

Title: The Image Of A Woman-Migrant In Modern Ukrainian Literature
Author: Olena Hlaskova, University of Alberta

According to the results of the latest research “Migration and money transfer” conducted in 2010 by the World Bank Ukraine occupies the 5th place among the countries with the highest rate of emigration. With such a high percentage of emigration from Ukraine this issue has been widely addressed in academic research, media, speeches of Ukrainian politicians, and writers. A tendency to distinguish female labour migration in a separate field of studies with its specific features has also been recently declared in Ukraine in works by Motyl' (2008) and Staryns'ka (2011).

In this research I will analyze the novel by Orest Berezovs'kyi “Internaimychka : dochka chy paserbytsia IEvropy?” (“Interservant: a daughter or a stepdaughter of Europe?”) focusing on the image of a woman-emigrant constructed by the author.

Based on a close textual reading, and approaching the issue of emigration depicted in the novel from feminist perspective, I address the gender peculiarities of labour migration of Ukrainian women and the social evaluation of this type of emigration as it appears in the novel. In my analysis I follow the understanding of a woman-emigrant expressed in the article by Staryns'ka, who identifies women-migrants as “active social actors” (Staryns'ka 2011). Exploring the phenomenon of female labour represented by Ukrainian women, Staryns'ka points out a negative social image of women-emigrants in Ukraine and explains this “negativity” by the prevailing patriarchal system of norms and values existing in the Ukrainian society. In this respect my other research question concerns gender stereotypes present in the text of the novel and their functions in construction of the above mentioned image and conveying the negative attitude to female migration in general.

elencapricha@gmail.com