PRZEGLĄD RUSYCYSTYCZNY 2022, nr 2 (178)

DOI 10.31261/pr.13208

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TSAR, EAST, AND CIVILIZATION: RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN EDNA DEAN PROCTOR'S TRAVELOGUE

American writer Edna Dean Proctor (1829–1923), known as a poet and a progressive social activist, published her travelogue back in 1871, hot on the trail of her extensive tour of the countries of Western Europe and the Holy Land, including the Russian Empire. A Russian Journey was reprinted in America several times, and by the 1890 reprint, which has served as the material for this paper. The purpose of the study is to reveal the peculiarities of the image of Russia in the female traveler vision, which was created at the intersection of several discourse fields, Russian and Oriental, European and Eastern. The analysis of the author's creative thinking is based on a culturological perusal, which makes it possible to identify symbolic and mythopoetic codes of construction of a "borderline" mentality, as well as on a gender-adjusted post-colonial approach, exposing the clash of colonial and anti-colonial ideas. The research demonstrates, that European codes do not play a meaning-forming role, as well as the truly Russian ones; instead, the Eastern codes are revealed to the fullest possible extent. The attempts to fit the development of the empire into the Western discourse leads to emergence of semantic shifts and dichotomy of Oriental and European concepts.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the successful rediscovery of women's travel writing and subsequent development of new methodologies to study such artifacts, they still remain under-investigated by scientists. Nevertheless, endeavors are continuously undertaken to shed more light on the issue[1]. Ana-

[1] See, for example: A. M. Ramli, "Contemporary Criticism on the Representation of Female Travellers of the Ottoman Harem in the 19th Century: A Review." *Intellectual Discourse* 2011, no. 19.2, p. 263–279, https://journals.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse/index.php/id/article/view/233/193 (10.08.2021); P. Smethurst, J. Kuehn (eds.), *Travel Writing, Form, and Empire: The Poetics and Politics of Mobility,* Rou-

lyzing the ongoing debates around the problem of female travel writers and colonialism, Gigi Adair and Lenka Filipova emphasize that the accumulated research has no doubt revealed how diverse testimonies women's travelers of the 19th century left in terms of perception and spatial representations. However, while forming a systemic perspective on this problem one should avoid essentialism, which blurs the specific features of texts labeling all of them as "gender travelogues,"[2] and introduce into scientific circulation neglected names and works, especially those by non-European authors. In both these respects, Edna Dean Proctor's travelogue titled *A Russian Journey* is of particular interest; needless to say, it has hardly been studied,[3] in spite of its clear geopoetic identity and extraordinary ideas regarding geopolitical issues.

American writer Edna Dean Proctor (1829–1923), known in her homeland as a poet and progressive social activist with mature views of the political and historical development of society, published her travelogue in 1871, hot on the trail of her extensive tour of the Holy Land and European countries, including the Russian Empire. The latter country was quite exotic for the Western world at that time and thus little explored by its representatives. Dean Proctor's route took her primarily to the eastern and southern parts of the vast tsarist realm, even less often visited by European travelers who tended to limit themselves to the largest Russian cities, St. Petersburg and Moscow. The author focused her attention on those cities and towns, major and provincial, which became Muscovite possessions after experiencing a long period of Mongol-Tatar yoke , as well as on large areas in the east extending from Kazan to Kamyshin and southern territories captured by Russia (Odessa, Crimea with Sevastopol, Yalta, Alupka and Bessarabia with Chisinau and Balti) – it has formed

tledge, New York 2009; E. Short, "Introduction. Women Writing Travel, 1890–1939." *Journeys. The International Journal of Travel and Travel Writing*, 2015, vol. 16, no. 1, p. 1–7; E. Takelani, *U.S. Women Writers and the Discourses of Colonialism, 1825–1861*. University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville 2003; C. Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763–1862." *Women's Writing*, 2017, vol. 24, pp. 131–150.

[2] G. Adair, L. Filipova, "Introduction: Gendered travel and the genre of travel writing." *Encountering Difference. New Perspectives on Genre, Travel and Gender*, G. Adair, L. Filipova (eds.), Vernon Press, Wilmington 2020, p. 20

[3] There are few extensive studies on the work. See M. Dobrushin, *The Invention of Russia in America, 1880–1920*, PhD. University of California of Santa Cruz 2018, https://escholarship.org/content/qt9h04h57r/qt9h04h57r.pdf(9.08.2021); M.D. Marinova, *Transnational Russian-American Travel writing*, Routledge, London 2011.

the key oriental and colonial discourses of the travelogue whose integrity is ensured not only by the theme of traveling across Russia and by the ideological focus on the issue of serfdom (explicitly called "slavery" in the Western European discourse) but also by the mutual interplay between its compositional, ideological and semantic components revolving around Russia, the people, and the cross-cutting image of Russian tsar Alexander II. All these geopolitical concepts and images require a more in-depth consideration.

The specific nature of Edna Dean Proctor's travelogue is determined by a number of factors and manifested at several levels of her text. First of all, its very form of, chosen by the author, is quite peculiar since both poetic and prose fragments are included. The poems serve as a prologue to the chapters, presenting highly-sensitive and emotional experience of the narrator in a sublime and high-sounding manner; the main text written in prose is their thorough expansion. It should also be noted that the verbal layer is complemented by images which Proctor had obviously made by herself. These pencil drawings (images of people – such as "Mendicant" (a beggar), Russian peasant couple Ivan and Nadia, Gypsy Fortune Teller, A Cossack Boy, Tartar Boys, Alexander II – or their homes, such as A Kalmuck Encampment, Peasant Cabins) are both a visual confirmation of the scenery she had observed in person and the evidence of a serious interest and mental and emotional perception and understanding of what she saw.

The purpose of the study is to reveal the peculiarities of the image of Russia in the female traveler eyes in the second half of the 19th century. Considering the dominant ideological and anthropological modes of the text, the key problems I dealt with are the specifics of understanding the Russian national character and forming the image of Russia, as well as representing the Russian environment through the prism of imperial and oriental discourses. The analysis of the author's creative thinking is based on a culturological perusal, which makes it possible to identify symbolic and mythopoetic codes of construction of a "borderline" mentality, as well as on a gender-adjusted post-colonial approach, exposing the clash of colonial and anti-colonial ideas.

THE IMAGE OF RUSSIA: BETWEEN MYTH AND REALITY

As rightly pointed out by Maxim Dobrushin, "As Twain's *Innocents Abroad* shows, travel writings were a defining genre that made avail-

able tropes of Russia's land and the excesses of the autocratic stat.e"[4] Proctor's *Russian Journey* supports this statement, because the image of Russia is one of its key conceptual toposes and thus the Western readers of the 19th century were provided with a fairly complete overview of the empire. Proctor has created a comprehensive and multi-layered image of Russia emerging at the intersection of real and semi-mythical perception of the country – a mythopoetic and documentary-realistic depiction of the specific features of its civilizational nature, religion, nature, politics, economy, and objects of cultural and material significance.

Exploring Russia, Proctor traveled by water and by land that helped her to get a fuller and broader insight into the nature of the country. Her descriptions of endless expanses of land (mostly steppes with their bleak and boundless landscapes and piercing winds) and water (giant Volga and Don rivers, Azov and "Euxine" (Black) seas) translate a view of Russia as a country of vast territories, which was established and widespread in the Western world at that time. On the other hand, Proctor's unbiased view of everything she observed helped her to show the empire as a country undergoing the complex process of formation and not another cliché of a barbaric state.

Proctor's *Russian Journey* was reprinted in America several times, and by the 1890 edition, which has served as the material for this study, the author had written a detailed preface titled Prelude where, she articulated the key ideas that formed the basis of her research. Prelude begins with "Russia" poem. It is constructed as an emotional and enthusiastic appeal to the Russian people, calling on them to break the shackles of slavery and come out to the world in all their ancient greatness. She called the Russian people a "race of love and fire,"[5] people with "the tender, lofty souls" who have been through exile and suffering and therefore deserve to enjoy prosperity. The Russian people's aspiration to freedom after centuries of silent grief, their 'holy ire' find resonance in nature, being supported by the stars and the heavens ("In the power of God on high").[6] This solemn and passionate intonation gives way to more restrained prose of the main text, where, in addition to the image of the Russian people as

[4] M. Dobrushin, *The Invention of Russia in America, 1880–1920*..., p. 16.
[5] E. D. Proctor, *A Russian Journey,* Houghton, Mifflin and Company, The University Press, Boston and New York; Cambridge 1890, p. VII.
[6] Ibid, p. VIII.

a suffering nation, an image of Czar Alexander II is created: from the author's point of view, the czar took on a huge burden of care for his multi-million people. She saw the guarantee of the country's future prosperity in the Russian Czar and the common people, ("I looked at the future of Czar and people").[7] These ideas outlined in Prelude are fully developed in the main text of the travelogue.

The image of Russia is modeled by three key components: the Russian people, the religion, and the Czar. The people and religion are represented in a complex, contrasting, and ambivalent way, while the image of the Russian Czar is described with unmasked and unambiguous enthusiasm. Proctor openly expresses her personal attitude to the Czar, whom she met in Yalta. She was impressed by his "stately beauty"[8] and love for his country. Thus, she portrays Alexander II in the most aesthetic and heroic manner, tending to continue the American tradition, laid by Mark Twain who "signified the tendency to heroize the actions of the Czar [...]."[9] Proctor uses the loudest words and solemn tone to emphasize the charm of his personality, the power of his will and enlightened wisdom that had broken the resistance of the nobles and had given freedom to the Russian people, who called him "Prince of the Free", "Czar of the People", and "Russia's redeemer."[10] In her imagination, all the nations inhabiting Russia and believers of all religions united in a common prayer for the Czar, who he had reformed and transformed the country and on whose security the justice and progress of the whole empire depended. In the representation of the Czar's image, the "imperial" component is most powerfully explicated in the author's mind.

Proctor gets the understanding of the life of the Russian Empire through the attentive exploration of the country's nature, religion, history, economy, architecture, customs, and rules governing everyday life of its people of all nationalities, classes and occupations. At the same time, the emotional and mental components are closely intertwined in the descriptions, and the author's emotional and evaluative judgments are combined with her historical and political conclusions. On the one hand, Proctor lookes at the country through the eyes of a Westerner, being amazed by everything she saw. Metaphoric expressions she uses convey the scale of the country's territory; the

[7] Ibid, p VIII.
[8] Ibid, p. 315.
[9] M. Dobrushin, *The Invention of Russia in America, 1880–1920*..., p. 15.
[10] E. D. Proctor, *A Russian Journey*..., pp. 319–320.

breadth of its plains and rivers and the vastness of its steppes ("domain – one sixth of the earth's surface; fir-darkened plain / That rolls to east and rolls to west, / Broad as the billowy main; majestic current of the Volga";[11] its amazing natural wealth (abundance of fish in rivers and seas, valuable furs in the North, berries in forests, precious stones and mineral resources); the contrast between its harsh nature with cold winds lashing the northern and central parts of the country and bringing a depressive mood ("Chill mists and vapors hung in the air [...] There is no sadder sound in nature than the wail of these Russian winds...") and blooming wealth of the south;[12] unique moral qualities of the people (frankness, simplicity, imagination, "their gentle endurance, and yet their force", "unbounded power of losing themselves in a feeling, an idea"; "their capacity for self-sacrifice", "their mysticism");[13] the zealous piety, especially typical for ordinary Russian people, and their deep faith in God ("their ardent faith").[14] All these generalities fully correspond to the stereotypical views of Russia widespread in the Western world, and at the same time, in the author's mind, are amplified, hyperbolized, and acquire the features of a myth.

On the other hand, Proctor's travelogue is interesting for the writer's intellectual reflections on the origins of the Russian state system, the peculiarities of its economy, culture, and national character, which make her representation of the country more objective and realistic. Proctor finds natural, historical, political or cultural justifications for all the specific features of Russian nature and way of existence. For example, she explains the Russian character by the geographical and climatic specifics of the country (according to her, the tendency to depression and frustration is caused by the fear created by the northern winds oppressing the soul; similarly, autocracy and Russian serfdom are justified by a historical necessity in the conditions of exposure to the Mongol raids to prevent the nomadic lifestyle of people while the inability and unwillingness of peasants to take advantage of their personal freedom stem from the centuries of inferiority of the people and the half-measures measures of the Russian government, which had granted the people freedom without granting them land.

The people, mostly represented by peasants, are the main "drive" of the country. Proctor calls them "great body" in the entire

[11] Ibid, pp. X, XV, 27.
[12] Ibid, pp. 28, 245.
[13] Ibid, p. X.
[14] Ibid, p. XI.

text[15] since they resemble her a body – great alive and with a huge positive potential. A number of geniuses emerged from the very midst of the ordinary Russian people, for example, Kuzma Minin, who saved the country from the Polish conquest, Nikita Demidov, who enriched the empire, Michael Lomonosov, who made Russian the language of science and literature. But en masse this "body" looks different, with Demidovs and Lomonosovs being more an exception rather than the rule, and Proctor carefully documents the appearance of Russian peasants, their miserable dwellings, their confusion, dullness, and apathy. She vividly describes the terrible conditions in which ordinary people live, but emotions do not prevent her from documenting the notable aspects of their gloomy life, in which only basic daily necessities are present:

> Nothing drearier can be imagined than these log huts with a roof of boards and often but a single window poor sheds which seem dropped without the least order upon the bare plain. Though sometimes miles from any town, they had often no apparent shop of any kind, nor street, nor winding path, nor tree, nor shrub, nor window flower to relieve the hard monotony.[16]

The anthropological mode of descriptions in the travelogue is supported by Proctor's close attention to the daily life of people, their appearance, clothing, and everyday behavior, which she captures scrupulously. She describes the features of appearance of Russians that distinguish them from dark-faced Tatars, very beautiful Armenians and representatives of other nationalities, but in maximum generalized form. Fair-haired and light-skinned Slavic men are, from her point of view, more beautiful than Russian women, but the latter give an idea of the nation's potential, being exquisite creations reminding her of angels with blue eyes and blonde hair. The anthropological mode is maintained and combined with the ideological one, which is the reason why, when describing people, she always specifies which social class they belong to. And it is important for her to note that peasants' faces bear the imprint of serfdom, because this explains their frustration. Let us look how she describes a group of peasants she met on the outskirts of Odessa:

> Gloomily stupid, they looked as if they had never had an emotion in their lives. [...] Born of ancestors equally degraded, they had had nothing to waken thought

[15] Ibid, p. X.
[16] Ibid, pp. 28–29.

> or hope or ambition. The grain they carried was not their own, but belonged to some landed proprietor who would pay them a mere pittance for the journey.[17]

Since "Russia [...] is the land of bells,"[18] a special attention in the travelogue is given to descriptions of its holy places. Proctor's reflections on the faith of Russian people in the context of the national character of the empire, demonstrate her extensive knowledge and good education. She notes that all Orthodox people, from the Czar to a peasant, are parishioners of the Russian Orthodox Church. She devotes many pages and even separate chapters to the Russian Orthodox sanctuaries and sacred architectural structures (The Shrines of Moscow, the Trinity Monastery of St. Sergius). In every city and town in her way, she visited the most significant Russian churches, such as the Cathedral of St. Isaac, the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan, and the Alexander Nevsky Monastery in St. Petersburg; the Kremlin ("religious heart of Moscow; the place of her holiest shrines and the deposit of her proudest trophies"), the Cathedral of the Assumption ("the Russian Holy of Holies") in Moscow[19]. She visited the Holy Trinity Monastery, which is located forty miles from Moscow, and described everything she saw there with such reverence and detail, that it seems that the purpose of her voyage was a pilgrimage to the holy places of Russia, especially considering that in every city she first of all visited a cathedral or church and described the service ceremony, listed miraculous icons, and the most revered Russian saints. She tells about the devotion of Russians to the Orthodox faith, their piety (they always make the sign of the cross over themselves when they see any church or icon, bow down before icons, believe that the saints they are named after will protect them from troubles) and the indissoluble connection of their daily life with faith (one would find a holy icon with a burning lamp in every dwelling, even in the most miserable shacks).

Proctor was amazed with the number and beauty of Russian cathedrals and churches; their golden domes impressed and elevated her soul ("the domes of Russia – gold against the pale azure of her sky");[20] church bell ringing, the best of all bell ringing she had ever heard in the most magnificent European cathedrals, would forever remain in her memory, because it evoked in her soul a sense of harmony and

[17] Ibid, pp. 278–279.
[18] Ibid, p. 65.
[19] Ibid, pp. 36, 39.
[20] Ibid, p. 67.

sense of presence of angels and all saints on the Earth. However, in her descriptions, emotions coexist with rational and sensual evaluation of the peculiarities of Russian worship. What attracted her, was the equality of all classes in the church and by church hymns, but the interior decoration of Russian churches and the service itself made her feel "solemn melancholy" and frustration with their grimness. She thought that they inspire fear and trembling rather than hope and love to believers. She was both fascinated and repelled by Russian believers' superstitions and the way of serving the God used by Russian hermit monks, whom she saw in the caves of the Holy Trinity Monastery and compared them to Eastern dervishes. She felt something painful and lifeless in all that, and she assured that if Christ came to the Earth again, he would cry because of "this mockery of holiness."[21] The vision of a Westerner in such a mixed reflection of what she saw is obvious.

LOOKING FOR TRULY RUSSIAN FEATURES

The analysis of the main components of the image of Russia makes it possible to agree with Margarita Marinova's statement that *A Russian Journey* is a "self-consciously political" text.[22] This idea is also supported by the fact that Proctor completely ignores such an important component of the country's life as the rapid development of various types of arts. She does not name a single representative of Russian culture of the 1840s and 1860s, even Ivan Turgenev, whose works have been actively translated into English since the 1860s and were very popular. Proctor also does not touch at all those social processes in the country that were interesting for progressive Americans in the second half of the 19th century, who, according to Choi Chatterjee, tended to describe Russia, as an "unbearable repressive" country and paid special attention to such vivid phenomena of the Russian life as nihilism, anarchism, and populism.[23] Perhaps Proctor, being under impression and romantic delight made on her by Russian Liberator Czar Alexander II, focused on the reasons for the

[21] Ibid, p. 83.
[22] M. D. Marinova, *Transnational Russian-American Travel writing*..., p. 83.
[23] Ch. Chatterjee, "Transnational Romance, Terror, and Heroism: Russia in American Popular Fiction, 1860–1917." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 2008, no. 50 (3), p. 755.

spread of serfdom and its consequences, believing that the liberation of the peasants would bear fruit soon. That was why she perceived Russia in a sequential chain of time layers of the past, present and future. The subjectivity of the author's view leads from the of harsh heroism of the past, through the contradictory and problematic present to the perspective of future successes and achievements, forming the above-mentioned illusory image of Russia.

One would call such a vision of Russia one-sided, but even that narrow perspective in which Proctor describes the country makes her image of Russia complex and deep, because her descriptions and reflections give rise to an implicit cross-cutting questions included in the travelogue, for which no easy and unambiguous answers were provided. The most important is a question about the civilizational path of the Russian Empire and its Western and European or rather Eastern affiliation. In the travelogue, Russia appears as an empire in the process of emergence, transitivity, and liminality. Its truly Slavic territories are not so large, since the majority of lands from Kazan to the Crimea had been conquered by Russian Czars at different times, and the composition of Russia's population is then extremely heterogeneous and diversified. Even in Moscow, it is difficult to talk about the domination of the Slavs, because of Tatar blood in the veins of "Muscovites"[24]; and its magnificent architecture combines the features of Christian traditions with the elements of Muslim and Oriental origin.

In her attempts to describe truly Russian features, Proctor continuously bumps into eloquent signs of artificially created Russianness or frank non-Russianness in many aspects of the political and cultural life of the empire. In St. Petersburg, the interior decoration of its grandiose cathedrals was the only trace of its purely Russian spirit: Proctor enjoys the beauty of the city but she feels depressed because of foreign and alien influences strongly manifesting themselves at its every corner: wide straight streets, enormous buildings, luxurious institutions, palaces and churches do not suit the place; Mediterranean marble is more appropriate for the round forms of Italian cathedrals, and the figures of Atlanteans and caryatids supporting buildings would look more naturally under the warm tropical sun than in cold Russia. The metaphorical comparisons used by the author emphasize these impressions of a city shorn of its identity,

[24] E. D. Proctor, *A Russian Journey*..., p. 53.

and although it is a "peer of the proudest," she calls it "the Paris of the Baltic – an imperial Muscovite Berlin."[25]

While St. Petersburg seems to her not truly Russian but rather a European city, it is more complicated in the case of Moscow. Proctor specifically calls Moscow (she nearly always emotionally expresses her admiration for the distinctive beauty of the cities she saw and especially Moscow) – "Asiatic city" and founds fragmentary historical signs of the East and Asia everywhere: "[...] every roof and doom bears of Tartar domination, and the dark faces among its fair Muscovite crowd show that the Asiatic still lingers in the long contested land."[26]

She also discovered a lot of Asian features in Nizhny Novgorod (the respective chapter is titled correspondingly: "Asia an Nijni"), which was a center of trade with Asian cities ("The Fair of Nijni is an institution of Asia"),[27] inhabited by a large number of Tatars, Kyrgyz, and other representatives of the Eastern nations. And the farther away from Moscow to the geographical east, the more and more of those signs could be found.

RUSSIA AS THE EAST, IN THE EAST AND BEYOND: THE ORIENTAL DISCOURSE

Consideration of the image of Russia within the framework of the Orientalist paradigm is one of the most difficult issues that arouse discussion and criticism today. Nevertheless, it can be argued quite definitely that the conceptualization of Russia in Western travelogues of the 19th century fits into the binary division between the East and Europe. "This view is further reinforced by the fact that the contemplation of Russia as Oriental dates back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries."[28]

Oriental/colonial plots and problems have been developed in American literature and culture in connotations consonant with the European views[29] As for the view of Russia as the East, since the sec-

[25] Ibid, p. 5.
[26] Ibid, p. 36.
[27] Ibid, p. 108.
[28] D. Kassis, *Deconstructions of the Russian Empire in Western Travel Literature*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2021, p. 3..
[29] See: M. J. Altman, "Orientalism in Nineteenth-Century America." *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Race in American History*, Paul Harvey and

ond half of the 19th century, researchers have noted the emergence of contradictions in its identification, along with an increase of fears about its expansion in Asia.

> The Eurocentric conceptualisation of the Other as pertaining to the peripheral world could not correspond to Russian geopolitical reality, given that British and American travellers often used Russia as an anti-modernist dystopia.[30]

The problem of a "civilizing mission" in Asia, which worries Western thought of that period, also concerns Proctor. Her judgments, quite insightful and extraordinary for a woman of that time, express her ideas about the upcoming shifts in the cultural and historical development of the empire and challenges for the Western civilization. She proves that Russia is steadily moving to the East, but the empire's gaze is also directed at the South. It's not by chance that the author mentions a conversation with a Russian, in which imperial aspirations were set out: it does not matter how much time would pass, but "Constantinople is ours."[31] Then the author asks, "What power will be able to compete with 'The Empire of the East' when the emperor comes to the Bosphorus?" and gives a remarkable answer, "the Republic of the West."[32]

In this context, some conclusions of the researchers of this travelogue need significant clarification. For example, in the study by Marinova, it is argued that Proctor failed "to present the two modes of existence – the European and the Oriental – as peacefully cohabitating in Russia,"[33] which makes one wonder whether the writer really sought to reconcile these two poles, if she actually contrasted the European and the Russian? In addition, her attempts to understand the Russian take her to the East. The "Oriental" unfolds into a complex and heterogeneous structure, which, moreover, appears to be the foundation of Russian culture.

Kathryn Gin Lum (eds.), Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018, https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190221171.001.0001/oxfordhb–9780190221171 (9.08.2021); Ö. Ö. Cansu, *American Travel Narratives of the Orient (1830–1870): a Study in the Nineteenth Century Latent Orientalism*, PhD Thesis. Jacobs University 2010. file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/phd2-0100121_oezmen.pdf (10.08.2021).

[30] D. Kassis, *Deconstructions of the Russian Empire in Western Travel Literature*..., p. 3.

[31] E. D. Proctor, *A Russian Journey*..., p. 161.

[32] Ibid, p. 161.

[33] M. D. Marinova, *Transnational Russian-American Travel writing*..., p. 92.

The consideration of the modeling of the mobile and fragile Russian space in its relationship with the Eastern in travelogue needs a special approach. Proctor's ideas do not fit into a clear dichotomous model introduced by Edward Said.[34] It represents the "Asian" or "Eastern" spatial perception incorporated into the imperial beginning, and the "Oriental" one, based on the European tradition of representation of the East, revealed in the above-mentioned study by Said. The original interpretation of the colonization outcomes also finds no sufficient justification in the position outlined in the said studies by Said. However, the solution to the problem can be seen more clear if we turn to the interpretations of the Said's methodology in feminist criticism.[35] In these studies, it is demonstrated and substantiated that the female view of the East was less absolute[36] and more "tentative"[37] than the male view. As a result of the position of a European woman both outside and inside the imperial discourse, texts by female authors are based upon other models and other metaphors of the comprehended space through the awareness of colonial pressure on the Eastern world, for example, the metaphor of penetration.[38]

In our opinion, the basic assumption of Meyda Yeğenoğlu about orientalism is the determining one in the context of the travelogue being analyzed. The researcher emphasizes the processality of the phenomenon, which produces a multiplicity of visions rather than a homogeneous static structure underlying the distinction. This is the process we are talking about in the analysis of the travelogue by Proctor, facing the duality of assessments of the colonial policy of the Czarism and the colonized Eastern peoples.

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[34] E. Said, *Orientalism,* Penguin, London 1977.

[35] S. Bassnett, "Travel Writing and Gender." *Travel Writing*, Peter Hulme, and Tim Young (eds.). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006, pp. 225–242; R. Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Face, Feminity and Representation*, Routledge, London 1996; S. Mills, *Discourses of Difference. An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism,* Routledge, London, New York 1991; E. Short, "'Those Eyes Kohl Blackened Enflame' Re-reading the Feminine in Gertrude Bell's Early Travel Writing." *Journeys. The International Journal of Travel and Travel Writing*, 2015, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 8–28; M. Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies. Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York 1998.

[36] R. Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Face, Feminity and Representation*..., p. 4.

[37] S. Mills, *Discourses of Difference. An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism*..., p. 3.

[38] E. Short, *'Those Eyes Kohl Blackened Enflame'*..., p. 25.

Duality can be traced in the differentiation of the East / West. The storyteller, tired of the artificiality of the West, was enchanted by hospitality and sincerity of Tatars. And at the same time, after visiting the Kalmyk yurts with their archaic way of life, when she finds herself in the "Moravian" hotel (according to Proctor's definition of this place), she approves of the environment, order, frugality, simplicity, which is familiar to a European, and is expressively contrasted with the Mongolian way of life. Speaking about the Eastern peoples, the author actively uses the common oriental stereotypes of backwardness, primitiveness, submissiveness and idleness. Southern cities (Kerch, Chisinau) evoked in her stable associations with the Orient, but also in a dual light: positive – garden, abundance; negative – fussiness, dirt and omnipresent stray dogs.

As was said above, the author focuses on the heterogeneity of society, which was particularly evident in transit places, such as road stations, railway stations, steamships and trains, as well as bazaars. The contrast of descriptions of the breadth and emptiness of landscapes with the brightness and diversity of the forms of human life is a characteristic feature of the travelogue's geopoetics. Geopoetic images formed through a direct contact with foreign life are closely intertwined with geopolitical concepts and historical excursions. Wind, as was already mentioned, is one of the most frequently encountered natural images in the travelogue. In the author's imagination, it takes her to a metaphorical journey through the time, making relevant what is not accessible to visual perception, but is important for understanding the national identity. On her way to Kazan, rushing wind "reminded" the traveler of a hurricane that enveloped the False Dmitry and his henchmen who approached the Kremlin with clouds of dust and provoked "suspicious horror" among the people.[39] When going from Saratov to Tsaritsyn, she felt strong, cold wind, the gusts of which seemed to bring the screams of ancient Asian warriors and cries of their victims. This is how a spatial image is formed, the main feature of which is a borderline nature:

> Yet this monotonous region has been the scene of more migrations, tumults, battles, and piracies than almost any other on earth. For we were now parallel to that open space of nearly three hundred miles between the Caspian and the Oural; the gate through which the tribes of Asia have always poured into Europe [...].[40]

[39] E. D. Proctor, *A Russian Journey*..., p. 114.
[40] Ibid, p. 174.

Emphatically diving into the eastern territories, the author not only uses the traditional spatial threshold metaphor of the gate, as well as "bulwark"[41], representing a boundary between civilizations, but also introduces the metaphor of absorption, which represents the author's idea of the mobility of this boundary. Here it can be found that the problem of national identification and cultural belonging of Russia to the Western and European or Eastern and Asian civilizations seems to be multi-dimensional in her mind. The Western mind of Proctor refuses to perceive Russia as part of Europe, yet represents its Eastern features in an expressive and comprehensive, but also ambivalent way.

The feeling of duality of culture and daily life of Russia, which had emerged in the capital at the very beginning of her journey, naturally increases as she goes farther to the periphery. However, already in the center, there is a significant distinction between the Asian features as a synthesized component of the empire and the Eastern features as an alien component existing inside that transformed unity. But at the beginning of the narrative, the author perceives these collisions visually, through the sacred architecture. For example, she sees "Kremlin, make up a Christian, Mohammedan, wonderful whole"[42] in the center of Moscow, and on the outskirts of the city her impressions are as follows: "There is but a single mosque, at the extremity of the city – a poor, plain affair where the few Mohammedans gather meekly to their devotions,"[43] Starting from Moscow, the Russianness is constantly being invaded by the Tatarness, the Easterness. The Eastern foundation turns out to be historically fixed and rooted in the Russian mentality. This makes it more clear why Proctor uses the word "race" with respect to all nationalities and ethnic groups, but very rarely generalizes and uses the "great Russian nation" formula,[44] tending to mean rather a political association of people.

Proctor avoids calling Russia a European country, opposing it to both Europe and Asia and seeing it somewhere between the West and the East with an obvious shift to the Eastern world. She finds signs of hybridity, mixed nature, and liminality of Russia everywhere: in its culture and architecture containing a lot of Eastern, Tatar features;[45]

[41] Ibid, p. 19.
[42] Ibid, p. 36.
[43] Ibid, p. 54.
[44] Ibid, p. X.
[45] Ibid, p. 276.

in its trade and economic relations, where Eastern merchants and Eastern goods predominate in the bazaars; in the methods of its conquering policy ("With true Asiatic diplomacy, Russia gives, when she would gain");[46] in its political monarchical structure, which is based upon patriarchal prejudices and the habitual faith of people in the Czar as a kind father without any sense of responsibility, but with a childish sense of self, which is due to the fact that the people had long been under the despotic rule of the Khan, and Russian Princes served under the Tatar Court. In Proctor's view, Russia is "mingled races dowered with the gifts of Europe and Asia," which should and would flourish, but only under favorable conditions of freedom and education, wisdom of people, development of philosophy, poetry, and absence of exile and repression.[47] If she ever allows thinking of Russia as of a European country, this happens within the framework of Western ideas about peace and universal progress, therefore Europe will remain Europe, and the Russian Czar for all peoples "from the Volga to the mountains of Tibet and the Chinese Wall" will become "Great White Khan"[48] of the Eastern Empire, being opposed and opposing to the Western world.

On the one hand, Proctor emphasizes the civilizational mission of the Russian Empire and its wars of conquest, bringing benefit to the conquered peoples because of their backwardness and primitive customs[49]. It is obvious that she cannot neglect the influence of the cultural and historical experience of her country, and in her view the American frontier is comparable in its goals and means to what she observes in Russia. She tells how the conquered lands and peoples are subordinated: first, Russia inducts troops and immediately builds military roads and fortresses with the help of its "daring pioneers, the Cossacks, are both builders and guardsmen,"[50] and then strengthens its influence on the local population with the help of a more correct and "purer religion" ("she rears shrines of her religion"[51]), active trade, establishment of banks and universities with libraries on the conquered lands. She supports such state measures and cultural and economic transformations, because they bring law and order to the "idle, ignorant population."[52] On the other hand, she expresses an an-

[46] Ibid, p. 157.
[47] Ibid, p. XV.
[48] Ibid, p. 159.
[49] Ibid, p. 107, 122, 159, 239.
[50] Ibid, p. 157.
[51] Ibid, p. 156, 159.
[52] Ibid, p. 185.

ti-imperial opinion that the Eastern peoples, falling under the imperial influence, inevitably lose their national identity, and she would prefer that the "tribes" develop according to their own way of living and worldview, in a step-by-step manner and without coercion:

> I wish these Turkish, Tartar tribes could be developed and elevated in ways congenial to their own instincts and peculiarities, and not forced to accept our modes of life and thought. In mind and manners and costume the world tends towards a uniformity which is fatal to individuality and picturesqueness.[53]

Proctor's travelogue, thus, conceptualizes the colonial policy of Russia both in the sense of civilizational progress, in semantics identical to European discourse, and in the sense of depersonalizing conquests, leveling the diversity of cultures.

CONCLUSION

The key image in Proctor's travelogue is the image of Russia that has been formed at the intersection of several discursive fields: Western/European and Eastern/Oriental/Asian. Their coherence and interference make the image of Russia complex, ambiguous, ambivalent, and borderline. European codes do not play a meaning-forming role in Proctor's vision of Russian Empire, they are minimized, as well as the truly Russian ones; instead, the Eastern codes are revealed to the fullest possible extent. The attempts to fit the development of the empire into the Western discourse leads to emergence of semantic shifts and dichotomy of Oriental and European concepts. Proctor manages to show Russia in the complex dynamics of its historical development, which adds a special epistemological value to this text. At the same time, her female vision is distinguished by a special depth of insight into the arrangement of the Other's life, which she discovers for herself and her readers from several position at once: she leads her narration as a naïve and detached traveler and simultaneously a very observant, sharp and astute author. Proctor fails to overcome the stereotypes of representation of the Russian space and at the same time she offers a versatile view of the problem of Russia as the Orient, including political, anthropological, sociocultural aspects of the interaction between the East and the West.

[53] Ibid, p. 160.

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