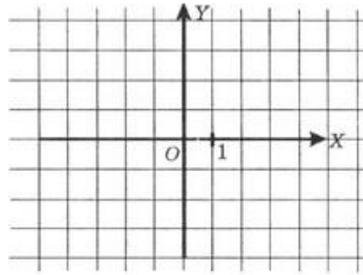
mysterious monad, reflecting the Universe, but not merging with Others. "Be yourself", "Do not lose yourself" – this is the essence of the Sosedov's (the surname of the main character of the novel) identity.

Most adequately Sosedov-Claire interaction (the protagonist sees the female as the Other) could be understood through the Levinas' reflections on transcendence of the sexes: "An irresistible twoness of creatures – that's what really concerns in love. It's a relationship with something forever hidden. The very fact of such relationship existence does not neutralize but preserves the Otherness. The pleasure of love is really thrilling when two are engaged. The Other in love interaction, because he or she is different, is not an object becoming ours, and is not the same as we are; on the contrary, the Other withdraws into mystery... I mean, that it is not necessary to understand this mystery in some sublime literary way; the most rude, shameless and prosaic materiality does not negate either the mystery or chastity as far as femininity is concerned. Profanation is not a denial of the secret, but one of the possible attitudes to it. ...When you have the attitude of "I'm different", something different is missing. It is not just absence, not the absence meaning nothing, but the absence in the horizon of the future, the absence meaning temporality" (Levinas, 1998, p. 93). That is, saying goodbye to Claire in personal *time*, the narrator anticipates her representation in the transcendent imaginative, eidotic focus of *eternity*. Sexual experience as an intention to merge with the Other causes sadness, and the protagonist has a need to get back to himself, which guides him through the "stream of consciousness" – the "art of memories". The relations with Claire reveal the problem of self-alienation of the hero and his inner polysubjectivity. "The character is no longer portrayed as a whole man, but as 'a plurality of separate hypostases" (Göbler, 1999, p. 85).

Being a socially biased individual, the protagonist considered Clair to be an alien. As the visionary and the actant of some initial modus he needs her Otherness, as Levinas (1998) interprets it, and thus she is a necessary pairing object for him to perform the cosmogonic act in the microcosm. Through the point of view of the author it's the event of the macrocosmic scale. Claire in her bodily completeness and non-obscureness brings the hero to the center of the world, to where the starting point of the vertical ascent to eternity is. And at this point of *tabula rasa* the dissonant hypostases of the hero come to unity. The coordinate system of time/eternity in the novel corresponds to the Gestalt of the cross (Figure 01).

A graphical approach is easily understood by a student at primary school level; it is a meta-element connecting precise mathematical knowledge and humanitarian mindset.

The symbolic emblem of the cross is one of the most famous in the world culture. The intersection point of its axes is the center of the world (both micro and macro) which indicates *the body and the spirit balancing*. The concept of time as an iconic sign due to its universal nature combines all possible meanings of the text, and also implies organically a mythopoetic context, which through the universal concept of time and through the topos of the cross is understandable for the most 'motley' audience. Thus, *the mythopoetic 'trace' in the analysis is quite accordant with our target – to present the concept of time in the novel as realizable as possible to an unprepared audience.*



Axis OX - subjective-objective time; Axis OY – eternity

Figure 01. The coordinate system of time/eternity

3. Research Questions

1. To outline principles and stages in the preparation of the public lecture on the novel "An evening with Claire".

2. To present in the lecture the concept of time of the novel.

There are two strata of intellectual content in society: a space for professionals who speak the same language of terms, and a platform where a specialist speaks to the general audience, with whom he/she does not share a common language of terms and concepts, still the audience shows cultural and educational interest in the subject of the lecture. Today, science needs such open platforms to expand the educational space.

The specificity of public lectures if compare them with academic ones is their accessibility together with thorough coverage of the topic. They should be rather neat, simple, clear and non-complicated to be taken up by audience. In addition, the most important principle of a public lecture is its communicative nature, which tends to be focused on the dialogue.

When preparing the lecture, we were guided by the following principles:

1. The material of the lecture should be relevant, interesting and informative, but at the same time, it should be rather difficult for potential students to understand it on their own because of the lack of specific knowledge and due to conflicting information. The character of Claire is the most controversial one in the novel. Its interpretation ranges from the light-minded frivolous temptress to the ideal of Eternal femininity.

2. The combination of ways of presenting the material: the material should be presented as a combination of the lecturer's monologue with the question-answer form. The lecture should be delivered in the form of the dialogue between the lecturer and the audience.

3. The simplicity of presentation: since the lecturer is a specialist while the listener is less aware of the topic, the main goal of the lecturer is the translation of special scientific information into the language of non-specialized knowledge. For the implementation of this principle citations of authoritative sources, comments, clarifications, repetitions, periphrases, description of situations, appeal to precedents are to be used.

4. Purpose of the Study

Creation of the public lecture

A summary with *the key ideas* (Table. 02) of the narration was prepared tentatively in the form of the following thesis:

Table 01. Key ideas

The essence of the novel "An Evening with Claire" are memories creatively <i>reconstructed</i> by the protagonist. Time is the predominant category that defines the architecture of the novel, the means of artistic expression, and the world of ideas.
Time in the novel could be schematized. It's a coordinate system. The horizontal vector presented as the subjective time of love commotion and voluntary war experience is intertwined with the objective time of society and the image of Claire's body. The vertical vector is the eternity the protagonist seeks to learn. The image of Claire should be interpreted as the starting point for the protagonist ascent up to a new life.
The narrative time of the novel is in the focus of development, in the point of the intersection of horizontal and vertical vectors of time-eternity.
In the novel, the trials the main character goes through signify the Space (order) recovery after the Chaos of war. Microcosm becomes macrocosm via the conversion of the "horrors of history" into the "catastrophe of my life" with the subsequent creative transformation of negative into positive (bright future).
The protagonist goes out of the circle of "eternal return", associated with the fear of death, to a new level of evolutionary development. He perceives all the challenges of life vitalistically, as an opportunity for self-development.
Gazdanov was able to assimilate a broad cultural modern outlook within the archaic worldview as a salvation from the "horrors of history".
Neomythology of the novel "An Evening with Claire" organically interlinks ultimate meanings with their nowadays actualization.

We have divided all the material that should be included into the presentation into two categories. The *"Important"* category contains the material that must necessarily be included into the presentation. The *"Secondary"* category, though being interesting and useful to listen to, comprises of information that could be excluded if there is insufficient time for it.

"Important" <2>, <4>, <5>.

"Secondary" <1>, <3>.

The technological vision of the lecture as of a kind of transformer gives, in our opinion, a wide scope for further popularization of the material in the audience of different level of preparedness due to the opportunity to have the text adjusted to the predicted situation.

The detailed text of the lecture is presented below.

<1> The idea of time in the works of Gaito Gazdanov, the writer of the first wave of emigrants, provides a context for the lecture. The name of Gazdanov has become a matter of increasing interest among the philologists in the post-perestroika period (Dieni, 1982). The format of one lecture is hardly sufficient to contain the richness of intertextual relations in the novel "An Evening with Claire", all the nuances of the style, in which the ease of perception is combined with the depth of thought. Therefore, to open the magical world of dreams, love, horror stories, children's vulnerability, we need a special "Golden key": the most all-embracing category of thinking – time, and its antagonist – eternity. The very concept of time is extremely capacious, and still is extremely abstract. The past is gone and the future is not yet here. That is why it is easier to understand the phenomenon of time through the memories. The novel "An Evening with Claire" is a novel about the memories.

<2> As for Gazdanov, he defines time in different ways. In his "Notes on Edgar Poe, Gogol and Maupassant" the writer shares his impression of time comparing it with water: "I used to think of time as of water masses, slowly sailing over the hills and valleys of the seabed, where great shipwrecks once happened" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 859). In the "Stories about leisure time" he offers another model of time – funnel-shaped, spiral (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 838). The spiral symbol means evolution. In the novel the

protagonist intention to get out of the shackles of death and eternal return is indicated by the word "rebirth". The central character of the novel is at that age when the transformation from a child to an adult, as a new life, should completely restart the consciousness and subconscious. In his sought-after maturation the atheist hero not only discovers himself to be a new person, but the whole picture of the world starting "from scratch". In ancient times the mechanisms of this transition were well developed. If a person, sensitive and creative by nature, ignores the necessary want for death-resurrection he or she can get into the bad company, as it happened to Sosedov for a while, even commit suicide (teenage suicide) or, worse still, repeat the hard way of murder and mental anguish of Raskolnikov.

In the literature of the non-classical paradigm, the depicted world appears in the form of the points of view relativity. It comes to intentional epatage, special effects, the purpose of which is nothing else but attracting attention. Gazdanov, too, portrays a complex picture of the world. He does not pretend to tell the gospel truth. But in the depth of the stream of consciousness, free from bias when conveying the phenomenon of life, a certain author's idea is hidden. The author's position contains a substrate, which in the course of narration accumulates a certain value system. This system is not mechanically expressed, but it vibrates in the obviousness of the situations the protagonist-observer is picking out from his memories. For example, a series of fires he remembers indicates indirectly the frame of mind of the immigrant. The fierce blazes and fires of war (Chaos) turn into a shimmering panorama of the lights of a new stage of life in the final scene. Guessing the unformulated indications of the author's position in the chain of events continues beyond the limits of the novel. The image of the main heroine related with the theme of love is most encrypted. To interpret this center of the world in the novel, we propose a system of *time-eternity coordinates*.

The protagonist's travel to Claire forms *the horizontal vector* of the narration. Love, in contrast to the stereotypes, does not belong to the inner world of the hero. Claire's bourgeois world, as well as the chaos of war, is always in the same external position to the hero. A disagreement with the outside world results in delayed responses to its challenges. The lyrical context comes about only from the *transformation* of Claire's personality, initially incompatible with Nikolai's patriarchal views. The hero dreams up her image, well recognizing it (if to compare with don Quixote's relation to Dulcinea).

Creative work for Nikolai, a representative of a secularized society, becomes a way to adopt high ideals. Sosedov is balancing between the degrading social world and the visionary and transcendent channel. The past for the hero is not nostalgia, but an effective psychological support and optimistic perspective. The current reality is a place of conflict of chaos and order, which escalates during the war. He refused Claire's young body and it grew into a catastrophe of his personal life. The subjective time of the protagonist and the time of the objective world, in which the disaster with Claire is more important than the danger of being killed in the war, intertwining, form a horizontal vector of the time axis. This is the way of the hero's personality formation up to the point when all the ordeals are passed through to get *a well-deserved* reward of physical intimacy with a beloved. Having overcome the fear of death, the hero came close to *the vertical vector of eternity*. Down-to-earth Claire paradoxically appears to be a beacon on the way to a new world. At the entrance to this alien atmosphere Nikolai consistently criticizes the Western way of life in conversations with Clare and when telling about her family, maid, etc. He does not position

himself as a missionary, still his priorities are unquestionable and not hushed up. Emigration becomes a sphere of expectation of unknown transformations, a part of the "new", unknown.

<3> The Code word that provides a starting point in the analysis of the short summary of the novel is the word "rebirth", and in the context of the whole meta-novel cycle – "pre-incarnation" (Proskurina, 2016).

The whole narrative is a melting pot, a retort where the atheist hero searches for the "divine meaning" inside the "horror before history" (Eliade, 1998, p. 233), about which M. Eliade wrote in his works. The protagonist, in the absence of a sacred sample in society, restores the space inside himself after the chaos of the Civil war through a journey to the fabulous time of playing games with his father, where a deep love of father and mother came vivid before his mind's eye. The personal myth of the hero is based on his impressions of the Caucasian grandfather's life and on reading books. It is not by chance that he enjoys Boehme, a theosophist-visionary of peasant origin. It was his idea of "Sophia" – Goddess of Wisdom which was further developed by Russian philosophers of the turn of the century. V. Solovyov's "Sophia" is "the bright body of Eternity". V. Solovyov had influenced the writing of all symbolist poets. In the novel "An Evening with Claire" the physical appearance of the female character is not given. The hero emphasizes the variability of her guise together with the constancy of her complete and perfect body. That is, Claire appears not as a real character, but as a *symbol* of the female body. Claire is a cosmogonic feminine principle in the creation of the world.

"An Evening with Claire" is a "novel of formation" on the threshold of an initiatory light. Three years after the publication of the novel Gazdanov became a Freemason.

And still before he has bound himself by vows with the Organization of Freemasonry, he, having the views similar to the Masonic ideology, seeks to break free from negative life experiences, sending the autobiographical hero on a trip to his roots. These are so called "Minor Mysteries" in the Mason's thesaurus. The cosmogonic model of the world renewal is isomorphic both in archaic culture and in modern metaphysical systems. It is based on the idea of reincarnation – the cycle of existence – and projective view of the visible but illusory world (Maya) originated from the ideal inhuman world. A person loses knowledge of this world because of his corporeality and attachment to sensual transient pleasures. In childhood, when a layer of "spiritual wastes" is thin, there is a chance to cure psychological scars. That is why Nikolai is looking for a sacred knowledge in the "gallery of memories", which lead "to childhood, to that period of time, the understanding of which ... is no longer available" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 50). In the monograph of Bugaeva (2010) we read that "one or another rite de passage situation, on the one hand, is reproduced in the literary text on the basis of episodic memory, on the other hand, it models the reality of narration, which in its turn, is subjected to further semantic transformation" (p. 4). Alchemical boiler, in which the hero is looking for a "philosopher's stone" (or it's better to say for "the meaning of life") is the boiler of time. The hero-intellectual converts his knowledge of the culture into co-natural intuitive knowledge, diffusing those things that avoid thereby the depreciation caused by the time.

<4> The reflection on the memories and situations of evenings with Claire, reveals Sosedov's version of "rebirth" as the actualization of Masonic ideas. Bugaeva (2010, p.53) writes: "The path Gazdanov's heroes walk together with the reader, is much in line with the Masonic ideas about the path to "enlightenment" and in a certain sense correlates with the initiation ritual for the Masons, which could be

consider as the key to understand the idea of the path as the author views it". The protagonist's guide star is the liberation from the phantasmagoria haunting him and the aspiration out of horizontal existence through the point of 'x' meaning the "rebirth" for the upper strata of the atmosphere of the spirit – to the initiatic light.

The past is considered as the initial unity of the real and the unreal, which is subjected to clogging and corrosion during life time. In childhood, as in mythological Golden age, a person hasn't lost the link with Cosmos and lives in tune with the outside world. Therefore, a child and a strong personality are synonyms in Nikolai's reflections: "I experienced real happiness, the one which is available only to a child or a person awarded an extraordinary spiritual power" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 50).

Sosedov interprets the concept of memory broadly: it is "heartfelt memory", where one can find the point of intersection of the heterogeneous information of the real life, the intersection of the read text with empathy; where existential challenges and psychedelic flashes of archetypes can also be revealed. Nostalgia for the "original state" ("the return to oneself") explains the protagonist's intention to be cognitively purified from the "accumulated life experience" obtained in the disharmonious world, to walk the path of creativity and individual mental experience instead. In the Masonic thesaurus it means to build up one's personality to gain superhuman abilities. Sosedov often uses the word "new" to indicate a life perspective: "I have always unconsciously sought to the unknown, in which I hoped to find new opportunities and new countries: it seemed to me that everything which was important to me would come suddenly into being and manifest itself more clearly, all my knowledge and strength and desire to understand something new and having understood it, to assert my influence on it" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 100).

At the end of the novel the meaningfulness of the upper light is expressed through the motif of lights on ships; at the beginning of the novel, before the intimacy with Claire, the upper light is presented as a downward vector shown in the form of the street lights mirroring in the river of Seine. Moreover, the light of the Parisian lanterns is defined as "misleading" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 39). Old time is stratified in the "geological layers of my story" metaphor (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 79) as well as in the form of 'time layers' of the earth slipping under foot. The eschatological horror of nothingness is virtually described in the next passage: "the sun, like a huge lantern, illuminates the black water of a still lake and the orange dead earth" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 64). The old time of nightmares is impenetrable and has the ability to harden, and the protagonist feels his helplessness. But when he journeys through the country of memories, his history is flexibly modified in a transparent, air-like time, the concentration of which is "Claire" (one of the meanings of the name Claire is "transparency").

<5> The hero's surname "*So-sedov*" shows that he has no roots in society, so the story ends with mysterious words about "another meaning" and "otherness of Claire" as a goal setting; the hero has just started moving forward the liberation from "eternal return". Hence the form of the past tense usual for the narration is changed to the performative form of the present "here and now" "with a babbling and beautiful dream about Claire coming true" (Gazdanov, 2009, p.161).

Genon (2003) in his "Notes on the dedication" distinguishes the rites of "Minor Mysteries" and "Final Liberation" from the Chain of Rebirth: "to characterize both of these phases, it is possible, via the usage of geometric symbolism, to speak of "horizontal implementation" and "vertical implementation", where the first serves as the basis for the second; this basis is symbolically represented by the earth

associated with the human world... However, it is not difficult to understand why the second necessarily implies the first: the central point of the human state is the only one where a direct communication with higher states is possible; after all, the latter occurs along the vertical axis, which crosses the human world at this point; it is necessary, therefore, to reach this center first in order to be able to rise then, following the direction of the axis, to superindividual states; and that is why, if we use the language of Dante, "Earthly Paradise" is a stage on the way to "Heavenly Paradise" (p. 15).

The theme of the celestial horizon appears after the intimacy with Claire (the hero contemplates of clouds on the wallpapers in her room), not at the end of the novel, because it symbolizes the atmosphere of cosmogonic chaos, when the sky and the earth are not yet separated. The structure of the novel manifests the non-insularity of the twists and turns of the main character's life. Biography of the hero is parallel to the "big time" of the history. Eliade (2014, p. 92) defines historical time as an "old time", it is impossible to improve it, it should be "destroyed to restore the primary chaos", *materia prima* up to the point of intersection with the vertical celestial vector. The old time of Nikolai is synonymous with his "incurable disease" of double existence, of the uncontrollable visions from the invisible world. The transition to a new stage of spiritual evolution through the ordeals of death and love gives the main character of the novel a new birth.

Carnal love for Claire, in spite of the incompatibility of the life positions of the characters, does not carry negative connotations. "Earthly Paradise" is the stage to the "Heavenly Paradise or "to the incomprehensible" Nikolai defines it. The image of Claire is the center, the passage of which means the readiness of the hero for the dedication. "An Evening with Claire" being the event of physical intimacy could be compared with a ritual purification of temple prostitution in ancient times, which is based on the idea of the body as the temple of the soul.

Mythopoeics of the Claire's character is full of the pathos Mamardashvili (1995, p. 128) wrote about in his "Lectures on Proust": "Through our attitude to the object of love we fulfil or try to fulfil some of the obligations towards what is behind it. And behind the object of love the spiritual goddess is discovered. In fact, the principal goal is to conquer time, while all my thoughts are focused on my love for Alberta. And if someone has conquered time by writing a novel that has, as Proust puts it, the seal of time on it, then he is freed from the pathogenic object".

Nikolai Sosedov is eager to know what is behind the matter-Maya to sublimate this knowledge in an artistic form. The hero was not just "creating imaginary positions of all the people involved in his life", which made his "memories so ineffably sweet", but also from the age of eight "was capable of writing his thoughts; that time I wrote a rather long story about the tiger hunter" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 50).

"Pathogenic object", appearing after the scene of physical intimacy and before the flood of memories took place, was the vision of "the ghosts with chopped-off hands", "they were indifferently hostile to each other" as though it was "a punishment for their sins" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 46). Bashlyar (1987) in the chapter "Poetic Moment and Metaphysical Moment" writes that to give the characteristics of vertical vector of eternity to a physical event means to get rid of the ghosts of guilt for a meaningless consumer life. The sorrow of the nightmare of alienation is overcome in the results of creative work. "None of the expressed times is the cause of the other, and the proof of this is the difficulty of expressing them in a sequential, i.e. in a horizontal, time. And yet both have a moment of realization that could only be grasped at the level of

the vertical, only when a person is rushing upwards feeling how sadness gradually goes away and the soul soars, parting with its ghosts" (Bashlyar, 1987, p. 347).

The last words of the novel are the quintessence of the elusive and fragile "stop, a moment" desire when you are in love. The cosmogonic atmosphere of "sea dusk", "air depressions" and "silence", i.e. of the Chaos that generates Space, is accompanied by the sound of the bells that "in general symbolize the passage of time" (Tressider, 1999, p. 28). "Claire becomes a symbol, a symbol of search, knowledge of the world, that is, for Nikolai she symbolizes the life" (Göbler, 1999, p. 84).

M. Gorky wrote that each novel moves "in one, certain direction - to a woman" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 29). "To a woman," to Claire who is the initial light gained in the search process. "She changed, took the images of different women, now looking like lady Hamilton, and then like fairy Rautendeley" (Gazdanov, 2009, p. 92). The "unattainability of the body" and "the Otherness", "roots" and "stars", all combined in one image of Claire express the absolute completeness of the universe, the fragile value of the local world and the greatness of invisible eternity.

5. Research Methods

Method of construction (creating of the cultural-educational lecture), historical and literary method, structural and semiotic method, hermeneutic method, historical and semantic method.

6. Findings

The functioning of time in the novel can be graphically represented in the form of a coordinate system (cross), which forms a universal stable matrix of the harmonic existence of a person who overcame the fear of death through the aspiration to eternity. Love considered as retention and creative activity considered as protention serve as the modes of Nikolai Sosedov's vitalistic self-supporting. "Otherness" of the "non-physical image of Clare" proposes that the novel is similar to the cosmogonic act "on its movement in one, certain direction – to a woman". The very narrative of the "gallery of memories", which looks like a work of art, not as a raw "stream of consciousness", served as a basis for this assumption, as well as the literary experience of the hero he tells about.

The proposed lecture is a kind of transformer, which gives a wide scope for further popularization of the material in the audience of different level of preparedness.

7. Conclusion

It is assumed that the addressee will receive new knowledge from the lecture: firstly, it expands the horizons of a modern person. Secondly, there are a number of reasons that make the name of the writer special in historical and literary sense. His creative career is definitely successful. The personality of G. Gazdanov is a phenomenon of multiculturalism: he is an Ossetian who wrote only in Russian and was published during his life outside of Russia. The writer's desire for apoliticism and dialogue, correctness in many pressing issues of modernity and at the same time fidelity to principles and competence in literary polemics create the image of a bright, talented person. Still he was undeserved and little-known in Russia up to this day and this is why the popularization of knowledge about this author is of a great need. His novels are interesting, their style is original, they are of a deep psychological and intertextual range.

Introduction to the artistic world of Gazdanov expands intellectual horizons, gives a positive life impulse, develops literary sensibility.

The lecture on the concept of time in the novel "An Evening with Claire" was delivered on 16.10.2017 in the group 342 IFF within discipline "History of Russian literature (emigrants of the first wave)": Tomsk State Pedagogical University (TSPU) 634061, Tomsk, Kievskaya str., 60 tel. (3822) 31-14-58, 52-17-54 Fax (3822) 31-14-64 e-mail: rector@tspu.edu.ru, <http://www.tspu.edu.ru>.

This creative work is a methodical product, which contains the results of scientific research of the most famous novel by the emigrant writer G. Gazdanov, adapted for the genre of public lecture. The introduction of public lectures into the educational process expanded students' vision of the philosophical quest of the twentieth century, associated with the cognition of the category of time, contributed to the understanding of the specifics of the modernist type of creativity and gave the opportunity to get an insight into the multidimensional concept of time in the novel "An Evening with Claire". The lively response, questions and remarks of the listeners were the markers of deep interest in the presented material, which allows to conclude that literary and methodical tasks of our research were solved.

Further strengthening of the methodological foundation of the public lecture in the form of additional material (abstracts, highlighting the important and the secondary in the text, etc.) expanded the scope of this product application in the audience of different levels of preparedness.

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