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THE POSTMODERN CITY TEXT IN SERHIY ZHADAN'S POETICS

У статті аналізується специфіка відображення параметрів постмодерного міста як тексту у роботах Сергія Жадана за творчий період з 2008 по 2022 рр. Досліджуються механізми репрезентації міста у діахронічному аспекті та виокремлюються часо-просторові й аудіальні характеристики української урбаністичності у зв'язку із європейською урбаністичністю на прикладах зображення регіональних центрів Харкова, Ворошиловграда, східноукраїнських урбанонімів районного значення, а також окремих закордонних урбанонімів.

Мета роботи полягає у виокремленні та аналізі основних категорій постмодерного міста як тексту у прозі та поезії Сергія Жадана. Завдання дослідження сфокусовані на визначенні та інтерпретації сучасних методів дослідження категорії міста як тексту, ідентифікації основоположних змістових репрезентативних елементів вагомих для автора східноукраїнських міст, визначенні основних категорій міста як тексту, а також Харкова як тексту, у творчій спадщині письменника.

Методи дослідження включають герменевтичний, історико-літературний, культурно-історичний та метод контекстуального аналізу.

У результаті аналізу доводиться, що текст міста у творчому доробку Сергія Жадана представлено безліччю форм, парадигмі «минуле-сучасність-мікс минуле/сучасність». Хронотопічний скелет міста втілено у низці матеріальних форм, представлених змішаною архітектурою, що несе у собі відбиток історичних епох; а також реалізується рядом просторових моделей залізничних станцій, що представляють собою галерею соціальних характерів та алгоритми кримінальних схем; автобусними маршрутами, міським транспортом, що персоналізується і репрезентується у якості «органів» міста; індустріальними об'єктами; пам'ятниками радянським лідерам; отелями; зоо-образами. Характерною рисою деталізації є зображення маргінальної складової міста (п'яничок, наркоманів, проститутток, нечесних політиків). Текст Сергія Жадана кодований, символічний, соціально маркований. Застигла реальність пострадянської дійсності, уособлена в містах, досягає апогею трансформації у час військового конфлікту, що модифікує тіло міста і змінює ментальність його мешканців. Образ міста у творчості автора набуває рис міста-повії. Сергій Жадан також породжує низку свіжих або оновлених форм, як-от місто-сирота, місто-каліка, місто-механізм, місто-тварина. Українські міста у спадщині письменника здебільшого чоловічого роду, тоді як закордонні міста відзначені помітними жіночими біблійними рисами.

Таким чином, у творчості Сергія Жадана формується постмодерністський міський текст як цілісна система знаків та образів, що відображає специфіку посттоталітарної урбаністичної культури. Поетика постмодерного міського тексту Жадана включає прийоми інтертекстуальності; пародійно-іронічне осмислення традиційних культурних архетипів (місто-сонце, місто-блудниця, місто-сад тощо) та їх підміну новими конотаціями (місто-пес, місто-риба, місто-примара, місто-механізм, місто-калека, місто-сирота, місто-блудниця тощо); має місце мотив ескапізму; фрагментарність зображення; застосовується принцип гри із читачем. У творча письменника створюється образ постмодерної міської свідомості як кочової, безпритульної та карнавалізованої. Подібний тип свідомості є основою для формування особливого типу героя – вічного кочівника-блудкача.

Ключові слова: образ міста, злам епох, урбаністичний простір, зоо-символи, хронотопічні моделі, постмодерністський міський текст, постмодерністська міська свідомість.

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City as a living organism, a “special existential code”, a “local text” goes through a considerable transformation, changing its shape according to the historical epoch and the dominant philosophy. In the macro-literary work, the city and the “urban text” get into focus in the era of industrialization when the urban space acquires certain significance. In the urban novel, the city is not only a chronotopic skeleton, a frame for the event, an important feature of the setting, but a specific independent character, a part of the unique artistic system of the author. In the works by William Makepeace Thackeray (“*Vanity Fair*”, “*The Luck of Barry Lyndon*”, “*The Newcomes*”), Ch. Dickens (“*Great Expectations*”), G. Orwell (“*1984*”) it's London, in the text by Feodor Dostoyevsky (“*Crime and Punishment*”) and Andrei Bely it's St. Petersburg (the novel “*Petersburg*”), in M. Bulgakov's legacy it's Kyiv and Moscow (“*Belaya Gvardiya*”, “*Master and Margarita*”), in the novels by Erich Maria Remark it's Paris (“*Arc de Triomphe*”), in “*The Slaughterhouse-Five*” (1969) by Kurt Vonnegut it's Dresden. Global literary criticism, embracing the world literary legacy diachronically, distinguished the following basic types of the cities, represented in literature, based on a particular philosophic background: the city-cave, the city-labyrinth, the sun city, the maiden-city, the party town, the forest-city, the garden city, the mother city [Степанова, 2015, с. 200–410; Щукін, 2014, с. 11–14]. The Biblical text generated the notion of the so-called prostitute city. Slavic literature, on the contrary, maintained the concept of a mother city, often associated with Kyiv.

The 21st century Ukrainian literature is deprived of one-dimensionality, tending towards intertextuality and hybridization. The Postmodern city in the text by the Ukrainian authors is a snapshot of the transitional period, embracing the features of multiple epochs and the metamorphosis of its components. The Postmodern city is a peculiar formation based on the rudiments of the Post-Soviet era, ethnic genes, the schizoid character of the nineties, the speed and computerization of the noughties and a total loss of the ideals. The late 20th – early 21st century city is a space without a dominant philosophy or ideology. It's a mosaic of contexts sewn together inside of the frames of a particular artistic form, creating a mixture of the seemingly uncombinable paradigms, which define the epoch of collapse of the Soviet meta-narrative.

The text by Serhiy Zhadan embraces all the Postmodern elements and portrays the establishment of a changing type of being. According to L.B. Lavrynovych, who had studied the urban text in the Ukrainian prose on the fringe of millennium, “time and space play an important role in the symbolic cultural continuum as they determine the ontological status of a person, the system of values and worldview dominants”, which finds its reflection in literature [Лавринович, 2010, р. 310]. City as a space is native to Serhiy Zhadan, brings him up, nourishes his mind, shapes his sociology and the world-view. The text by Serhiy Zhadan is a product of urbanization and urbanization is the setting and the code for the author's text. The city by the writer is represented by both biological substances and inanimate objects, reaching the culmination of its conversion in the days of the ongoing military collision with its outbreak on February, 24, 2022.

Urban space frequently gets into focus of investigation by sociologists and anthropologists like Georg Simmel, Max Weber, Mykola Antsyferov, Max Sheler, Pierre Bourdieu, Maksym Karpovets. The individual urban text in the novels and poetry by chosen authors was explored by S.O. Hryastunova in her thesis “*The poetics of the novel “City behind the River” by G. Kozak*” (2005), by N.V. Shmidt in her thesis “*Urban text in the poetry of the Russian Modernism*” (2007), by T.S. Kryvolutskaya in her thesis “*The urban text in the Russian Novels by Nabokov of 1920s-1930s*” (2008), by M.N. Veselova in her investigation “*A Historic city as a text of the Russian Culture*” (2009), and by I.V. Devdiuk in her article “*Modifications of Urban Space in the Ukrainian and English Prose Works of the Interwar Period: Existential Aspect*” [Девдюк, 2018]. However, the studies of the Ukrainian urban text are rather fragmented and are often linked to some ‘classic’ names, representing Ukrainian literature of the gone epochs.

Meanwhile, city as a special kind of text, characterized by the concentration of the informational, cultural, psychological, spatial and spiritual features, is a constitutive element of

Serhiy Zhadan's poetic system. V. Fomenko in his work *"The city and literature: Ukrainian vision"* (2007) stresses that "the city is a historically shaped, polished space, which preserves information codes, illusions, myths, embodied in the architecture and art. It has got an arguable footage and belongs to the narrative, which turns it into a text, embracing the unique information" [Фоменко, 2007, p. 35]. The concept of the city in Serhiy Zhadan's prose was analyzed by O.V. Danylina in the article *"The Concept "city" in the prose by Serhiy Zhadan"* (2010) based on two his novels *"Depeche Mode"* (2004) and *"Anarchy in the UKR"* (2005). Noticeable that the second novel exploits an English contraction "the Ukr" used in the same line with the Ukrainian text. According to Yurii Lotman, "the interference of a "fragment" of the text of some foreign language can play a role of a generator of the new meanings" [Лотман, 2000, p. 66]. The English text allows the author to stress the aspect which stays inexplicit in the native language: the article "the", for example, still marks the affiliation of the country to a larger entity – the USSR, serving as a symbol of the yet uncut umbilical cord. At the same time, the researcher concentrates more on the literary context as a fertile ground for the development of some particular traditional senses in the new texts: Danylina concludes that the concept "city" in the Modern Ukrainian literature is often used in the opposition to the rural area, the village, thus being represented as "an alien space" [Даниліна, 2010, p. 349]. However, the researcher skips the idea that "the village" stays rather unknown to the author, who is an indigenous city/town dweller. On the other hand, Danylina recognizes Zhadan as a representative of "the new wave" in the Ukrainian literature, who is characterized by so-called "esthetic plurality" [Даниліна, 2010, p. 349]. She distinguishes several dominant urban locuses in the chronotopic system of the both analyzed novels – Svatove town, Vuzlova station, Grakove station, Lugansk, Starobilsk, Gulyaipole [Даниліна, 2010, p. 353]. The mentioned points form the dominant coordinates of the analyzed novels. Inga Bryden singles out the following dominant vectors of the analysis of the city in the contemporary prose: "city as a text; mapping the city; writing and walking; literature and the built environment, and globalization" [Bryden, 2009, p. 21].

The *goal* of the current research is to identify and analyze main categories of the Postmodern city as a text in the poetic system by Serhiy Zhadan, based both on his poetry and prose and embracing the period between 2008 up to 2022. The tasks of the investigation include the interpretation of the contemporary methods of the research of the 'the city as a text' category, the identification of the basic elements of the representation of the Eastern Ukrainian cities, significant for the author, the determination of the main categories of the city as a text, and Kharkiv as a text in particular, in the legacy of the writer. *Methods* include hermeneutical, historical, literary, cultural methods and the method of contextual analysis

The notion "city as a text" appears when, according to M. de Certeau, the city "can be read". Yurii Lotman sees the city as a particular "cultural/existential code" [Лотман, 1984, p. 31]. According to Y.M. Lotman, "city, as a complex semiotic mechanism, generator of culture, <...> constitutes a pot of texts and codes, differently organized and heterogeneous, belonging to various languages and levels" [Лотман, 1984, p. 35]. Lotman concludes that "it is a semiotic polyglotism of every city that turns it into a field of diverse semiotic conflicts, impossible under any other condition. Implementing connection of various national, social, stylistic codes and texts, the city produces diverse hybridization, recoding, semiotic translations, which turn it into a powerful generator of the new information" [Лотман, 1984, p. 35]. E.V. Shcherbakova in her thesis *"London as a text in the novels by W. Thackeray "Vanity Fair", "The Luck of Barry Lyndon", "The Newcomes"* stresses that "city as a text is a complex entity with the trite borders, but distinct characteristics" [Щербаківа, 2016, p. 4].

According to Nick Bentley, postmodern cities in contemporary literature represent "a labyrinthine enigma that metaphorically stands in for the dizzying plurality of contemporary urban living. <...> it is the physical manifestation of a culture of consumerist access and bears the traces of earlier images of the modernist metropolis in which an implicit critique of contemporary culture is manifest alongside the dehumanizing effects of hyper-urban living" [Bentley, 2014, p. 175]. The city text by Serhiy Zhadan is different. It is a hybridization of familiar to the character realias of the Soviet and post-Soviet eras (view Tetiana Starostenko. *"War as a Text in the Online Diary by Serhiy Zhadan"* [Starostenko, 2022, p. 181–182]), marked by the obvious recession, and the incarnation of the infused foreign European and Asian elements, modified by the

Ukrainian urban sociology. The early poetry and prose by Serhiy Zhadan captures the urban space in its depressive state, frozen between the old and the new, looking forward and gazing back, combining the features of the past and the sprouts of the present, changing its skin, like a reptile: «Із будинків сходить весь холод зими, як шкіра архітектури висихає і починає оживати після довгої перерви, оскільки після зими міста завжди нагадують підлітків, котрі вічно не знають, що їм одягти – половина речей на них вже мала, решта давно вийшла з моди»¹ [Жадан, 2008а, р. 125]. This city-teenage parallel has got a deeper layer of the meaning, addressing the stage of the development of the reborn country, still marked by the mediality of the transition. Serhiy Zhadan's urban space has strong communist-reality-links, nourished by its powerful post-soviet industrial background, pierced through by a parodic embodiment of the cultural archetype of the "sun-city" and the whole cultural intertext: «Місто побутового футуризму і комунарської самоорганізації, коли-небудь, коли жити тут стане зовсім неможливо, з історичного центру міста обов'язково зроблять музей під відкритим небом, ... будуть підводити до нього групи американських чи японських туристів і говоритимуть – ось воно, це середньовічне місто-сонце, червоно-синя комуна, винищена чумою і фіговим комунальним господарством»² [Жадан, 2008а, р. 125]. Kevin Robins writes, "The postmodern city is then about an attempt to re-imagine urbanity: about recovering a lost sense of territorial identity, urban community and public space" [Robins, 1991, р. 304]. Zhadan's text is never about the recovery. Altogether the spotted post-Soviet reality comes into conflict with the lyrical hero, the product of the updated reality, evoking in him the feeling of rejection: «Поштове відділення викликало у мене нервовий розлад»³ [Жадан, 2008а, р. 92]. The motif of nervous disorder, popping up with every contact of the character with the reality of the city, creates the existential intertext – there occurs an allusion to the motif of sickness, which experiences Roquentin when coming into contact with the reality in the similar novel by J.-P. Sartre.

According to L.B. Lavrynovych, the contemporary Ukrainian prose embraces "a strain of image-thematic sets, which form a city" as "a topographic, social, cultural and bodily organism". Altogether he notices that the most frequent actual urban text in the works of literature is usually represented by the following locuses: Kyiv space, Lviv space, Kharkiv toponymy, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk and Rivne placement [Лавринович, 2010, р. 311]. For the text by Serhiy Zhadan the dominant location is Kharkiv, the image of which prevails even in the novel "Voroshylivgrad" (2019).

Within the image of Kharkiv the writer spots the marginal layers of the society in their statics – as what never changes with the time it's the need in prostitutes, the presence of beggars, drunkards and drug-addicts in the streets. In Kharkiv the homeless dance on the background of music, natural phenomena (like rain), and seasonal shifts. The fleur of post-Sovietism of Kharkiv gets lost in 2022 within the depiction of the city caught in the war [Starostenko, 2022, р. 180–186].

As well as the the majority of the urban images in the works by Serhiy Zhadan, the image of Kharkiv is represented by following dominant locuses: railway stations, bus stations and skinned intercity buses, buildings, party offices, industrial boroughs and factory pipes, railway and tram tracks, hotels with prostitutes and relatively destroyed infrastructure, old rented communal apartments, buffets and bakeries, cemeteries, churches and garages, monuments to the former Soviet leaders, like Lenin, foreign spots outside the country.

The railway stations, as well as the road, shape the mutual chronotope of the whole spatial system of the writer's books, which is marked by movement: «Кількаденні переїзди, без води й сну, зависання на безіменних станціях, чорний голод нічного плацкарту, чорна вода залізничних перегонів, вигорілі від сонця й водки душі провідників, криваві сні пасажирів

1 "The cold of winter peels off the houses, like the skin of architecture dries up and revives after a long break, since the post-winter cities always remind teenagers, who never know what to wear – a half of their clothes is already small, and the other half went out of fashion".

2 "The city of domestic futurism and comunard self-organization, one day, when living here will get absolutely impossible, the downtown will be turned into an open-sky museum, ... and the invited groups of American and Japanese tourists will be told – here it is, the Medieval sun city, red and blue commune, cleared by plague and lousy communal economy"

3 "The post-office triggered in me psychotic break"

і знищені комунікації»⁴ [Жадан, 2008а, р. 162]. In the war city the railway station, previously depicted as meeting points or marked by criminality, get a sort of updated account: *«Вокзал, моя коробка із-під взуття, // наповнена листами людей, що любили і вірили, // схована в шухлядах міст»⁵* [Жадан, 2022]. In such a way, the railway station, previously full of life, turns into a box, burying the destinies, focusing on the past reminiscence, hiding in the city lines. According to I.V. Devdiuk, who had analyzed the modifications of the urban space both in the Ukrainian and English prose of the interwar period, city, on the one hand, “is a center of the intellectual thought, the carrier of the ancient culture”, on the other, becomes “an embodiment of the technocratic reality”, “hostile to the human essence” [Девдюк, 2018, р. 97]. The military reality turns Kharkiv into a city-trap, the city-box, the city-cripple and together with that the hero-city.

The images of the hotels and railway stations as the dominant ones in the urban text by Zhadan turn into symbols of some nomadic, unsettled style of life. The distance is not only a travelling measure, it is a measure of relationships, which exist between two urban points: *«Вони мешкали у різних містах – він у Харкові, вона у Києві, зустрілись випадково, випадково я був при цьому присутнім, і мені від початку було зрозуміло, що це буде ще одна гарна історія даремно спаленого бензину»⁶* [Жадан, 2008b, р. 159]. In Serhiy Zhadan’s reality, relationships don’t stand the test of distance and turn into a story “of wasted gasoline” symbolizing the efforts done in vain. The image of “wasted gasoline” develops into a multiform metaphor, marking more than just failed relationships. Gasoline, serving as the source of energy and activating the mechanism, acquires the meaning of wasted vital energy, meaningless and pointless movement. Thus, Zhadan deromanticizes the traditional image of the vagrant/wanderer and simultaneously desacralizes the mythologem of the way. The mythologem of the way, traditionally representing the idea of the path in the search of life sense, is thought of as some self-escapism and transforms into the way to nowhere. It is an escapism from reality. As it is stressed by T. Gundorova, “Zhadan creates a peculiar parallel reality: his characters always travel, meet, carry one another, spend their nights in the alien kitchens, or simply get acquainted” [Гундорова, 2005, р. 175]. Giving his preference to the road and not to a settled urban life, the character by Zhadan runs away from the city as the embodiment of the Apocalypse of the post-Soviet reality. Escapism turns into one of the key motifs of the postmodern urban text. The motif of escapism gets incorporated into the topic of eternal loneliness and the disengagement of people of the period of social stagnation, who have lost their cultural clenches, which had united them earlier. In the text of the Postmodern epoch those clenches are desacralized and get ironic interpretation: “The topography of intertemporal, which is native for the dwellers of the 1990s, is constituted out of the stations of departure and arrival, where the travelers form a special caste of the homeless and uprooted people, which are basically united by that homelessness. As even with all “his love to his homeland”, which in those places has always been thought of as “keef”, speaks ironically Zhadan, what can actually unite people in their motherland, “the rising sun, for example, or the common loo”, “and afterwards the folklore and alcohol could be added to the list” («Цитатник», с. 50)» [Гундорова, 2005, р. 170].

The mainstreaming of the image of the hotel shows that the city serves as a home neither for the character-storyteller, nor for the rest of the characters: *«ти тут чужий, і питання лише в тому, скільки ти витримаєш у своєму готелі, наскільки у тебе вистачить грошей, драпу і консервів, аби вижити в кривавому готельному просторі, наповненому важкими сновидіннями й запахом одеколону»⁷* [Жадан, 2008а, р. 7]. Apart from the

⁴ “Several-day crossings, without water or sleep, hanging out at the nameless stations, the black hunger of the night reserved seats, the black water of railway races, the souls of conductors burned by the sun and vodka, the bloody dreams of passengers and the destroyed communications”.

⁵ “The railway station, is like a shoe box, // filled with the letters from people, who used to love and believe, // is hidden in the city drawers”.

⁶ “They lived in different cities – he was in Kharkiv, she was in Kyiv, they met by chance, and I happened to witness this, and it was clear for me from the very beginning that this would be another good story of wasted gasoline”.

⁷ “You are an alien here, the only question is, how much you will stand this hotel, how much money, dope and tins you have to survive in this bloody hotel space, filled with heavy dreams and the smell of Cologne water”.

urban literature of the epoch of Modernism, targeted at the comprehension of the relationships within the system “the city – the man”, – reciprocal influence, opposition, counteraction, mind formation etc., in the Postmodern paradigm the human being doesn't interact with the city. The process of “letting the city inside yourself and letting yourself inside the city” as the one defined by V. Toporov [Топоров, 2003, p. 14] as the basis of formation of the traditional urban text stops in the Postmodern text by Zhadan. The character-narrator doesn't interact with the city – he is, probably, a nomad-observer. Kharkiv city, initially alien to the writer, who finally finds his home there, makes him watch, listen and feel: *«ти потрапляєш до чужого міста // і починаєш слухати голоси, котрі лунають уночі // на сходових майданчиках, приглушене багатоголосся // працівників пекарень і газетних редакцій, це історії, // які вони розповідають про своїх подружок, // таємниці, якими вони діляться»*⁸ [Жадан, 2008b, p. 116]. The lyrical character of Serhiy Zhadan's poetry is familiar with the marginal side of the city, which is not deprived of some unhealthy romanticism embodied in the urban bio-accessories of the homeless people and drug addicts: *«Безкінечна сієста харківських нарків, котрі сидять собі під деревами, ховаючись у тінь і уникаючи небесного контролю»*⁹ [Жадан, 2011, p. 104].

Thus, in the Postmodern urban text by Zhadan the image of the shelterless mind is being manifested. As it was rightfully noticed by Tamara Gundorova, “Zhadan's character as a Postmodern individual is marked by the wound of fatherlessness, caused by the weakness of his parents followed by him during the 1990s and accompanied by the devaluation of their values. As a result, a fatherless child – Zhadan's protagonist, who has also turned out to be homeless, has neither parents, nor parents' house – a place of protection and faith. Such a character becomes an eternal outcast, which can be easily associated with every wanderer [Гундорова, 2005, p. 57].

Zhadan's Kharkiv is a home for the homeless people and bastards, which implicitly speaks for the paradigm of morality – immorality: *«Танцює бомж подібне щось на вальс»*¹⁰ [Жадан, 2008c, p. 15]; *«Танцює Харків – місто байстрюків»*¹¹ [Жадан, 2008c, p. 15]. Dance is ritualistic for the writer, together with music displaying the city rhythm, the rhythm of life. Even the images of birds, indigenously associated with the urban chronotope, – the pigeons – in Serhiy Zhadan's perception embody the souls of the homeless: *«І голуби – сполохані й лякливі – // Блакитні душі вмерлих тут бомжів»*¹² [Жадан, 2008c, p. 15]. Spatial parameters of the city, familiar to the lyrical character are all about the decline. This craving for marginality, ability to spot the symptoms of the ill society shows, using the term by Y.I. Kovaliv, a sort of “groundedness of civilization”, and the dance of a homeless person symbolizes the antithesis of the spiritual and physical [Ковалів, 2010, p. 443].

The motif of marginality interlaces with the motif of death and decay, highlighting the dominance of statics and desolation in the image of the city. At the same time, the static nature of the city comes into contrast with the all-absorbing motion of the trains and the mainstreaming of the images of the railway stations – the motion is possible exclusively between the cities. Inside the urban space there is an absence of motion, rest, decay, death. A bright embodiment of the spiritual death is represented through the image of the cemetery as the apotheosis of physical death, that seems to be as attractive for the character-narrator as museums and parks: *«ниптаї їхніми вулицями, сидіти в парку, фотографувати фасади будинків, блукати міським кладовищем, розглядаючи прізвища на могилах, і пізнаючи найбільш із них відомі»*¹³ [Жадан, 2008a, p. 42]. The parks, buildings, cemeteries constitute the balance between life and death, the past and the present. However, this balance is illusive. In a static city the past merges

⁸ «You get to a stranger city // and start listening to the voices that are echoing at night // on the landings, a muffled polyphony // of the bakery and newspaper workers, the stories // they tell about their girlfriends, // the secrets they share”.

⁹ “The endless siesta of Kharkiv junkies, who are sitting under the trees, hiding in the shade and avoiding heavenly control”.

¹⁰ “A bum dances something similar to a waltz”.

¹¹ “Kharkiv dances – the city of bastards”.

¹² “And the doves – frightened and fearful – // The blue souls of the bums who died here”.

¹³ “Walking through their streets, sitting in the park, taking photos of the facades of the buildings, wandering through the city cemetery, looking at the names on the graves, and getting to know the most famous of them”.

with the present. The present is actually existence in the past, evoking a firm association with the image of a post-Soviet city as a cemetery of the Soviet epoch.

Investigating other Ukrainian authors and their legacy, as well as *“Depeche Mode”* by Serhiy Zhadan, L.B. Lavrynovych identifies several hypostases of a city: the past, the present, the future, parabolic timelessness, the variations of temporal imposition: “The past of the city in a mystical way influences its present, creating not only visual, but also a symbolic and sacral image”. The researcher thinks that the modernity “absorbs the past, saving the link with the place, where the event took place”, which makes topographic elements significant and allows to distinguish so-called “levels” of the city [Лавринович, 2010, p. 311–313, 317]. Meanwhile, the urban text by Serhiy Zhadan is predominantly “the present in the past”, embracing spatial elements of multiple epochs, mixing and using them as an explanation for the contemporary society hierarchy. The sociology of the city is viewed as a result of the historic shifts: *«Дитинко, ми наслідки цих революцій»*¹⁴ [Жадан, 2008с, p. 4].

City is viewed as a live organism, where trams are compared to hearts and the buildings are personified: *«трамваї зупинялись, ніби серця»*¹⁵ [Жадан, 2008а, p. 153]. Such elements create an image of a city-mechanism. However, all this post-industrial reality is invariably contrasted to a range of marginal details, like the smell of the toilet or weed. Interestingly, Zhadan’s characters select some marginal space areas in the city: *«він часто сидів у ідальнях для безпритульних, // ховався по ночліжках, // організованих червоним хрестом, // виводив на площі циркових тварин»*¹⁶ [Жадан, 2008b, p. 135]. The other social layers of the city are represented by the ability to adapt: *«всі, хто устиг зайняти в цьому суспільстві належну нішу, // від жирних біржовиків до останнього анархіста – // його клієнти складали якщо й не більшу, // то у всякому разі кращу частину населення нашого міста»*¹⁷ [Жадан, 2008b, p. 131]. The imperfection of the urban space is viewed as a kind of some normal abnormality, “intoxicating decadence”, attractive and native for the lyrical hero: *«Це занепад епохи, це п’яний декаданс»*¹⁸ [Жадан, 2008с, p. 16].

Remarkably, the cities in the contemporary Ukrainian literature are of the male grammatical gender, when traditionally the city is linked to femininity. Carl Jung defines the city “as a symbol of motherhood, which nourishes its children”. “The fortresses, the unsubdued cities are virgins; the colonies – are sons and daughters”. There are also cities-wicked-wenches [Carl Jung, 1938, p. 200–201]. The cities and towns by Serhiy Zhadan are deprived of any fleur of maternity. They are more indifferent like fathers (Starobilsk), unbridled like teenagers, unchained like young adults (Voroshilovgrad), corrupted like a crooked politician (Kharkiv), wounded like old men (Svatove, Kharkiv in the days of war). Masculinity, which is dominant in the images of the cities, created by the writer, acquires some hypertrophic forms – it is prostitution specified by the author, which serves as one of the key markers of the urban code and the urban text. This dominant makes all the Eastern-Ukrainian cities by Serhiy Zhadan similar, displaying the combination of Soviet-generated metal and the freedom of sexual revolution. Thus, Zhadan creates an inverted image of a well-known cultural archetype of “the whore-city”, which is transformed into “a city of whores”. This technique of an intricate play with the classics constitutes one of the most important components of the poetics of a Postmodern urban text.

According to V.G. Shchukin, the city can be depicted as an animal – sleeping, moving or aggressively tuned. The researcher thinks that the most widespread metaphor of the capitalist city is the city-octopus (e.g. *“Les Villes tentaculaires”* by Emile Verhaeren, 1895). He also distinguishes the spider cities and the mole-cities (represented in the works by Pyotr Lopatin, Pyotr Kozhevnikov) [Щукин, 2014, p. 12]. Serhiy Zhadan’s megacities are personified entities,

¹⁴ “Babe, we are all the consequences of these revolutions”.

¹⁵ “The trams stopped like hearts”.

¹⁶ “He was often sitting in the canteens for the homeless, // hiding in shelters // organized by the Red Cross, // was bringing out circus animals in the squares.

¹⁷ “Everyone who has managed to occupy a proper niche in this society, // from fat stockbrokers to the last anarchist – // all his clients made up, if not the largest, // then at any rate the best part of the population of our city”.

¹⁸ “This is the decline of the epoch, this is an intoxicating decadence”.

compared to the dogs: «*Пси-мегаполіси мучаться від спеки, міста подібні до сторожових псів – кожен із них реагує лише на власне ім'я. Влітку вони ліниво лежать у траві, важко дихаючи і спостерігаючи за фурами, що об'їжджають їх по окружній*»¹⁹ [Жадан, 2011, р. 103]. This name-coding of the cities detects their peculiar nature, defines their habits, and determines their character. The dogs have owners, as well as the cities do. The dog-images continue to be used in multiple contexts: «*На трасу вивалився кривавого кольору "ікарус". Перехняблено став на всі колеса, наче пес*»²⁰ [Жадан, 2019, р. 18]. Meanwhile, the concept of a watchdog correlates with the notion of a walled city, developed during the war time writing of the author (view [Starostenko, 2022]).

Zoo-associations is a characteristic feature of Serhiy Zhadan's writings: «*Автобус, він мчав на південь, // Борсаючись, мов риба, в дощових потоках*»²¹ [Жадан, 2008с, р. 6]. The wild world (both flora and fauna) and the cities co-exist, coming into interaction, with the nature infringing into urbanity: «*Наше місто навесні заростає травною, небеса над ним густо і компактно заселяються птахами, по зимі вони повертаються з Єгипту й Палестини, влітають на пласкі дахи й під арки будинку державної промисловості, розганяють повітря над площами, зникають у круглих зелених деревах*»²² [Жадан, 2008а, р. 124–125]. Such interpretation leads to the creation of the fleur of wilderness associated with Ukrainian urbanity. In exchange for the traditional archetypes of the maiden-city, the sun-city, the garden-city Zhadan creates a strain of Postmodern connotations like "the city-dog", "the city-fish", "the city-reptile", etc. The Postmodern city loses the traits of the stronghold of civilization. Instead of the traditional Apollonian space of reason, the Postmodern city chooses the space of Dionysian chaos, the human mind gives its way to the wild instinct. The Nietzschean image is state-building and city-forming. Apollo degenerates into a simulacrum of the post-totalitarian epoch. Cosmos turns into chaos, in which human existence becomes a pointless whirl of events. In such a perception of the city, the image of the universe, deprived of harmony, is being born. The image of the city through Zhadan's perception turns into a projection of the Postmodern picture of the world as a crisis of individuation, in which, according to O. Tsendrovskiy, "authorities and sacred things reveal their inner irrationality, groundlessness, and disruptiveness. The progress, verity, sense, order, fair society, and basically the whole Western "logocentric tradition", according to Jacques Derrida, is proclaimed to be a set of ideologeme and myths" [Tsendrovskiy, 2015, p. 21]. The downfall of the sacred objects of the Soviet epoch, with nothing in return, provokes the chaotic nature of perception, which gets reflected in the stylistic specificity of the Postmodern city. In the works by Zhadan the integrity of the image of the city is absent. The image of the city falls into fragments, often disconnected by the deficiency of the common idea and representing a set of topographic points (locuses), similar and interchangeable in the description of any city of the post-Soviet epoch. The image of a nomadic, shelterless mind, dominant in the works by Zhadan, and presupposing the permanent state of a wanderer, creates conditions for a fragmented perception of the city, related to the carnival world-view. Hereby develops peculiar to Zhadan's urban text parodic reconsideration and overthrow of the traditional sacred objects: "Such notions as rhizome, collage, labyrinth..., which reflect fundamentally diverse, chaotic and fragmented world-view, are linked to some ironic (meaning risorial) review... All these peculiarities of the Postmodern world-perception are similar to carnival mentality and world-view" [Zagibalova, 2011, p. 34]. Thus, the Postmodern urban mind is a carnival mind, marked by the fragmented perception of the world, escapism, parodic and ironic reconsideration of the traditional halidome, the erase of the borders between day-to-day and festive condition of the character – the eternal nomad-wanderer.

¹⁹ "Metropolitan cities-dogs are suffering from the heat; cities are like the guard dogs – each of them responds only to its own name. In the summer, they lie lazily in the grass, breathing heavily and watching the trucks driving around them on the circular road".

²⁰ "A blood-colored "Icarus" fell onto the track. Recklessly, he stood on all the wheels, like a dog".

²¹ "A bus was heading the South, // Tossing like a fish in the flood of the rain".

²² "Our city gets overgrown with grass in spring, the sky above it gets densely and compactly inhabited by birds, after winter they return back from Egypt and Palestine, fly to the flat roofs and find a place under the arches of the buildings of the state industry, disperse the air over the squares, disappear in the round green trees".

If within the images of Kharkiv, Starobilsk, Svatove the fragmentality of depiction gets combined with the detailed description of the railway and bus stations, hotels, squares and monuments, etc., the depiction of Lugansk in the novel *"Voroshilovgrad"* is dominated by half-tone. However, even the half-tones show the fragmented-carnival world-perception, erasing the border between the day-to-day routine and festivity: *«Якесь, уже вечірнє, святкування перемоги, рекетири і наші гравці, якісь жінки в святкових сукнях, чоловіки в білих сорочках і спортивних костюмах, офіціанти, кооператори, ми, молоді, сидимо за одним столом із бандитами, гарячі хвилі алкоголю прокочуються крізь голову, так мовби ти забігаєш в нічне море, тебе накриває чорною солодко-гіркою хвилею»*²³ [Жадан, 2019, р. 40].

The image of Voroshilovgrad in the similar novel is dithered. The depiction of the city or its particular locuses is absent. On the pages of the novel the very name appears only several times. The image of the city is represented through the vague memories of one of the characters: *«Ну, які могли бути пам'ятники у Ворошиловграді? Мабуть, Ворошилову. Я вже не пам'ятаю, якщо чесно. А що ти бачиш на такій картці? Сам пам'ятник, коло нього клумба, поруч хто-небудь обов'язково проходить, позаду може їхати тролейбус. А може, до річі, і не їхати. Може світити сонце. Може лежати сніг. Ворошилов міг бути на коні, а міг бути й без коня»*²⁴ [Жадан, 2019, р. 132]. Such a city image creates the feeling of unreality, existence illusive nature. Inability to visualize the unknown city results in the creation of work, where Voroshilovgrad is practically present in the title only. The stuffing of the spatial representation is formed by the depiction of the regional cities of district significance. In such a situation, on the one hand, the maxims of a game with a reader, built on the effect of failed expectations, caused by the substitution of senses, is being implemented. The writer involves the readers into a peculiar dialogue, suggesting to complete the building of the image of the city by themselves. On the other hand, such a strategy of narration is subordinated to the idea of nonexistent city image creation that has been already lost. The title of the novel represents the city which doesn't actually exist. The image of Voroshilovgrad is the image of a ghost-city of the Soviet epoch: *«Та й немає тепер ніякого Ворошиловграда... – Ну як це нічого немає? – не погодилась Ольга. – Ось ти ж є, правильно? І я є. – Правильно, – погодився я. – Я є. А Ворошиловграда немає»*²⁵ [Жадан, 2019, р. 133]. The situation in which "the human being exists and the city doesn't" contradicts the thesis of the continuity of the epochs and symbolizes an impassable rupture between the present and irretrievably lost epoch, between the Soviet and post-Soviet mind, thereby maintaining the triumph of Time with a prefix post-

Thus, the Postmodern urban text as a holistic system of images and signs reflecting the specificity of the post-totalitarian urban culture gets formed in the writings by Serhiy Zhadan. The poetics of the Postmodern urban text by Zhadan include the intertextual devices; parodic and ironic reasoning of the traditional cultural archetypes (the sun-city, the city-whore, the garden-city, etc.) and their substitution with the new connotations (the city-dog, the city-fish, the city-ghost, the city-mechanism, the city-cripple, the city-orphan, the city of whores, etc.); the motif of escapism; fragmentation of depiction; the mode of a game with a reader. The works of the writer create the image of the Postmodern urban mind as nomadic, shelterless and carnival. This type of mind serves as a basis of formation of a new peculiar type of a character – the eternal nomad-wanderer.

The urban text by Serhiy Zhadan is a depiction of decadence, marginality and some mosaic layers, symbolizing the waves of historic transition. The chronotopic skeleton of the city comprises a range of 'mothballed' elements of the Soviet or post-Soviet epochs, the snapshots of the

²³ "Some evening celebration of victory, racketeers and our players, some women in festive dresses, men in white shirts, and track suits, waiters, cooperators, we are young, sitting at the same table with gangsters, hot waves of alcohol are seeping through the head, as if you are deeping into the night sea, and you get covered by a black sweat and bitter wave".

²⁴ "What sort of monuments could be in Voroshilovgrad? Probably, to Voroshilov. I actually don't remember, to be honest. And what can you see on a such postcard? The very monument, a flowerbed near it, of course somebody is passing by, and there can be a trolleybus running at the background. Or there can be no trolleybus. The sun can be shining. There can be snow around. Voroshilov could be on the horse or without it".

²⁵ «There is no Voroshilovgrad, actually... – Well, what do you mean by "there is no Voroshilovgrad?" – isagreed Olga. – You exist, right? And I exist. – Right, – agreed I. – I do exist. And Voroshilovgrad doesn't".

consequences of Perestroika, the milestones of the development of the ongoing war reflected in the city transformation, the images of the urban inhabitants (the homeless, drunkards, drug addicts, hookers, politicians), zoo-symbols (pigeons, stray dogs, cats), transport (buses, trams, trains), architecture (all sorts of buildings, created in various styles, railway stations, Palaces of Culture, concert halls, hotels and churches). The urban chronotope by Serhiy Zhadan concentrates in Kharkiv city, embracing some urban points of the East of Ukraine and several cities abroad. The urban space is dynamic, highly-concentrated and reflective. Serhiy Zhadan is a master of the artistic detail, which makes his text specially coded.

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THE POSTMODERN CITY TEXT IN SERHIY ZHADAN'S POETICS

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Key words: *the image of the city, the turn of epochs, urban space, zoo-symbols, chronotopic models, Postmodern urban text, Postmodern urban mind.*

The article explores the display mechanisms of the postmodern city as a text in Serhiy Zhadan's works during the period between 2008 up to 2022. We've investigated the city representation tools portrayed in the diachronic aspect. There have been studies of Ukrainian urbanism time-space and audio characteristics, viewed through the connection with European urbanity on the examples of Kharkiv regional centers' and Voroshilovgrad depictions, the east of Ukraine urban points of district significance, as well as particular foreign urban locations.

The purpose of the research paper is to distinguish and analyze the main categories of the Postmodern city as a text in poetry and prose by Serhiy Zhadan. The tasks of the research are focused on the definition and interpretation of the modern research methods within the investigation of the 'the urban text' category, the identification of the fundamental content-representative elements of the Eastern Ukrainian cities significant to the author, the interpretation of the main categories of the city as a text, and Kharkiv as a text in particular, in the creative heritage of the author.

The research *methods* include hermeneutical, historical, literary, cultural methods and the method of contextual analysis.

As a result of the study, it has been proved that the city text in Serhiy Zhadan's works is represented by multiple forms, as well as the paradigm "the past – the present – the mixture of the past / the present". The chronotopic skeleton of the city is embodied in a number of material congestions, represented by the intervened example of architecture, which bears the imprint of different historical eras. The urban chronotope is marked by location points, endemic for the writer: numerous spatial models of the railway stations, representing a gallery of social characters and algorithms of criminal schemes; bus routes, city transport, personified and serving as the "bodily organs" of the city; industrial facilities; monuments to Soviet leaders; hotels; zoo-images. A characteristic feature of destabilization is the depiction of the marginal components of the city (drunkards, drug addicts, prostitutes, dishonest politicians). The hotels serve as the points of sin and the marks of well-being. Serhiy Zhadan's text is coded, symbolic, and is socially marked. The accompanying fragments of the realistic depiction are music, dances, weather, color, natural and unnatural sounds. The cities, marked by the influence of the historic shifts, create a picture of a transitional period in Ukrainian society. The frozen reality of the post-Soviet reality, embodied in the cities, reaches the peak of its transformation during the military conflict, which defaces the body of the city and modifies the mentality of its inhabitants. The buildings, the animals, the natural world tend to echo the military events and reflect the gradual degeneration and altogether rebirth of the city of Kharkiv. The urban space by Serhiy Zhadan is a mocking festivity. It revolves around day-to-day reality with the print of the epoch that dominates. The city by the author acquires the features of the whore-city. Serhiy Zhadan also generates a number of fresh or updated forms like city-orphan, city-cripple, city-mechanism, city-animal. The Ukrainian cities in the writer's legacy are of male gender, whereas the foreign ones acquire noticeable female Biblical features.

Thus, the Postmodern urban text as a holistic system of images and signs reflecting the specificity of the post-totalitarian urban culture gets formed in the writings by Serhiy Zhadan. The poetics of the Postmodern urban text by Zhadan include the intertextual devices; parodic and ironic reasoning of the traditional cultural archetypes (the sun-city, the city-whore, the garden-city, etc.) and their substitution with the new connotations (the city-dog, the city-fish, the city-ghost, the city-mechanism, the city-cripple, the city-orphan, the city of whores, etc.); the motif of escapism; fragmentation of depiction; the mode of a game with a reader. The works of the writer create the image of the Postmodern urban mind as nomadic, shelterless and carnival. This type of mind serves as a basis of a new peculiar type of a character formation – the eternal nomad-wanderer.

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