

UDC 821.111(71)

doi: <https://doi.org/10.15330/clid.1.1.67-77>

## **CHILDREN'S VOICES OF WAR VICTIMS IN *STOLEN CHILD* BY MARSHA FORCHUK SKRYPUCH**

**Tetiana Kachak**

Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ukraine

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6863-1736>

**Tetyana Blyznyuk**

Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ukraine

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0558-2201>

**Abstract.** The article analyzes the novel *Stolen Child* by the Canadian writer Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch. It stands out among other works of military themes by the artistic perfection of revealing the painful topic of human destinies crippled by war and lost childhood, by the plot thought out to the details, psychologism of the image of a child hurt by war criminals. The author conveyed all the tragedy and drama of the events through the prism of children's suffering and pain. In one story of a kidnapped child, she showed the fate of hundreds of thousands of Polish and Ukrainian children who became victims of the Lebensborg program during World War II. The life of the main character, a twelve-year-old girl from Ukraine, is full of losses, fear, trying to remember the past and understand who she really is. Before ending up in Canada, the child experienced the loss of parents, hunger, loneliness, bullying, humiliation, spent five years in a camp for displaced persons.

Artistic interpretation of the inner world, children's pain, suffering, loneliness, self-searching, love and hate, perception of others, experiencing school bullying and adaptation in a new country and realities. This is not the entire list of problems raised by the writer in this novel. This is “a gripping exploration of war-induced trauma, identity, and transformation” (*Stolen Girl*).

The issue of the relocation of Ukrainians and representatives of other nationalities to Canada and the arrangement of their lives, interaction with the rest of the population deserves special attention in the novel.

The combination of the story about the post-war events from the emigrant life of the young storyteller is synthesized with memories, dreams, visions from the past. In the process of a systematic literary analysis of the poetics of the novel, the artistic representation of a child's traumatic experience of war, its “voicing” at different levels of the work: in the relevant issues, the mosaic plot, the dynamic narration of the homodiegetic child-narrator in the introdiegetic situation, the psychologism of the image of the main character, the time-space plane, other images - symbols, military markers and artistic details. The novel is considered in the context of literature for young readers, taking into account the perspective of double addressing.

**Key words:** literature about war, military themes, child-narrator, psychologism of the story, traumatic experience of war.

## INTRODUCTION

...How I wished I lived a simple life  
that had never been touched by war...

(Skrypuch, 2010, p. 71)

These words from Marsha Forchuk Skrypukh's novel belong to a child who became a war victim. This is the desire of millions of people who had to live in wartime and who know what war is. The war is the greatest crime against humanity. The horrors of war are taking place in the heart of Europe. Ukrainians fully feel them. One more genocide of a nation: cynical murders, destruction, kidnapping, torture and deportation of civilians and other war crimes committed by Russians in the 21st century. The policy of Russia, an imperial totalitarian state, for centuries was aimed at enslaving other peoples and destroying their independence. The theme of war dominates not only in public life, but also in modern literature<sup>1</sup>. The works on military topics by writers from different countries, dedicated to the events of the First and Second World Wars, autobiographical memories, childhood traumatic experiences of war victims, are gaining relevance<sup>2</sup>.

The Canadian writer Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch describes in her works the pages of the tragic history of Ukrainians who suffered the trials of the Second World War, staying in camps for displaced persons, emigration to Canada. Her English-language novel *Stolen Child* (2010) has been recently translated into Ukrainian and is an example of how a child's voice of a war victim can sound in literature.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### Children's voices and war literature in the discourse of scientific research

Children's voices of war victims are mostly heard in autobiographical texts of diary and confessional type, documentary prose. One of the best examples of such prose is *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* (1993). Images and traumatic experience of war in documentary and artistic discourses, in children's literature of different countries are analyzed by Hamida Bosmajian (2013), Mary Galbraith (2000), Ruth Gilbert (2010), Lydia Kokkola (2003), Lissa Paul, Rosemary R. Johnston, Emma Short, Emern O'Sullivan, Peter Hunt and other writers in the collection *Children's Literature and Culture of the First World War* (2019), Mateusz Świetlicki and Dorota Michulka (2022), Maciej Wróblewski (2023) and more.

In the aspect of theoretical understanding of the problem, the works of researchers of children's literature devoted to its specificity (Perry Nodelman, 1992),

---

<sup>1</sup> Ukrainian writers talk to children about the horrors of war in a verbal and visual language accessible to them in the picture books and fairy tales *The War That Changed Rondo* by Romana Romanyshyn and Andrii Lesiv, *The Tale of Light* by Khrystyna Lukashchuk, realistic stories and novels *My Forced Summer Vacation* by Kateryna Yehorushkina, *Home by Railway* by Maryana Savka.

<sup>2</sup> Among them it is worth noting *The Boy in Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne, *Ark of Time* by Marcin Szczygielski, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr, etc.

narrative models (Maria Nikolajeva, 2004), artistic representation and reception of children's experience, trauma, emotions (Marek Oziewicz, 2020; Kidd, Kenneth B, 2005) are relevant.

Research of contemporary Ukrainian literature for children about the war is important. Only within the framework of the International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference “Childhood. Literature. Culture. Education” held at Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University in 2023, a dozen speeches devoted to this topic were delivered. Among them, it is worth highlighting the research “Retransmission of heroic discourse in Ukrainian children’s illustrated books about the war” by N. Akulova, “Artistic interpretation of the theme of childhood during the war in Ukrainian literature about the Holocaust” by N. Horbach, “The specificity of Patron's autobiographical narrative in the novel by Z. Zhyvka” “Pes Patron”” L.Kutsa, “The war theme in contemporary children's literature: typical plots or individual models of life experience?” T. Kachak and others (Kachak, Blyznyk & Budnyk, 2023).

Literary reception of war, trauma in the context of war, the language of war, genre literature as an attempt at self-therapy of war trauma - this is far from the entire spectrum of research by O. Pukhonska, author of the monograph “Beyond the Battle. The discourse of war in modern literature” (Pukhonska, 2022), many articles, literary concepts of research on this topic in literature for adult readers.

The war in literature addressed to young people is mostly discussed in journalistic materials. Here predominate book reviews of about the war (Vzdulska, 2022; Knyzhka zaspokojuje... 2022; Korolchuk, 2022; Stakhiv, 2023), manuals and methodical developments oriented to the psychotherapeutic and pedagogical aspect (Living writers. How to talk to children about war and peace, 2023). Scientific discourse in this context includes the works of Ukrainian researchers T. Kachak and T. Blyznyuk on the artistic understanding of the Russian-Ukrainian war in modern publications for children (Kachak, Blyznyuk, 2024); T. Kachak and U. Baran, who highlight the peculiarities of the disclosure of the theme “children and war” in the works of writers of the 20th century (Kachak, Baran, 2016); V. Kyzylova, who focuses attention on the anti-military experience of understanding the Second World War in works about and for children (Kyzylova, 2021); L. Yaremko, who examines the author’s tales about the war, posted on YouTube (Yaremko, 2023); Yu. Kulinska, who investigates the specifics of the representation of a historical fact in the context of the topic “child and war” (Kulinska, 2020) etc. Polish researchers also reveal the war theme in contemporary Ukrainian books for children, e.g. M. Świetlicki (2018; 2019), K. Jakubowska-Kravchuk and S. Romaniuk (2019).

Literary works of Skrypuch are analyzed by Anastasia Ulanowicz (2017) and Mateusz Świetlicki (2020; 2023). Świetlicki is the first literary critic to carefully read Skrypuch’s *Hope’s War* (2001) and her two Second World War trilogies<sup>3</sup>, and study the depiction of Ukrainian displaced persons (DPs), the underground operations of Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), Jewish–Ukrainian relations, the Holocaust, and the

---

<sup>3</sup> *Don’t Tell the Enemy* (2017), *Trapped in Hitler’s Web* (2020), *Traitors Among Us* (2021), *Stolen Child* (2010), *Making Bombs for Hitler* (2012) and *Underground Soldier* (2014).

display of the Ukrainian Righteous Among Nations. These works play an important role in passing on memory to future generations, in particular, about the traumatic experiences of many Ukrainians.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE, METHODOLOGY AND DATA

In this study, the novel *Stolen Child* is interpreted through the prism of a systematic literary analysis of the poetics of the work, taking into account the historical and cultural perspective, achievements of narratological theory, memory studies, trauma theory. The key emphasis is placed on the artistic specificity of the implementation of the children's voice of the war victim, chosen by the writer for children's optics of the representation of the described events. The problematic spectrum of the work, the mosaic plot, the psychologism of the image of the main character-narrator, the first-person narration, the confessional manner of writing, military markers and artistic details are noted. The novel is considered in the context of literature for young readers.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The problems of Marsha Forchuk Skrypukh's novel

The central voice in this story belongs to a twelve-year-old girl who became a victim of the “Lebensborn” program – a mass horrific crime by the fascists. In the notes, the author rightly points out that the Holocaust is the well-documented murder of six million Jews by the Nazis, while not everyone knows that in 1936, Hitler’s secret police, the SS<sup>4</sup>, created the “Lebensborn” program, the purpose of which was to increase the number of Aryan children - representatives of the ruling race, to populate most of Europe. Between 1940 and 1942, the German kidnapped blond, blue-eyed Polish and Ukrainian children from Eastern Europe. After a thorough medical examination and screening, children under the age of eight who were selected were sent to a foster home, “where they were brainwashed”, told they were German, and placed with German families. Others ended up in concentration camps or slave labor camps and became ostarbeiters. The author admits that this is a deeply personal book for her, as her mother-in-law Lidia (Kravchuk) Skrypukh, originally from Zolochiv (Ukraine), lost many of her classmates through the program “Lebensborn” (Skrypukh, 2010, p. 151). With this novel the writer conveys “the voice of a generation whose childhood fell in the period 1939–1945” (Wróblewski, 2023).

Artistic interpretation of the inner world, children's pain, suffering, loneliness, self-searching, love and hate, perception of others, experiencing school bullying and adaptation in a new country and realities. This is not the entire list of problems raised by the writer in this novel. This is “a gripping exploration of war-induced trauma, identity, and transformation” (*Stolen Girl*, 2019).

---

<sup>4</sup> Part of the Nazi Party, (Schutzstaffel, Protection Squadron) an elite paramilitary organization.

The issue of the relocation of Ukrainians and representatives of other nationalities to Canada and the arrangement of their lives, interaction with the rest of the population deserves special attention in the novel.

### **The plot and composition of the novel *Stolen Child*: a child's view of the world**

The plot of the novel is extremely deep and dynamic. Skrypuch, like a mosaic, assembles events from several time-space planes into a single narrative canvas. Fragments of memories and delusions of the main character and narrator Nadiya complement the story of the events that happen to her and her named parents Marusya and Ivan in Canada. This is graphically displayed in two types of fonts: the story is presented in normal font, memories from the past, dreams and visions in italics. It begins with the description of the arrival of the girl Nadiya and Marusya to Canada, the arrangement of the house that Marusya's husband is building for them. The girl talks about learning English with Miss Mackintosh, attending a local school, friendship with the boy Mykhailo, who also emigrated from Ukraine, and her classmate Linda. However, at school Nadia is laughed at, her classmates humiliate her. She longs to make friends and feel safe, but is deeply traumatized by the war. She is haunted by disturbing memories of the most painful and dramatic episodes from the wartime past and related to her kidnapping from her grandmother and sister, her stay in a German family, and the events she experienced in a camp for displaced persons. As reviewer Shannon Ozirny notes, "These memories are so much more engrossing and vivid than her present difficulties adjusting to life in Canada. The rather banal events of Nadiya's present function only as filler between flashbacks and as a failed attempt to generate suspense between bursts of memory" (Ozirny).

There is no linear (chronological) development of events in the novel. This intrigues the readers, keeps them in constant tension, forces them to independently build up a plot and reconstruct the past not only of the girl, but also of many other Ukrainian families who became victims of the Nazis and the Soviets. The author briefly mentions other war crimes.

The plot of the novel is oriented towards psychology (each episode is described through the prism of the child's feelings and emotions, the emphasis is on perception, understanding, vision). However, the action in the novel is no less important. Some researchers argue that action orientation is one of the most important aesthetic characteristics of literature for young readers and the main source of reading pleasure" (Nodelman, 1992), although now "a higher aesthetic quality is attributed to the psychological image" (Nikolajeva, 2004, p. 173). In fact, it is about two different techniques that Skrypuch successfully combined in the novel *Stolen Child*.

### **Psychologism of the image of the main character**

The image of the main character, who became a victim of the Nazi machine and was kidnapped from the Ukrainian family, impresses with its psychologism and

expression. The child tries to remember the real past. She is tormented by memories and terrible dreams: "I fell asleep loved and secure.

*I am surrounded by the people whom I love most, snuggled together under a down comforter in a cosy bedroom. Suddenly there is a banging at the door. I try to wake the people beside me but they have melted away. I am alone/ My heart pounds. The door bursts open, but I cannot see who it is.*

I woke with my arms flailing, shouting, "Leave me alone!". Strong hands pulled me to a sitting position. I opened my eyes. I was in Brantford, in my own backyard. Marusia sat beside me. I was safe" (Skrypuch, 2010, p. 15)

Already in Canada, in relative safety with Ivan and Marusya, she experiences fear, pain, and despair. Flashes of memories "were like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that didn't fit" (Skrypuch, 2010, p. 27). The girl, whom Marusya named Nadiya, was most afraid of finding out that she was a Nazi. And the first memories of staying in a German family could indicate exactly that. Even Mykhailo said that her blond hair, blue eyes and speech associate her with a Nazi. Bullying that the child experiences at school adds even more doubt and distances her from the answer to the question of her national identity: "What is her true nationality?". She feels guilty and talks about it with Marusya: "I'm a Nazi, aren't I?", "Then why do I look like a Nazi?", "The other children in the DP camp didn't look like me and they didn't sound like me" (Skrypuch, 2010, p. 30).

Only later, after collecting all her memories of life in the German house, she realizes that she did not feel safe there, she was not happy, although she had enough food and everything a girl could dream of. The father in the Nazi uniform, the girl Eva, who was called her younger sister, and the mother, who did not treat her favorably, were strangers to her. Nadia remembered how they were going to the city to meet Hitler, how the crowd chanted "Heil Hitler!", and the Führer himself bowed down in front of her with the words "What a perfect specimen of Aryan youth you are, my dear" (Skrypuch, 2010, p. 45).

Then her name was changed into Gretchen Grimmel. She remembered how they were separated from Lida, how they were forced to speak German, beaten and taught new rules: "I speak Ukrainian to one of the other children, but a woman in white slaps my face. "You are German!" she says. "Speak German". The next time I speak my own language, I am dragged away. They kick me down a flight of wooden stairs and I land on the dirt floor. It is dark and all I can see are the glowing eyes of rats. I clasp my arms around my knees and try to stay warm. When the women in white come to get me, the brightness from outside almost blinds me. I take classes with the other children. A woman who does not smile teaches us the rules we are to live by. Ukrainians and Poles are sub-human. Those who are allowed to live will be slaves to the Aryans. "You are Aryans", she tells us. "The people you, think were your parents, are thieves. They stole you from your Aryan parents and now we will give you back". I know she speaks lies" (Skrypuch, 2010, p. 138).

Fragments that flash in the narrator's memory are, as a rule, caused by associations with certain things or phenomena. For instance, the soup at Miss Mackintosh's place immediately evoked the girl's memories of escaping with

Marusya in a platform car, several days of hunger, and that soup boiled with a few potatoes dug up in a farmer's field. Later, Nadiya would remember her sick grandmother, who was also fed with the soup together with her sister. The black car, the gingerbread cookies, the rain outside the window, the books in the library would remind of similar things in the suburban German house where the girl lived, and would restore the memory of Vater and Mutter, the events during the Nazi rally, the visit to the concentration camp, the fire at the factory with ost-workers. Perhaps the biggest shock for Nadiya was when the school inspector in a brown suit gave her a candy. She immediately remembered how she and her sister Lida took such candies from “Brown Sisters” and were stolen from their grandmother in the middle of the night: “The doorway fills with the silhouette of two soldiers; one holding a flashlight and the other pointing a rifle at us. When my eyes get used to the brightness, I see a third person – the woman in brown who gave us candy. She comes to the bed and grabs me roughly by the arm, but Baba won’t let go. The woman turns to the soldier. “Take her” (Skrypuch, 2010, p. 135).

And then was a dirty truck, imprisonment, inspection, the brand “Lebensborn”, separation from her sister, ideological drills. Nadiya recalls being bullied, learning German, marching, saluting the Führer, etiquette lessons, and the Nazi claiming that “Ukrainians and Poles are sub-human. Those who are allowed to live will be slaves to the Aryans”, “Jews are rats”, “None deserve to live” (Skrypuch, 2010, p.138). Nadiya protested against that and was thrown into the basement with rats. However, in order to survive, she became submissive and did everything that was asked of her. So, she became Gretchen Himmel and got into a German family. It was there that she met Marusya, who told her “This is not your home”, “I will protect you” (Skrypuch, 2010, p.144).

Marusya’s sister was also kidnapped by the Nazis, and she was made an ostarbeiter. Ivan’s father and brother were killed by the Soviets, his sister was captured by Nazi poachers, and his mother was sent to a concentration camp. Marusya helped Nadia save her from death. Together with Ivan, they passed her off as their own daughter, they sincerely loved her and really wanted her to feel safe. The girl’s sense of safety and protection is reinforced by images of her own home, family, where she is cared of.

And although the girl “did not pieced together all the details of her life before her parents disappeared”, and “the ache of their loss was like a wound in her heart” (Skrypuch, 2010, p.149), she was able to remember what happened to her: “I am not Nadiya. I am not Gretchen. My name is Larissa!” (Skrypuch, 2010, p.136). Memories of the traumatic past helped her restore her own identity and national belonging, remember her real family and the fact that her father was killed by the Soviets and her mother by the Nazis. Mother’s lullaby, the smell of lilacs, prayer, language are things that are genetically embedded and cannot be erased from memory. These are markers of national identity, which are expressive elements of the image of the main character.

## **Narration as the main tool for voicing the tragic experience of a child victim of war**

The voice of a child victim of war is heard in the novel due to the narrative strategy chosen by the writer. Homodiegetic narrator in intradiegetic situations or autodiegetic narrator is an ideal narrative model that ensures the confession of writing, reflection of the narrator, self-characterization and characterization of other persons. This is a tool that allows you very precisely to verbally record the tragic and dramatic experience of a child victim of war, her/his emotional state in traumatic and post-traumatic situations through narration, monologue speech, retelling of dialogues.

Ivan urges Nadiya to talk about her dreams, visions from the past, memories, because by telling her story, she will get rid of fear, pain and finally feel safe. The experience of confessional self-awareness provides an impetus for the restoration of the individual. Verbalization of childhood trauma through “reproducing the lost world” and creating a new one (Galbraith, 2000, p. 341) is a way to overcome it.

Finally, Nadia realizes that her memory has returned. She remembered her grandmother and sister and realized that “It was a sad time, but also a cherished one”. The girl thinks about her family: “I still had not pieced together all the details of my life before my parents disappeared. The ache of their loss was like a wound in my heart. I must have been very young when they were taken away. And I realized now that they weren’t just taken away. They were dead. Tato was killed by the Soviets and Mama was killed by the Nazis. My teeth chattered – not from the cold but from the realization of all that I had lost... But I also knew that Mama and Tato had loved me. Flecks and shadows of scenes from the past told me that” (Skrypuch, 2010, p.149).

Nadia was ready to tell Ivan and Marusya what she remembered: “I was. At least, about as much as I remembered. It was a relief to say the details out loud” (Skrypuch, 2010, p.149).

## **CONCLUSION**

On the example of the analysis of the novel *Stolen Child* by Skrypukh, the artistic features of the representation of the children’s voice of the war victims, the articulation of the problems of war crimes, the tragedy of human destinies and traumatic experiences in literature addressed to young readers are shown. This work is a testimony of the collective national memory, which collapses in the memories of the emigrants’ descendants, is verbalized in the artistic text and becomes a fragment of the post-colonial literary discourse.

The voice of a child victim of war is heard in the novel due to the dynamic narration of the homodiegetic child-narrator in an intradiegetic situation. It is strengthened by the psychologism of the image of the main character, topical problems, a mosaic plot built up in different time-space planes, images-symbols, military markers and artistic details. The analysis of the work is a contribution to the study of the impact of war on children’s lives and the artistic representation of war trauma in literature addressed to young readers.



## REFERENCES

- Bosmajian, H. (2013). *Sparing the Child: Grief and the Unspeakable in Youth Literature about Nazism and the Holocaust*. New York: Routledge.
- Galbraith, M. (2000). What Must I Give Up in Order to Grow Up? The Great War and Childhood Survival Strategies in Transatlantic Picture Books. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 24 (3), 337-359.
- Gilbert, R. (2010). Grasping the Unimaginable: Recent Holocaust Novels for Children by Morris Gleitzman and John Boyne. *Children's Literature in Education*, 41, 355–366.
- Jakubowska-Krawczyk, K., & Romaniuk, S. (2020). Universalism of the topic of war? Problems of translation of the illustrated book: the case of “The war that changed Rondo”. *Language: Classic - Modern - Postmodern*, 5, 84–97. <https://doi.org/10.18523/lcmp2522-9281.2019.5.84-97> [in Ukrainian].
- Kachak, T., & Baran, U. (2016). Dity i viina: khudozhnia interpretatsiia temy v ukrainskii literaturi dlia ditei ta yunatstva [Children and war: an artistic interpretation of the theme in Ukrainian literature for children and youth]. *Bulletin of the Ukrainian Research Center of Children's and Youth Literature "Literature. Children. Time"*. Vol. VI: Materials of the All-Ukrainian scientific conference “Ukrainian literature for and about children: historical achievements and development trends” (October 11, 2016). (p. 68-76). Luhansk National University named after Taras Shevchenko [in Ukrainian].
- Kachak, T., & Blyznyuk, T. (2024). War in Contemporary Ukrainian Literature for Children and Youth. *Research bulletin. Series: Philological sciences*, 209, 151 – 157. <https://doi.org/10.32782/2522-4077-2024-209-23> [in Ukrainian].
- Kachak T., Blyznyuk T., & Budnyk O. (Eds.). (2023). *Childhood. Literature. Culture. Education. Book of Abstracts of the I International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference* (October 5 – 7, 2023). Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University. [https://ciot.pnu.edu.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/144/2023/10/2\\_book-of-abstracts-pnu-ukraine\\_05-07.10.2023.pdf](https://ciot.pnu.edu.ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/144/2023/10/2_book-of-abstracts-pnu-ukraine_05-07.10.2023.pdf) [in Ukrainian].
- Kachak, T. (2018). *Tendentsii rozvytku ukrainskoi prozy dlia ditei ta yunatstva pochatku XXI st* [Trends in the development of Ukrainian prose for children and youth at the beginning of the 21st century]. Akademydav [in Ukrainian].
- Knyzhka zaspokoivue: shcho pochytyty dytyni, poky tryvaie viina* [The book soothes: what to read to a child while the war is going on]. (2022). *Osvitornia*. <https://osvitoria.media/opinions/knyzhka-zaspokoyuye-shho-pochytyty-dytyni-poky-tryvaye-vijna/> [in Ukrainian].
- Korolchuk, M. (2022) *Hovorymo z ditmy pro viinu: 11 knyh dlia molodshykh pidlitkiv* [Let's talk with children about the war: 11 books for younger teenagers.]. <https://learning.ua/blog/202207/hovorymo-z-ditmy-pro-viinu-11-knyh-dlia-molodshykh-pidlitkiv/> [in Ukrainian].
- Kokkola, L. (2003). *Representing the Holocaust in Children's Literature*. Routledge.
- Kyzylova, V. (2021). Antymilitarnyi dosvid osmyslennia podii Druhoi svitovoi viiny v ukrainskykh khudozhnikh tvorakh dlia i pro ditei [Anti-military experience of understanding the events of the Second World War in Ukrainian works of art for and about children]. In K. Yakubovska-Kravchyk (Ed.). *Literary image of childhood in times of crisis of the 20th - 21st centuries*. Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego (pp. 73 – 84) [in Ukrainian].
- Kulinska, Yu. (2020). Istorychnyi fakt i literatura dlia ditei (na materialy prozy suchasnykh pysmennykiv: romanu O.Zakharchenko “Vertep”, povisti H.Kyrpy “Mii tato stav zirkoiiu”, “Kazky pro Maidan” Kh.Lukashchuk i kazky R.Romanyshyn i A.Lesiva “Viina, shcho zminyla Rondo”, “Povernutysia z viiny” N.Nahornoi ta in.). [Historical fact and literature for children (based on the prose of modern writers: O. Zakharchenko's novel “Vertep”, H.

- Kyrpa's story "My dad became a star", H. Lukashchuk's "Tales about the Maidan" and R. Romanishyn's tales and A. Lesiva "The war that changed Rondo", "Return from the war" by N. Nagornaya, etc.).]. *Literary process: methodology, names, trends*, 16, 35–40. <https://doi.org/10.28925/2412-2475.2020.16.5> [in Ukrainian].
- Living writers. How to talk to children about war and peace*. Manual. (2023). Ref. T. Stus, A. Tretyak, M. Artemenko [in Ukrainian].
- Nikolajeva, M. (2004). Narrative theory and children literature. In Hunt (Ed.). *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (pp. 166 – 178). Second Edition, Volume 1. Routledge.
- Nodelman, P. (1992). *The Pleasures of Children's Literature*. Longman.
- Ozirny, S. *Stolen Child* by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch. *Quill & Quire*. <https://quillandquire.com/review/stolen-child/>
- Paul L., Johnston, R. R., & Short, E. (Eds.) (2016). *Children's literature and culture of the first world war*. Routledge
- Pukhonska, O. (2022). *Poza mezhamy boiu. Dyskurs viiny v suchasni literaturi: Monohrafiia* [Beyond the battle. Discourse of war in modern literature]. Brustury: Diskursus [in Ukrainian].
- Skrypuch, M. F. (2010). *Stolen Child*. Toronto: Scholastic Canada
- Stakhiv, M. (2023). Viina. Dity. Literatura: dytiachi knyzhky ta viina v Ukraini [War. Children. Literature: children's books and the war in Ukraine]. *Goethe-Institut*. <https://www.goethe.de/prj/lek/uk/--/wrrchldrn.html> [in Ukrainian].
- "Stolen Girl" by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch. A gripping exploration of war-induced trauma, identity, and transformation. (2019) *Kirkus*. <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/marsha-forchuk-skrypuch/stolen-girl/>
- Świetlicki, M. (2020). Białe plamy pamięci. Nieopowiedziana historia Wielkiej Wojny w twórczości Marshy Forchuk Skrypuch. *Slavica Wratislaviensia*, 172, 111–122. <https://doi.org/10.19195/0137-1150.172.10>
- Świetlicki, M., & Michułka, D. (2022). Unburied Practices of Memory: The Holocaust and the Polish-Jewish Relations in Joanna Rudniańska's "Kotka Brygidy" (2007) and "XY" (2012). *Children's Literature in Education*, 54, 555-569. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-021-09473-6>
- Świetlicki, M. (2019). Mój tato został gwiazdą. Tanatos w ukraińskiej książce obrazkowej. *Slavica Wratislaviensia. Wielkie tematy kultury w literaturach słowiańskich*, 168, 197 – 206. <https://doi.org/10.19195/0137-1150.168.16> [in Polish].
- Świetlicki, M. (2023). *Next-Generation Memory and Ukrainian Canadian Children's Historical Fiction The Seeds of Memory*. Routledge.
- Świetlicki, M. (2018). "Oh, What a Waste of Army Dreamers...": The revolution of Dignity and War in Contemporary Ukrainian Picturebooks. *Filoteknos*, 8, 119 – 130. <https://doi.org/10.23817/filotek.8-9>
- Świetlicki, M. (2020). 'You will bear witness for us': Suppressed Memory and Counterhistory in Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch's "Hope's War" (2001). *Anglica Wratislaviensia, LVIII*, 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.19195/0301-7966.58.5>
- Ulanowicz, A. (2017). 'We are the People': The Holodomor and North American-Ukrainian Diasporic Memory in Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch's *Enough*. *Miscellanea Posttotalitariana Wratislaviensia*, 2 (7), 49–71. [https://doi.org/10.19195/2353-8546.2\(7\).4](https://doi.org/10.19195/2353-8546.2(7).4)
- Vzdulska, V. (2022). Totia Sup i pivnyky-heroi: ohliad naitsikavishykh knyzhkovykh novynok dlia ditei. [Aunt Sup and hero roosters: a review of the most interesting book novelties for children]. *Chytomo*. <https://chytomo.com/totia-sup-i-pivnyky-heroi-ohliad-naitsikavishykh-knyzhkovykh-novynok-dlia-ditei/> [in Ukrainian].
- Wróblewski, M. (2023). Stolen childhood. War memories of children and young people from 1945-1946. *Children's Literature in Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-023-09523-1>
- Yaremko, L. (2023). "Vid temriavy do svitla": suchasni ukraiński avtorski kazky pro viinu (interpretatsii) ["From darkness to light": contemporary Ukrainian author's fairy tales about

war (interpretations)]. *Studia Methodologica*, 56, 84-92. <https://doi.org/10.32782/2307-1222.2023-56-9> [in Ukrainian].

**Tetiana Kachak**, Doctor of Philological Sciences, professor of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ukraine

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6863-1736>

[tetiana.kachak@pnu.edu.ua](mailto:tetiana.kachak@pnu.edu.ua)

**Tetyana Blyznyuk**, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences (Ph. D.), Associate professor of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ukraine

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0558-2201>

[tetyana.blyznyuk@pnu.edu.ua](mailto:tetyana.blyznyuk@pnu.edu.ua)

**Качак, Т. & Близнюк, Т.** (2024). Дитячі голоси жертв війни у романі Марші Форчук Скрипуч “Викрадене дитя”. *Дитяча література: інтердисциплінарний дискурс*, 1 (1), 67 – 77.

У статті аналізується роман “Викрадене дитя” канадської письменниці Марші Форчук Скрипуч. Він вирізняється з-поміж інших творів міліарної тематики художньою довершеністю розкриття болючої теми скалічених війною людських доль і втраченого дитинства, до деталей продуманим сюжетом, психологізмом образу скривдженої військовими злочинцями дитини. Авторка передала весь трагізм і драматизм подій крізь призму дитячих страждань і болю. В одній історії викраденої дитини показала долю сотень тисяч польських і українських дітей, які під час Другої світової війни стали жертвами програми “Лебенсборг”. Життя головної героїні, дванадцятирічної дівчинки з України, наповнене втратами, страхом, намаганням пригадати минуле і зрозуміти, ким вона є насправді. Перш, ніж опинилася в Канаді, дитина пізнала втрату батьків, голод, самотність, цькування, приниження, п’ять років перебувала у таборі для переміщених осіб.

Художнє осмислення внутрішнього світу, дитячого болю, страждання, самотності, пошуків себе, любові й ненависті, сприйняття інших, переживання шкільного булінгу й адаптації в новій країні та реаліях – далеко не весь перелік проблем, які порушила письменниця у цьому романі.

Окремої уваги в романі варте питання переїзду українців та представників інших національностей в Канаду і облаштування побуту, взаємодії з іншим населенням. Це “захоплююче дослідження травми, ідентичності та трансформації, викликані війною” (“Викрадене дитя”).

Послання оповіді про повоєнні події з емігрантського життя юної оповідачки синтезовано зі спогадами, снами, візіями, з минулого. У процесі системного літературознавчого аналізу поетики роману зауважено художню репрезентацію дитячого травматичного досвіду війни, “озвучення” його на різних рівнях твору: у актуальній проблематиці, мозаїчному сюжеті, динамічній оповіді гомодієгетичного наратора-дитини в інтродієгетичній ситуації, психологізмі образу головної героїні, часопросторовій площині, образах-символах, мілітарних маркерах і художніх деталях. Роман розглянуто в контексті літератури для юних читачів з урахуванням перспективи подвійного адресування.

**Ключові слова:** література про війну, міліарна тематика, дитина-оповідач, психологізм оповіді, мозаїчний сюжет.

**Kachak, T. & Blyznyuk, T.** (2024). Children's Voices of War Victims in “Stolen Child” by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch. *Children's literature: interdisciplinary discourse*, 1 (1), 67 – 77.

**Received:** January 12, 2024; **Accepted:** June 10, 2024.