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## REPRESENTATION OF THE PERSON OF CULTURE IMAGE IN ANGLOPHONE LITERATURE

### **Abstract**

This article examines the person of culture image represented in Anglophone literary texts, conceptualized through social and cultural contexts. Fiction, in particular, foregrounds fundamental philosophical and existential issues, given through the prism of culture and experience, inviting readers to reconsider established assumptions about the world and the self. Such experience is mediated through literary characters who, by artistic concept, are deeply rooted in cultural traditions and function as embodiments of cultural values. The authors define the person of culture as an individual who has assimilated humanity's cultural experience and realizes their life potential through cultural values, humanism, and spirituality.

The study explores how this image is constructed through recurring themes characteristic of Anglophone literature, including cultural identity, postcolonialism, trauma and memory, moral choice and act. These themes are realized through various modes of image positioning, ranging from explicit character development to implicit cultural allusions. Employing content analysis methods, such as thematic coding and qualitative interpretation, this study examines the way the person of culture image is introduced and developed in the Anglophone novel. The design and adoption of thematic coding is grounded in the premise that such an image is formed in literary texts through the recurring representations of dialogism, individuality, and cultural awareness. The authors identify six primary dimensions of representation: cultural experience, commitment to humanistic values, spiritual and moral values, innovativeness and creativity, aesthetic taste, and self-development. The research shows that the interpretation of the person of culture image cannot be fulfilled in isolation but should be contextualized within broader themes such as postcolonial discourse, cultural identity formation, and cultural values. The authors propose to extend the analysis of the representation of the person of culture image at both verbal and conceptual levels, through the interpretative frameworks of linguistic and cultural approaches.

**Keywords:** person of culture, person of culture image, Anglophone literature.

### **Анотація**

У статті розглянуто образ людини культури, представлений в англійськомовних текстах, концептуалізований через соціальні й культурні контексти. Художня література порушує фундаментальні філософські й екзистенційні питання, висвітлюючи їх крізь призму культури та досвіду, спонукаючи читачів переосмислити власні уявлення про світ і себе. Такий досвід передають персонажі, які за художньою концепцією глибоко вкорінені в культурі і покликані її транслювати. Автори визначають "людину культури" як індивідуума, який засвоїв культурний досвід людства і реалізує свій життєвий потенціал через культурні цінності, гуманізм і духовність.

Проаналізовано, як такий образ формується через повторюваність тем: культурна ідентичність, постколоніалізм, травма і пам'ять, а також моральний вибір і вчинок, які характерні для англійськомовної літератури. Ці теми представлені за допомогою позиціонування образу, що варіється від явного розвитку персонажа до неявних культурних алюзій. За допомогою методу контент-аналізу (тематичне кодування та якісна інтерпретація) досліджено, як образ людини культури вводиться і розвивається в англійськомовному романі. Розробка і адаптація методу тематичного кодування ґрунтуються на положенні, що такий образ формується в літературних текстах повторюваними репрезентаціями діалогійності, індивідуальності, культурної обізнаності. Визначено шість основних вимірів репрезентації: культурний досвід, відданість гуманістичним цінностям, духовні й моральні цінності, інноваційність і креативність, естетичний смак і саморозвиток.

Дослідження показало, що інтерпретація образу людини культури не може бути здійснена ізольовано, а повинна бути вписана в більш широкий контекст, такий як постколоніальний дискурс, культурна ідентичність та культурні цінності. Автори пропонують поглибити аналіз репрезентації образу людини культури на вербальному й концептуальному рівнях шляхом використання інтерпретаційних можливостей лінгвістичного та культурологічного підходів.

**Ключові слова:** людина культури, образ людини культури, англійськомовна література.

**Introduction.** Culture encompasses every aspect of an individual's existence, including material, spiritual, and social dimensions, where human self-expression takes diverse forms, introducing a unique way of preserving meanings and values across generations. In parallel, culture constitutes a framework through which these meanings are constructed and interpreted, functioning as a kind of cognitive language for individuals embedded within this system. Understanding how meanings emerge and the contexts in which they function gives a broader scope of means for interpreting culture and distinguishing its representations.

Culture serves as a binding source for societal values and beliefs, while literature, reflecting shared values in various literary forms through creative and imaginary expression, shapes judgements and expectations about the world. By means of literature, humanistic and social values, concepts and meanings are expressed, transferring experience of many generations associated with a particular time period. Being different sides of the same coin, literature and culture are interconnected, conveying the senses through their respective means of expression.

**Literature review.** Literature is a credible, inexhaustible source for studying cultural representation, generating valuable insights into human activity, behaviour, and social reality. Separately, fiction, in its broader sense, can also be seen as a means of presenting both emerging and existing concepts. Works of fiction frequently bring forth significant philosophical issues, unveiling the canvas of social tissue, and provoke rethinking how we perceive the world and our own existence. The interpretation of literature, to some extent, is a form of reflexivity, and sense construction, in which the method of reading literary texts is to expose readers to different world views, raise cultural awareness at the same time building the whole picture of the authors' idea (Hanauer, 2001). Any interpretation of a text cannot leave the reader beyond cultural context, it is embedded, emphasizing the validity of Geertz's metaphor viewing culture typology 'culture as text' (Bachmann-Medick, 2012). This methodological perspective broadens the scope of hermeneutic understanding by recognizing culture as a system of meanings that reveal those objects, actions, and behaviors embodied in symbols which have relevant cultural significance.

The person of culture is the core concept of contemporary social and cultural discourse, which takes a central place in the worldview system and embodies value orientations of the society. Therefore, studying the levels and means of this image's representation contributes to a better understanding of its functioning and, which is particularly important in an educational context, fostering it among student youth. Since literature inevitably deals

with the image of a person, it is necessary to consider all its potential for presenting this image in different aspects, among which the cultural one is central. A person's relation to culture and acting in culture serves the basis for constructing theories for the cognition of cultural values and spirituality, finally enriching one's picture of the world. Additionally, every historical epoch reflects the collective consciousness and spirituality of mankind, constructing the ideal of a person based on the values it propagates, integrating ideas and views through the complexity of literary texts. However, such reflection is biased along multiple dimensions, ranging from personal experience and background to social setting and ideology (Jones, 2004).

We define the person of culture image as a system of ideas about an individual who assimilated cultural experience of mankind and positively realizes their life potential, professing cultural values, humanism, and spirituality in their beliefs and actions (Ушаков, 2021). Taking into account the complexity and multidimensionality of the person of culture concept, this definition is intended to facilitate terminological clarity; however, it cannot be regarded as exhaustive.

**The aim of this paper** is to study the peculiarities of forms and modes through which the person of culture image is represented in Anglophone literature. With this aim in view, we anticipate the following tasks: to consider cognitive approaches to the conceptualization of cultural realities and their explication in literary texts; to design criteria for selecting literary works that present cultural contexts; to define cultural representation markers and to deliver content analysis.

**Results and discussion.** When discussing image representation, it is necessary to define what concepts and ideas it conveys and which it is related to. Analysis of literary texts gives the answer to the question of how this image is portrayed within societal contexts and the conditions of human existence. Literature is called upon to bridge the person of culture image with the practices in which it is employed, through the complexity and diversity of linguistic means. Consequently, we see that one of the goals in studying the person of culture image in literary texts, namely Anglophone fiction, is to help the reader deepen their understanding of this concept, explore and analyze the meanings it generates, encourage the reader to dig into the senses, and discover the relationship between contemporary realities and eternal values.

From a broader perspective, fiction can also be seen as a means of presenting concepts, a cognitive tool, and a way of reshaping our thinking (Swirski, 2007). Works of fiction frequently bring forth significant philosophical issues, introduce fresh viewpoints and revelations, and provoke reflexivity about how we perceive the multidimensional world through our own existence and experience. They provoke questioning, in various ways, and encourage deep philosophical reflection on the topics addressed.

The study of the linguistic means and methods of portrayal by which the person of culture image is represented allows us to uncover constructed identities, identify national and cultural features of the language system of a certain language area and, respectfully, to study in depth the worldview and cultural identity of the speakers.

Culture provides collective memory storage, decentralized and distributed. S. Gelman and S. Roberts (2017), studying the influence of language on the formation of cultural heritage categories, believe that the evolution of culture includes not only behavioral practices and material artifacts, but also the ideas about them, embodied in certain dynamic categories that simultaneously represent the public and the private, the material and the spiritual, experience and innovation.

Bruce Mannheim, examining social imaginary, underlines the role of language in its construction, claiming that the meanings conveyed by means of language are more implied,

rather than explicitly expressed via propositional content (Mannheim, 2015). Much is left to reflexivity and interpretation.

The analysis of the person of culture image in the linguistic and cultural perspective allows us to identify its features:

- the person of culture and the person of culture image, despite their apparent similarity, are not identical, because one refers to the features of an individual and the other to the conceptual portrayal of cultural identity;
- not only people of culture themselves (artists, musicians, public figures, etc.) shape the formation of socio-cultural discourse, but rather their images, as created and perceived by means of language and in the linguistic settings of a particular culture, play a central role;
- people of culture, as creators (transmitters of material and spiritual values, cultural artifacts), act as mediators of the person of culture image because they form the basis for public discourse (political, economic, social, cultural), which reflect all the features of culture and distinctive features of ethnic mentality;
- representation is always connected with corporate and personal standards (cultural personality as a prototype (Schafer, 2018));
- as a form of predominantly collective reflection, the person of culture image is constructed through various narratives (speeches, public acts, actions of this person, mentioning in the media, fiction texts, etc.);
- the representation of the person of culture image is realized through the content of social and cultural realities enshrined in literary works.

The analysis of the lexical units related to the person of culture image in Anglophone fiction shows that a separate semantic field is created around the concept, the main elements of which are as follows: axiological dimension, genius, dignity, humanism, ideal, intellectualism, spiritual reference point, spirituality, creativity, morality, carrier of cultural values, self-improvement, self-realization, self-development, worldview reference point, cultural subject, subjectivity, creative personality, creative search, value logosphere of the personality, value orientations, etc. As we can see, lexical units denoting the person of culture image are either neutrally or positively semantically colored, and in addition, they are often stylistically marked. By contrast, lexemes with negative connotations are practically absent. Certainly, taking into account the aforementioned, we can assume that the semantic field formed around this image represents the referential, ideal character of the concept under study.

Examining the interrelation of language and culture, we can conclude that these are complementary categories, coexisting on the basis of joint development and interdependence. Language is a necessary and unconditional factor of culture, and it is mainly through language that an individual assimilates and comprehends culture. Moreover, language shows the features of national mentality, and language itself is a powerful expression of the spirit of a people. Language provides a platform for culture to function, facilitates the establishment of social connections within a community, and plays a key role in the process of intercultural communication. Culture affects language by determining the emergence of words (signs of new phenomena), influencing their use (for example, through censorship or, conversely, by stimulating development), and providing the relevant context. Knowing a language without understanding its associated culture may be insufficient for proper communication, since culture is always preconditioned not only by the national and cultural affiliation of the communicators, temperament, mentality and national character, but also by the level of civilizational development, intercultural and interethnic relations, religious factors and other equally important influences. Language depends on culture, being its

component, accumulating and “archiving” important information that is conceptualized in specific categories and cultural codes. One of these is the ideal, constructing the person of culture image, the formation and representation of which is impossible outside the dimensions of culture and language.

The results of our analysis are directly related to the methodology chosen for interpretation. In our work we adopt the definition of content analysis as a systematic, replicable technique for reducing extensive textual data into a smaller number of meaningful content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Krippendorff, 1980). M. Schreier, T. Dahl, M. Janssen, A. Whittal and C. Stamann (2020) argue that the results are defined by the way qualitative content analysis is done and described, focusing on interpretative techniques reduced to paraphrasing and condensing as to leveling in order to carve out direct and indirect referencing.

The logic of our research implies identifying the features, by which we identify the person of culture and explore this concept in literary texts. The choice of Anglophone fiction is grounded on the diversity of values, globality, “transcultural literary medium” characteristics (Pfalzgraf & Teichler, 2024). Rich cultural context serves as one of the criteria for selecting works for analysis. The person of culture image is represented through characters, their thoughts, speech, actions, and references.

The selection of works for the content analysis is justified by philosophical, political, social, and cultural contexts presented in English novels and their inclusion in the curriculum. We selected 20 Anglophone fiction works of different periods to illustrate the scale and depth of the person of culture image representation through non-explicit and individual references to art and culture.

Thematic coding is a form of qualitative analysis that involves recording or identifying passages of text that are linked by a common theme or idea (Gibbs, 2007). That is important for us to identify the themes and ideas, which the person of culture image conveys. We followed the standard procedure of six steps in applying this technique.

In our design of the coding scheme for the content analysis we kept on the assumption that the person of culture image in literary texts is shaped by recurring representations of dialogicity, individuality, cultural awareness, and cultural experience, reflecting a holistic personality, which embodies freedom, spirituality, and humanism across narrative contexts. Discovering multiple levels of representation, from explicit character portrayals to implicit cultural references, requiring both surface-level and deep interpretative analysis techniques enabled us to capture the full spectrum of meanings.

The characters were selected to illustrate their relation to the following domains: strong connection to culture, humanistic values, spirituality, creativity, aesthetics, self-development. The generalizations pursued are consolidated in Table 1.

The content analysis undertaken shows that the person of culture is observed through recurrent themes such as cultural heritage, postcolonialism, trauma and memory, indigenous cultures, cultural identity, values, feminism, migration, and moral choice. Together, these themes constitute a symbolic system within the narrative discourse. This symbolic system is particularly evident in A. S. Byatt's *Possession*, where the author constructs various images: academics, researchers, and poets, whose narration is presented through the form of letters, poems, diaries. The image of the person of culture is reflected through “the motif of the mirror as a way to decode, interpret, and analyze the narrative structure, content” (Arnavas, 2021), thereby emphasizing literature as both the medium and mirror of culture.

Table 1.

Theme	Representation
Cultural Experience	The characters internalize cultural heritage and appropriate its values through education, literature, and customs; they transmit these forms in their behaviour, reflecting the level of their intellectual and spiritual development.
Commitment to Humanistic Values	The characters facing moral challenges, uphold person's dignity, empathy, humanistic values through their actions and behaviour.
Spiritual and Moral Values	The characters demonstrate an orientation toward moral principles and spiritual aspirations in their choices, actions, and inner struggles. In ethical dilemmas they show moral integrity, spiritual maturity, and culture of act.
Innovativeness and Creativity	The characters reimagine inherited traditions, giving them new meaning and relevance within changing social or personal contexts. The characters display uniqueness of thought and creativity, shaping their cultural environment through personal style and invention.
Aesthetic Taste	Aesthetic taste assigned to the characters through their engagement with literature, music, art, and the environment. It is explicitly revealed in their aesthetic judgments and emotional response.
Self-development	The articulation of character's individuality in self-development is expressed through a character's conscious striving for intellectual, moral, and spiritual refinement.

The image of the person of culture extends across historical epochs in literary texts, being traced in the themes and narratives. In Byatt's novel, this continuity is reflected through the characters portrayed in parallel timelines deliberately connected with the domains of literature, history, art, giving setup for interpretation of cultural heritage and transmitting artistic values. Moreover, *Possession* discloses the individuals' cultural identity, exploring how engagement with culture shapes their understanding of themselves and the world around them. The journeys to the sites of cultural heritage such as libraries, museums, and other historical locations (e.g., the London Library, Tate Gallery) form a detailed picture of the lives of poets, reflecting their thirst to explore artistic and cultural traditions.

The novel contains the episodes in which the characters show a genuine interest in literary practice, expressing admiration, reverence, or even disillusionment with the studied works. Their active participation in intellectual debates and discussions (Roland and Maud's discovery of the letters) on the ethical and moral aspects of artistic integrity, expressing concern for moral responsibility of scholars and researchers when interpreting and preserving artistic legacies. Byatt's talk from her characters in this respect goes far beyond this problem of academic integrity: it uncovers a broader cultural and spiritual context of what it means to live as a person of culture. Ultimately, Byatt presents this image as a system of attitudes that expresses the individual's evaluative and emotional stance toward human attitude: to the self, to moral choice and responsibility, to knowledge and creativity, and to culture itself.

A fragmented representation of the person of culture image is observed in the modernist novel. In *Ulysses*, a landmark work of stream-of-consciousness narrative, James Joyce reimagines this image through the characters' cultural self-awareness, aesthetic perception, and moral reflection. Joyce's *Ulysses* embodies a dialogical model of culture, grounded in the idea that culture functions through the continuous exchange of meanings. In this view, true

culture lies not in the possession of knowledge but in the continual re-creation of meaning through perception, dialogue, and ethical reimagining of life. Through the continuous referencing characters, times, and traditions, the novel presents a cultural personality as formed within a historical context (“History is to blame”), featuring perfection or, to be precise, giving ideal features (“A man of genius makes no mistakes...”). This becomes more evident as the novel’s two central figures, Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus exchange their ideas, perceptions, and judgements throughout their parallel journeys.

By mentioning cultural and artistic figures such as Yeats, Mozart, and Mercadante in relation to Irish artistic heritage, J. Joyce links cultural references through allusions, pieces of mythology, literature, history. In such a way, the images depicted are part of a person’s relation to culture.

Culture as spiritual inheritance and a practice of resilience, lays the ground for an indigenous/postcolonial conception of interpreting the person of culture in Witi Ihimaera’s *The Matriarch* (1986). The studied image is represented distinctly from Western narrative forms: not as aesthetic contemplation and dealing with passive knowledge but as continuous practice to mobilize cultural resources, spiritual inheritance (Rodríguez-Salas, 2023). The novel gives rich contexts for rituals, ceremonies, and customs that are essential to the characters’ lives, emphasizing their commitment to preserving Māori culture, heritage, and identity. That is valuable for our analysis in identifying invariable features of the person of culture throughout the text.

The novel’s narrative structure is featured by framing female protagonists as “persons of culture”, a portrayal that receives its fullest articulation in *Artemis Riripeti Mahana*. She is portrayed as one of the most remarkable examples of the person of culture image, presented in literature, embodying a complex set of strong personality traits with deep moral values, based on resilience and cultural identity. Mahana is doing everything she can to raise her grandson in a way that honours cultural and family traditions, religious values and colonial history. She also encourages him to defend and preserve the cultural code of the Māori people, who are indigenous to New Zealand.

Artemis’s mission is a symbolic one and family gatherings demonstrate cultural succession and spirituality in Māori life. Pursuing culture implies reflection and self-awareness, which is observed through her insistence on properly performing tikanga (custom) at events such as funerals, blessing scenes, or other rites. This attitude reflects the role of the elder in providing guidance and ensuring respect for traditions. The author reimagines history and postcolonial heritage, exploring the category of truth through the judgements and reflections of Tama Mahana, a narrator in the novel: “All truth is fiction really, for the teller tells it as he sees it, and it might be different from some other teller. This is why histories often vary, depending on whether you are the conqueror or not” (*The Matriarch*, p. 403).

The novel introduces key concepts related to culture such as whakapapa, ancestor, land, mana, prophecy, ritual, and the sacred, highlighting the necessity of understanding one’s lineage and heritage to find oneself in the present. As one character reflects, “... whakapapa, how can you know who you are in the present? Without genealogy to bind it together, there can be no iwi”, thus underlining that the continuity of lineage and family heritage is essential for preserving cultural identity and collective memory. *The Matriarch* expresses a firm belief that the narratives are subjective and it is important to follow whakapapa, genealogy, and ancestral knowledge to preserve cultural integrity. Ultimately, the text reveals that Māori identity is shaped not only through the preservation of tikanga and whakapapa but also through the narratives filling these traditions with meaning across generations.

The illustrations provided allow us to identify common features of the person of culture image across Anglophone literature, such as assimilation of cultural experience, transmission of humanistic and spiritual values, cultural reflexivity, creativity, cultural projection.

**Conclusions.** Therefore, the person of culture image, being pivotal in the system of worldview ideas, was explored on the basis of a linguistic and cultural approach. The person of culture image is a cognitive category, providing an expansive framework for its interpretation. Nevertheless, a set of linguistic means (lexical, phraseological, grammatical, pragmatic and stylistic, etc.) conveys the conceptual meaning of the person of culture image, thus making it comprehensible in language consciousness and receiving verbal expression. Accordingly, its representation is possible only if certain socio-cultural realities encoded in the language are analyzed.

Since the socio-cultural basis of language is transient, the person of culture image as a form of predominantly collective reflection, along with its invariant features, acquires dynamics depending on changes in social and cultural realities. Thus, the person of culture image is a conceptual mediator of the human and culture interaction, as it accumulates the reference to values and meanings, values and ideals of a particular epoch, including the modern one.

**Prospects for further research** are primarily related to extending the research area and clarifying the linguistic representation of the person of culture image in modern educational, academic, and media discourses. Based on the linguistic and cultural studies approach it undoubtedly deepens interpretation of verbal and conceptual representation of this image. This, in turn, will contribute to the conceptualization of the person of culture image as a genuine and valuable object of interdisciplinary explorations of linguistics, semiotics, discourse analysis, and cultural studies.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

### Use of Artificial Intelligence

No artificial intelligence tools or materials were used in the manuscript.

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