

BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF LETTERS

**Representation of the Second World War
in the Soviet Literature and Cinematography**

PhD Thesis

Summary

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR

Prof. Univ. Dr. **ȘTEFAN BORBÉLY**

PhD CANDIDATE

OLGA GRĂDINARU

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SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Theoretical and Conceptual Background
- 1.2. Research Directions and Work Hypotheses
- 1.3. Research Area and Methodologies
- 1.4. Thesis Structure

2. THEORETICAL ASPECTS. CRITICAL APPROACHES

- 2.1. Socialist Realism. Perspectives
- 2.2. Issue of the Positive Hero
 - 2.2.1. General Considerations
 - 2.2.2. Rakhmetov's Role in the Evolution of the Positive Hero Category
 - 2.2.3. The Positive Hero in the Soviet Period
 - 2.2.4. Conclusions
- 2.3. Heroism, Heroic and Soviet Heroization
 - 2.3.1. A Short History of the Concept of "Heroism"
 - 2.3.2. "Heroic Deed" – Conceptual Evolution
 - 2.3.3. From *The Song of Igor's Campaign* to Russian Heroism of the 19th Century
 - 2.3.4. Soviet Heroism

3. REPRESENTATION OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN THE SOVIET LITERATURE: STAGES AND NOVELISTIC PERSPECTIVES, ELEMENTS OF HERO CONSTRUCTION

3.1. REVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

3.2. ROMANTIC-HEROIC PERSPECTIVE

- 3.2.1. Alexander Fadeyev, *The Young Guard* (1945, 1948) and Ideological Fictionalisation
 - 3.2.1.1. Genesis and Background of the Two Editions of the Novel: the Relation between Historism and Historical Novel

- 3.2.1.2. Style, Principles, Tendencies and Theoretisations
- 3.2.1.3. Elements of Hero Construction
- 3.2.1.4. Representation of War
- 3.2.1.5. Preliminary Conclusions

3.2.2. Boris Polevoy, *A Story About a Real Man* (1946) and Soviet Heroisation

- 3.2.2.1. Introductory Elements
- 3.2.2.2. Aspects of Hero Construction
- 3.2.2.3. Representation of War
- 3.2.2.4. Preliminary Conclusions

3.3. PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.3.1. Yuri Bondarev, *The Hot Snow* (1970) and the Errors of Soviet Criticism

- 3.3.1.1. Introductory and Meta-Critical Aspects
- 3.3.1.2. Facets of Hero Construction
- 3.3.1.3. Representation of War
- 3.3.1.4. Preliminary Conclusions

3.4. PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.4.1. Leonid Leonov, *The Russian Forest* (1953) and Metaphorisation

- 3.4.1.1. Introductory Elements
- 3.4.1.2. Elements of Hero Construction
- 3.4.1.3. Representation of War
- 3.4.1.4. Preliminary Conclusions

4. REPRESENTATION OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN SOVIET FILM ADAPTATIONS

4.1. FILM ADAPTATION OF ALEXANDER FADEYEV'S *THE YOUNG GUARD* DIRECTED BY SERGEI GERASIMOV (1948)

- 4.1.1. Biographical and Professional Aspects
- 4.1.2. Analysis of the Film *The Young Guard*

- 4.1.3. Conclusions
- 4.2. OTHER FILMS INSPIRED BY "THE YOUNG GUARD"
 - 4.2.1. TV Series *The Last Confession* directed by Sergey Lyalin (2006)
 - 4.2.2. Animated Feature Film *Ours* directed by Aleksey Sych (2012)
- 4.3. FILM ADAPTATION OF BORIS POLEVOY'S *A STORY ABOUT A REAL MAN* DIRECTED BY ALEXANDER STOLPER (1948)
 - 4.3.1. Introductory Aspects
 - 4.3.2. Analysis of the Film *A Story About a Real Man*
 - 4.3.3. Conclusions
- 4.4. FILM ADAPTATION OF YURI BONDAREV'S *THE HOT SNOW* DIRECTED BY GAVRIIL EGIAZAROV (1972)
 - 4.4.1. Introductory Notes
 - 4.4.2. Analysis of the Film *The Hot Snow*
 - 4.4.3. Conclusions
- 4.5. FILMS ADAPTATION OF LEONID LEONOV'S *THE RUSSIAN FOREST* DIRECTED BY VLADIMIR PETROV (1964)
 - 4.5.1. Introductory Aspects
 - 4.5.2. Analysis of the Film *The Russian Forest*
 - 4.5.3. Conclusions
- 4.6. COMPARATIVE-CONCLUSIVE REMARKS
5. CONCLUSIONS
6. ANNEXES
 - 6.1. Images from Alexander Fadeyev's Film Adaptation Directed by Sergei Gerasimov (1948)
 - 6.2. Images from Boris Polevoy's Film Adaptation Directed by Alexander Stolper (1948)
 - 6.3. Images from Yuri Bondarev's Film Adaptation Directed by Gavriil Egiazarov (1972)
 - 6.4. Images from Leonid Leonov's Film Adaptation Directed by Vladimir Petrov (1964)
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

SUMMARY

Key-Words: novelistic discourse, filmic discourse, representation of war, film adaptation, socialist realism, positive hero, Stalinist era, cultural thaw.

The main preoccupation of our thesis is the representation of the Second World War and its multiple facets in the Soviet literature and cinematography from historical and synchronic perspectives. The premise of our interdisciplinary analysis is constituted by the special status of the Second World War for the Soviet cultural space and mentality – a war of a rightful nature, entitled *Velikaia Otechestvennaia Voina* - "Great Patriotic War". This special title played a propaganda role in the Stalinist rhetoric, representing the link between the Second World War and the Patriotic War of 1812, known as *Otechestvennaia Voina* and regarded as a defensive war during the invasion of Russia by Napoleon I. *Velikaia Otechestvennaia Voina* was meant to ensure not only a historical continuity for the Russian people but also to induce the idea of unity and cohesion for the newly born Soviet people and the nations and peoples within the boundaries of USSR. The status and the role of the Second World War were amplified during the post-Stalinist years, after the successive waves of the cultural Thaw¹ as consequences of Nikita Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" in February 1956 during the 20th Congress of the Communist Party. The cult of the Great Patriotic War was a necessary step in the process of the new power legitimization, especially during Brezhnev's period², given the ideological void left after the de-Stalinization campaign.

Our research underlines the specificity of the *representation* concept for the Soviet cultural context, taking into account the main traits of the socialist realism (that is analysed in a chapter). However, we delineated briefly several approaches and perspectives on the issue of

¹ Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*. 3rd edition. Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2000, pp. 210-233.

² Gabriela Welch, „Memoria celui de-al Doilea Război Mondial în Uniunea Sovietică: sacrificiu, victorie, cult” [”Memory of the Second World War in the Soviet Union: Sacrifice, Victory, Cult“] in Mihalache, Andi, and Adrian Cioflâncă, *Istoria recentă altfel: perspective culturale [Recent History Otherwise: Cultural Perspectives]*. Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, Iași, 2013, pp. 223-239.

representation in the area of literary theory³, while mentioning some links for our subject. According to Zhdanov's ideology, the "true historic representation of reality in its revolutionary development"⁴ had to be in keeping with the task of ideological transformations in people's mind and educating the labour people in the spirit of socialism. Thereby, the interpretation is tributary to the intentional position proposed by Antoine Compagnon⁵ and what derives from the comprehension of the literary text rarely overcomes the author's intention, the historical background details, biographic elements, and the eulogy of the alleged truthful representation of society, soldier's heroism and Soviet citizen during the war. We would be tempted to support the idea that most of the texts on the Second World War in Stalinism were defined by what Compagnon calls *common sense*, only it would be the case of a *party-minded common sense*, while W. Iser's *negativity*⁶ acquires more space from the Thaw period. We highlighted in our analysis the alterations occurred in approaching the war representation in various decades of the Soviet era.

The political changes after the Russian Revolution brought also cultural-ideological mutations, which influence both literature and cinematography as a direct result of Lenin's article *Partiinaia organizatsia i partiinaia literatura (Party Organization and Party Literature)*, written in 1905, and some ideas expressed by Maxim Gorky⁷, Anatoly Lunacharsky⁸ and Georgi Plekhanov⁹. After October 1917 the party mindedness became the mandatory trait of the proletarian culture, along with the setting of the "social mandate" of literature¹⁰, promoted by RAPP (*Rossiiskaia Assotsiatsia Proletarskikh Pisatelei*) and other proletarian associations of

³ Olga Grădinaru, „Reprezentare și interpretare – perspective și accepțiuni” [”Representation and Interpretation – Perspectives and Significances“] in *Philologia* LIII. Institutul de Filologie al Academiei de Științe a Moldovei, January-April 2012, pp. 54-60

⁴ See A. A. Zhdanov's discourse at the First Congress of the Union of Soviet Writers in 1934.

⁵ A. Compagnon, *Demonul teoriei*. Trans. by G. Marian and A.-P. Corescu. Editura Echinoc, Cluj, 2007, p. 109.

⁶ W. Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London and Henley, 1978.

⁷ See the articles written in 1928-1933 dedicated to literary matters - M. Gorki, *O literature*. Sovetskaia literatura, Moskva, 1934.

⁸ See especially his consideration on Lenin's previously mentioned article - A. Lunacharski, *Stat'i o literature*. [Articole despre literatură]. Sostavlenie, podgotovka teksta i primechaniia I.Satsa. Goslitizdat, Moskva, 1957, pp. 76-90.

⁹ See his ideas regarding the relationship between art and social life - G. Plehanov, *Studii de istoria artei [Studies of History of Art]*. Editura Univers, București, 1978, pp. 210-290.

¹⁰ E. Dobrenko, "Socialist Realism" in E. Dobrenko, M. Balina (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Russian Literature*. Cambridge University Press, New York, 2011, p. 97.

artists¹¹. That was the period when the term “Soviet literature” was coined by Alexandr Vronsky, probably the most notable literary critic of those times; the concept was meant to reject other possible ones to designate the new type of literature (“*proletarian literature*” or “*communist literature*” to name some of them). On the other hand, the term “*Soviet literature*” acquired a new significance, equivalent with the terms “*revolutionary*” and “*class literature*” in Stalin’s perspective¹².

That was the Soviet background prone to the development of the seventh art, cinematography, regarded as an art of a special value and importance for its propaganda potential. And that was according to Lunacharsky’s account regarding Lenin’s considerations on cinema¹³, followed by the establishment of a Committee for Cinematography, a School of Cinematographic Art and a Party Conference on the subject in 1928. The development of the seventh and youngest art on the grounds where a new society was in the making is suggestive, as Manuela Gheorghiu-Cernat mentions due to the fact that it marks the affinity “*between a revolution of the masses and an art destined for the masses*”¹⁴.

Despite the proclaimed equidistance in 1925 concerning the existing literary groups by the resolution of Politburo, the beginning of industrialization in 1928, the First Five-Year Plan, collectivization of agriculture and even a cultural revolution “from below” (1928-1931)¹⁵, a gradual reconsideration of generosity shown to the cultural area became necessary. That situation is regarded as a tension, a crisis between the political and cultural discourse¹⁶, which was also discussed at the Party Conference on cinema in 1928. Thus, the aesthetic expressions and searching of Proletcult were gradually restricted given the gradual growth of Stalin’s cult of personality (phenomenon that started in 1929). The solution for the tensions and conflicts between artistic associations came as “socialist realism” – a term proposed for the first time in

¹¹ B. Thomson, *The Art of Compromise: The Life and Work of Leonid Leonov*. University of Toronto Press Inc., Toronto, pp. 12-13.

¹² E. Dobrenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.

¹³ V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*. 5-e izdanie v 55 tomakh. Tom 44. Izd. Politicheskoi literatury, Moskva, 1970, p. 579.

¹⁴ Manuela Gheorghiu-Cernat, *Filmul și armele. Tema păcii și a războiului în filmul european [Film and Arms. The Theme of War and Peace in European Film]*. Editura Meridiane, București, 1983, p. 109

¹⁵ Cf. James Goodwin, *Eisenstein, Cinema, and History*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1993, p. 140.

¹⁶ Cf. Sanda Cordoș, *Literatura între revoluție și reacțiune: problema crizei în literatura română și rusă a secolului XX [Literature between Revolution and Reactions: Issue of Crisis in Russian and Romanian Literature of the 20th Century]*. Ed. Biblioteca Apostrof, Cluj-Napoca, 1999.

1932 by Ivan Gronskey, president of the Organizational Committee of the new Union of Writers¹⁷ (after the dissolution of RAPP and other proletarian artistic associations). The term was meant to combine the proletarian realism (specific to RAPP) and the revolutionary romanticism (characteristic to the rival proletarian theory)¹⁸, as Andrei Zhdanov proclaimed at the First Congress of the Union of Writers in 1934.

While Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was Tempered* was considered an exemplary literary work for the socialist realism, the same year (1934) provides another model in cinematography – Dmitry Furmanov's film adaptation – *Chapayev* – directed by Vasiliev Brothers¹⁹. Centralization of the Soviet film industry in 1930 in *Soyuzkino*²⁰ (after other attempts in 1924-1925 *Goskino* and 1925-1930 *Sovkino*) was followed by an uncertain period for film makers due to the establishment of new administrative-bureaucratic units responsible with censorship and reviewing the cinematographic productions. The most fearful verdict of all became the “*ideological rejection*” (*ideologicheskii brak*)²¹. The proclamation of socialist realism as the only style of artistic expression contributed to the simplicity and transparency of the filmic language, which, combined with other factors, conferred the Soviet cinema of the '30s the title of “*factory of illusions*”²² rather than that of truthful reflection of social-historical reality.

The establishing of socialist realism based on the “*political demagogy of A. A. Zhdanov*” as the official method of Soviet literature rather than a genre, style or literary school²³ had consequences on the manner of representation of World War II in the Soviet literature and cinema. This so-called *Great Fatherland War* was differently represented given the temporal distance from the war events and especially the Stalinist period so that we may discuss about a tension between idealization, heroization, on one hand, and truthfulness, deheroization, on

¹⁷ G. Ermolaev, *Rozhdenie sotsialisticheskogo realizma in Mosty*, Munchen, Nr. 13-14, 1968, p. 295.

¹⁸ K. Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-34.

¹⁹ Lilya Kaganovsky, *How the Soviet Man Was Unmade: Cultural Fantasy and Male Subjectivity under Stalin*. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, 2008, p. 11.

²⁰ Boris Shumyatsky was the head of *Soyuzkino* in 1930-1938. *Soyuzkino* merged several cinema organizations – the partly private studio *Mezhrabprom*, *Proletkino*, the expression of proletarian cultural movement and *Gosvoenkino*, the studio that provided materials for military forces.

²¹ For a comprehensive presentation see P. Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society 1917-1953*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 129-130.

²² Anna Lawton (ed.), *The Red Screen: Politics, Society, Art in Soviet Cinema*. Routledge, London and New York, 1992, p. 4.

²³ G. Hosking, *Beyond Socialist Realism. Soviet Fiction since "Ivan Denisovich"*. Holmes&Meier Publishers Inc., New York, 1980, pp. 1-7.

another hand. In Manuela Gheorghiu-Cernat's words, there are two main tendencies in reflecting war in cinematography – “romantic-heroic” and “critical-deseccrating”²⁴ – as we unveiled in the analysis of our film adaptations.

The thesis *Representation of the Second World War in the Soviet Literature and Cinematography* is an interdisciplinary research aiming at delineating the war theme in literature with its cinematographic representations in Stalinist and post-Stalinist period. The main interest of our study is represented by the manners of reflecting the Great Patriotic War, an aspect that situates it in the area of comparative literature and cultural history.

Starting from the premise that the Russian literature and criticism from the middle of the 19th century till the end of the Soviet period was preoccupied with presenting on one hand a typical character for the common social types, and, on the other, to present an exemplary behaviour that would represent a solution for some social Russian problems, we situate the specificity of our demarche at the junction of the Soviet and Western literary criticism. Although the mentioned aspects are not exclusive characteristics of the Russian and then Soviet literature, we don't have consistent reasons to consider them defining traits for the Western literature. In the same way, the status of a moral raisonneur of the Russian literature, overtaken and modified later in the Soviet times in a tribune of the party rhetoric according to the moral communist code imposed at the middle of the '20s²⁵ is not necessarily specific to Western literature.

Another premise of our thesis is the status of the Soviet literature as a form of popular literature, situating the Soviet novel in the same category as the detective novel, as Katerina Clark suggests. As the aim of the Soviet literature is to address the masses and to offer them education through texts, this type of literature can't be disregarded; it is structurally a different phenomenon. From this perspective, the Soviet texts, especially the novel, may be analysed using not only the literary theory instruments, but also means specific to analysis of myths, fairy tales and medieval texts. Hence, the used methodology is eclectic, especially due to the specificity of the socialist realism literature that brings it closer to hagiography, medieval texts, myths and fairy tales. As a result, a formalist and structuralist approach is required, in the

²⁴ Manuela Gheorghiu-Cernat, *op. cit.*, pag. 46.

²⁵ D. L. Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity, 1917-1941*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2003, pp. 57-87.

analytical tradition opened by Vladimir Propp. Although the aim of our study doesn't reside in offering a structuralist or anthropological perspective on the Soviet novel on the subject of World War II, the mentioned aspects contribute to the emphasis of some important cultural facets.

The research is not limited to a diachronic perspective on the evolution of the theme of the Great Patriotic War and its associated literary motifs in the Soviet literature, as it also points out elements of the character construction, which are deeply related to the cultural and political background of the 20th century. Concerning the war representation, the analysis highlights the relevance of narrative structures and elements that contribute to the portrait of the Soviet man and the enemy at war.

As a working method, with the risk of simplifying and reducing the complexity of the literary phenomena in the Soviet period, we differentiated various adopted perspectives on war literature: the revolutionary perspective (specific to the transitional period of World War I, Russian Civil War, where we distinguish several simplified germinative elements used unceasingly in the Stalinist years); the romantic-heroic perspective (from the years of World War II and immediately after the war until Stalin's death); the psychological perspective (represented especially in post-Stalinist period by the generation of young soldiers and lieutenants – *okopniki*, giving birth to the concept *okopnaia pravda* - "truth of the trenches"); philosophical perspective (specific rather to post-Stalinist years due to the required temporal distance for such an approach). We may mention the existence of an authentic perspective, detaining elements from the last two perspectives and adding deheroizing aspects; it is representative for the last Soviet decades and for the post-Soviet period²⁶.

In our analysis of the World War II representation we used several coordinates: terrestrial and aerial, relational and corporal. We noticed that the relational aspects are differently pictured during the Stalinist period (idealised, schematized and reduced to the collective dimension), and during post-Stalinist years (under the anguish and terror of the war, depicting loneliness, conflicts and rivalries of all sorts). We highlighted the diminished and sublimated effects of the

²⁶ We mention here Viktor Astafiev's novel *Veselyi soldat* (*The Jolly Soldier*, 1999), preoccupied by the horrors of the Red Army, and also books with a biographic and journalistic character – Svetlana Alexievich's *U voiny ne zhenskoe litso* (*War's Unwomanly Face*, 1985), or the volume *Ja, iz ognenoi derevni* (*I'm from the Burned Village*, 1977) written by Ales Adamovich, Ianka Bryl, Vladimir Kolesnik.

war in case of Stalinist works (frequently presented indirectly), and also the devastating effects reflected in the period of the Thaw and later.

The limitation of analysing the representation of The Great Patriotic War only in the case of film adaptations has reduced the dimensions of research so that being fully aware of the necessity to tackle the evolution of Soviet cinematography in its larger context, we restrain our analytical preoccupation. We mention Marc Ferro's consistent contribution in the area of cultural history and conceptual relations between history and cinematography: "*the film is valuable not only because of what it reveals, but also because of its socio-historical approach it justifies*"²⁷. On the other hand, we support the privileged place of cinema among other artistic practices of historicization (so that history may be examined as a conceptual network and theoretical construct with many connections, among which filmography, relations simplified through categorization²⁸), taking into account Pierre Sorlin's considerations: "*History is not pre-existent to the film, it is produced by it. [I]t is not a reality used by the film; it has to be rebuilt and the result of the reconstruction is never reliable*".²⁹ This privileged place of the film corresponds fully to the nature of Stalinist art, as its most important aim was the illusion of "*reflection*"³⁰.

The filmic analysis has its starting point in the premise, presented by George Bluestone, that the literary text lends itself to states of consciousness, while the filmic text to observe reality³¹. These aspects suppose specific limitations in both cases, but also that the film adaptation produces a new autonomous art form. Far from offering a theory of adaptations, the chapters dedicated to this subject point out the Soviet predilection for adapting literary works, especially those on the subject of the Second World War. Another limitation of such an approach is given by the analytical hierarchizing impulse, according to which the film adaptation suffers from a negative cultural evaluation and has an implicit/explicit inferior³² or secondary status compared to the literary work that represents the "*original*".³³ Despite Linda Hutcheon's view,

²⁷ M. Ferro, *Cinema and History*. Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1988, p. 29.

²⁸ Tony Barta, "Screening the Past: History Since the Cinema" in Tony Barta (ed.), *Screening the Past: Film and the Representation of History*. Praeger Publishers, Westport, 1998, p. 2.

²⁹ P. Sorlin, *The Film in History: Restaging the Past*. Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1980, p. 170.

³⁰ Cf. E. Dobrenko, *Stalinist Cinema and the Production of History: Museum of the Revolution*. Trans. by Sarah Young. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2008, p. 4.

³¹ G. Bluestone, *Novels into Film*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2003.

³² J. Naremore (ed.), *Film Adaptation*. Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ, 2000, p. 6.

³³ Linda Hutcheon, Siobhan O'Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation*. (Preface to the first edition). Second edition. Routledge, New York, 2013, p. XIV.

preoccupied with challenging the authority of any notion of priority, we don't consider the original status of the literary writing a “*disparage*” of the filmic text³⁴. Thus, we support the priority of the literary work, the basis of the film script (that is mostly a “*labor of simplification*”³⁵) and the necessity of analyzing the faithfulness of director's version, following Brian McFarlane's “*close reading*” method for film adaptations, seen as metamorphosis from fictional to cinematic³⁶. Moreover, the starting point of our analysis resides in the fact that the film adaptation is, in Robert Stam's terms, “*mutations that help their source novel survive*”, being “*adapted to changing environments and changing tastes, as well as to a new medium, with its distinct industrial demands, commercial pressures, censorship taboos, and aesthetic norms*”³⁷. Similar considerations of a Romanian researcher – Manuela Gheorghiu-Cernat – propose the analysis of war films as a “*double document*”: sources of images and information about war and “*indicators of the political pulse*” of the years in which the films were shot³⁸.

We have to point out that the film script gains the status of a literary independent work within the Soviet cultural context, while the montage is rather regarded as means to destroy the conventional narration and it lacks ideological nature³⁹. Bearing in mind that both aesthetics and ideology shapes the perception of the past⁴⁰, especially ideology of the socialist realism, we point out other defining facets of the Stalinist film are given by the mutation of the present into the past and the transformation of the future into the present⁴¹, which supposes the complete de-realization of the present. The roots of the cult of the Second World War may be considered here, in the Stalinist specificity when compared to the revolutionary one – the cult of the progress and future was no more the source of legitimation; it was replaced by the cult of the past. Thus, we point out the construction of the past in Soviet cinematographic productions

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. XV.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 1-2.

³⁶ B. McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Oxford University Press, U. S. A., 1996, p. 201.

³⁷ R. Stam, A. Raengo (ed.), *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Oxford, 2005, p. 3.

³⁸ M. Gheorghiu-Cernat, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

³⁹ E. Dobrenko, *Stalinist Cinema*... p. 5.

⁴⁰ Deborah Cartmell, I. Q. Hunter and Imelda Whelehan (eds.), *Retrovision: Reinventing the Past in Film and Fiction*. Pluto Press, London, Sterling, Virginia, 2001, pp. 1-7.

⁴¹ See the analysis of historical films shot in the Stalinist period (*Bogdan Khmelniŭky, Minin and Pozharsky, Suvorov, Kutuzov, Amiral Ushakov, Ivan the Terrible, Amiral Nakhimov* and others) with clear references to stringent facets of the very period they were shot in, especially Stalin's cult of personality - *Ibidem*, pp. 65-108.

through historicization, museification⁴² of the war experience and alienation from the past and trauma of memory⁴³.

Our demarche aims at creating an instrument that would constitute the starting point for similar research in the area of war representation in the Soviet and post-Soviet context⁴⁴, offering a balanced perspective on the subject, liberated by stereotypes generated in the post-Soviet space by the cult of the *Great Fatherland War*.

Summary of Chapters

Our research proposes a new approach of the Soviet literature that brings to attention the subject of the Second World War, and it is structured in three main parts. The following section offers a brief presentation of these parts.

Theoretical Aspects. Critical Approaches

The thesis reveals the ways in which the great theme of the Second World War is constituted, presenting fundamental notions for understanding the Soviet literature, starting with the concept of *socialist realism* and possible approaches. The *positive character* is considered the most important ingredient of the socialist realism prose, generating discussions among literary theoreticians, literary critics and writers of the Soviet era, fact that determined us to offer this issue a generous space within our study. That chapter represents the necessary background for delineating the elements of constructing literary characters in the analysed war prose. The last chapter with an introductory role in the Russian-Soviet atmosphere is the chapter dedicated to the notion of *podvig* ("heroic deed") from the semantic area associated to *heroism*. Those pages

⁴² See also B. Groys opinions on the Stalinist aesthetics and its aim in overcoming the difference between art and life - B. Groys, "Bor'ba protiv muzeia, ili demonstratsia iskusstva v totalitarnom prostranstve" in M. Balina, E. Dobrenko, I. Muraşov (eds.), *Sovetskoe bogatstvo: Stat'i o kul'ture, literature i kino*. Akademicheskii proekt, St. Petersburg, 2002, pp. 48-49.

⁴³ E. Dobrenko, *Stalinist Cinema...*, pp. 7-14.

⁴⁴ See the research in this direction - Olga Grădinaru, "Between Myth and Demistification. Soviet and Post-Soviet Films on Molodaya Gvardia (The Young Guard) Organization" in *Brukenthalia*. Romanian Cultural History Review. Supplement of *Brukenthal. Acta Musei*. no. 5, Editura Muzeului Național Brukenthal, Sibiu, 2015, pp. 908-920, Mihaela Grancea, Olga Grădinaru, "Scandals on Statues. Dangerous Nostalgia, Unfinished Polemics during Post-Communism in Brukenthalia no. 5, pp. 974-983, but also the presentation "Soviet Heroic Visual Patterns in Post-Soviet Documentaries on The Young Guard Organization" at the conference *Material Cultures of Television* in Hull, 21-22 March 2016.

attempt to differentiate the Soviet heroic and heroism, taking into account the required heroization by socialist realism standards and the exceptional cases when that kind of heroization is avoided.

Representation of the Second World War in the Soviet Literature: Stages and Novelistic Perspectives, Elements of Hero Construction

This part consists of three main segments: romantic-heroic perspective (that contains the analysis of Alexander Fadeyev's novel *The Young Guard* and Boris Polevoy's short novel *A Story about a Real Man*); psychological perspective (focused on Yuri Bondarev's novel *The Hot Snow*), and philosophical perspective (which contains the analysis of Leonid Leonov's novel *The Russian Forest*).

The chapter *Alexander Fadeyev, "The Young Guard" (1945, 1948) and Ideological Fictionalisation* presents the genesis of the novel, as well as the context of the controversial reception of the first edition of the book, and the specificity of the second edition, while problematizing the relation between historicism and historical novel, historicization and historic-ideological fictionalisation. Among other preoccupations of our analysis we mention the style of the novel and its specificity, taking into account other Fadeyev's novels, and the theories generated by the second edition of the novel. The analytic constant of this section is represented by the emphasis of elements of hero construction and various facets of war representation.

The next chapter - *Boris Polevoy, "A Story About a Real Man" (1946) and Soviet Heroisation* – includes biographic and socio-cultural elements concerning the postwar reality, and offers an analysis of the journey of the main hero and manners of representing the war, with a focus on the clinical space and the projected heroising aspects (strictness, severity, efficiency of the medical personnel in harsh war circumstances). Following Katerina Clark's and Lilya Kaganovsky's directions for reading and interpretation, we highlighted the stages of Alexey Meresyev's inner tensions between *spontaneity* and *consciousness*, as well as his steps for complete subjectivity (toward the state and its high authority, Stalin) after being removed from his social position through an extreme form of disciplinarity (paralyzed, damaged or wearing prostheses).

The psychological perspective on the Second World War is analysed in Yuri Bondarev's novel *The Hot Snow* (1970). Although the chosen novel isn't part of the first wave of post-Stalinist war prose, it has the advantage of concentrating symptomatic traits of that generation of writers and crystallized motives of Bondarev's short prose of the previous decades. The introductory and meta-critical elements of the chapter encompass the specificity of the lieutenants' prose in the larger context of the Thaw and it presents the recalcitrant and/or ideologized tendency of the Soviet critics. The subchapter *Facets of Hero Construction* takes into account the cultural mutations of the period and points out the peculiarity of Bondarev's heroes, while the war representation is analysed from the perspective of fragments with psychologizing tendencies and war descriptions from the angle of stream of consciousness.

The chapter *Leonid Leonov, The Russian Forest (1953) and Metaphorisation* is concerned with significant details about Leonov's activity and it presents the background of the novel's publication. Although *The Russian Forest* is more than a war novel (as the author has the ambition of offering an epic presentation from Tsarist times to World War II), we chose this novel due to its unprecedented conception and controversial (and deceiving) presence of some literary motives specific to Stalinist times and due to its influence over other writers. The impact of Leonov's novel was reduced because of Stalin's death and subsequent Thaw period; nevertheless, his metaphorisation method had been used in other Soviet literary works. The manner of constructing the literary heroes and the war representation are subdued to author's intention to offer a cosmogonic anti-utopia, where the forest (seen as the embodiment of the people) is both the hero and the background.

Representation of the Second World War in Soviet Film Adaptations

The analysis of film adaptations represents the third major part of our thesis, unveiling the deployment of the filmic text inspired by the literary text, as well as the tone and manners of representation of World War II. Every chapter dedicated to film adaptations presents the peculiarity of the director's vision, the analysis of some significant sequences of the script, the script parameters and sequential profiles, taking into account the camera movements, types of montage, background organization and image composition, types of plans and filming techniques, as well as non-specific filmic processes (illumination, costumes, presence or absence of colours, actors' play, dialogues, sound), and filmic time and space.

In our analysis we took into account the aspects pointed out by Francis Vanoye and Anne Goliot-Lété⁴⁵, revealing not only the suppressed or added characters, scenes, but also alterations of the scene dimensions. However, we used the notion of *fidelity* in the sense proposed by John Desmond and Peter Hawkes, which is not in the evaluative sense that would establish the merit of the films, but rather as a descriptive term that would allow the discussion of the relation between the two works – literary and filmic. According to the classification proposed by the two researchers (close, free and intermediate), we established that all four Soviet film adaptations are close adaptations. Regarding the only two post-Soviet analysed films, inspired by the activity of “The Young Guard” organization, we support the idea that *The Last Confession* directed by Sergey Lyalin is an intermediate adaptation (as it presents many narrative and other type of similarities to Fadeyev’s novel), while *Ours* directed by Alexey Sych is a free film adaptation.

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