

# CONSTRUCTION OF CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN IDENTITY IN 21ST CENTURY VAMPIRE LITERARY NARRATIVES<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT** *The article examines the construction of contemporary Russian identity within and through the 21st-century Vampire Narrative. It focuses specifically on the construction of geographical places (such as Russian villages, Moscow or America) as a means to map the world and construct Russian identity. The analysis concentrates on two literary works: a vampire dilogy by Victor Pelevin (Empire V [2006] and Batman Apollo [2013]) and Oleg Divov's novel Night Watcher (2004). They are put into their historical and contemporary context and submitted to structural analysis. Tlostanova's theory of Secondary Empire is then applied. Both works are profoundly patriarchal and colonial towards further, more Eastern Others, but Russian identity is constructed, above all, in relation to the collective West. Russianness gets metaphysical importance as the only actually valuable attitude to the world. The reasoning bears features of resistance and imperialism (masked as resistance).*

**KEY WORDS** *Vampire Narrative; Russian Identity; Narratological Structure; Mental Mapping; Subaltern/Secondary Empire; (Post)Colonialism.*

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