

**A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE NOVEL “THE HOT SNOW” BY RUSSIAN WRITER YURI BONDAREV***Badegül CAN EMİR\****Abstract:**

Every branch of science which deals with *man* – from literature to psychology – studies disasters experienced by societies. Great Patriotic War was one of such disasters and it left its mark on the 20<sup>th</sup> century Soviet-period Russian literature. War reflected in literature with all its aspects and the literary works of writers and poets of the war period were enhanced by the manifestation of the human soul. One of the prose writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Yuri Bondarev who emphasized the destructive side of war in his works by portraying the physical, social and mental deterioration of man during the war. In one of his works – the novel *The Hot Snow* – the author shows the human nature tested under hard conditions of war and gives the account of the people’s struggle for their motherland and freedom as they fought against the enemy with limited resources.

This paper presents an effort to study the novel *The Hot Snow* by war-period prose writer Yu. Bondarev from philological and psychological perspectives. The psychological trials experienced by each character in a different way, the moral and mental changes in the person caused by war were studied in the paper under different titles. The goal of this paper is to provide a pattern of the use of psychology in the analysis of pieces of literature and to support the research in the area of psychology of literature. As a result this paper – besides demonstrating the meaninglessness of war once again – will be important for revealing the psychological sources of literature.

**Key words:** Yuri Bondarev, Literature, Psychology, War, Soviet Period Russian Literature.

**INTRODUCTION**

Great Patriotic War (Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna, 1941–1945) was a profound event which left its indelible mark in Soviet people’s psychology and memory. Thus it also inevitably took an important place in the literature of the country. The vast majority of the authors who wrote about war were soldiers who had personally experienced war. At the same time the literature did its best to move the people’s emotions and to honestly reflect the violence that was experienced at war. Writers and poets in their

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works of war period dealt with the issues of war, victory, death, heroism, high treason or devotion; and their portrayal of these issues was enhanced by the manifestation of the human soul. One of them was Yuri Bondarev. He was born in 1924 and was taken to war right out of school. He fought at Stalingrad and was wounded there. Yuri Bondarev wrote based on his own experiences, and war stands in his works as the people's psychological experience. Yu. Bondarev's works put people's fortitude to the test and each of his works represents a clear picture of war and man. One of such pictures is the author's novel *The Hot Snow* (Goryachiy sneg, 1970). In *The Hot Snow* Bondarev narrates the world-famous Stalingrad events with clear psychological analyses. The novel consists of 26 chapters. It was published in 1970 on 410 pages. The action takes place in Stalingrad in 1942. The action is focused on heroes such as Bessonov, Vesnin, Drozdovski, Kuznetsov, Ukhanov, Rubin, and Zoya. In the beginning of the novel the characters may seem alike to the readers, however even though they share the same fate they turn out to be very different people with diverse personalities and habits, needs and dreams, and attitudes to the people around them. Thus each of them reacts to their battlefield experiences in a different way. Yu. Bondarev uses the images of these people to describe the psychological shocks the war produces in people.

### 1. FEAR OF DEATH

One of the main psychological shocks experienced by the soldiers in the novel *The Hot Snow* is the fear of death. The fear of death arises from a person's awareness of his or her separation from life because of experiencing the existential splitting between life and death. The subconscious fear of separation from life is revealed in the moment of danger and causes mental disorders. The soldier characters of the novel *The Hot Snow* are constantly in the midst of war facing the fear of separation from life. As we look at Kuznetsov in the novel, we see that the fear of death makes him act differently than he would always act and he cannot believe in what his fears bring to his mind: "*This damnable disability... Panoramas should be taken! Why am I afraid of dying? Am I afraid of shrapnel into my head? To hell with the aims! I don't have enough strength to jump out of the trench... I am ready to order but keep sitting here myself. If I jump out of the trench then there will be no protection. And sizzling hot shrapnel will hit me into the temple!..*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 384). Despite the fear these people have under the danger of death there is one truth they fully comprehend – and the truth is the reality of death at war. In example senior sergeant Ukhanov puts it in like this: "*War, damn it! Today it kills one, tomorrow another. The day after tomorrow it'll kill you!*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 583). As the soldier heroes of the novel are shaken with the danger of death, they feel a relief when the danger is over. The feelings of Kuznetsov at the withdrawal of the enemy's bombers may serve as an illustration of this. As soon as the danger

of death is past Kuznetsov feels free and his fear is relieved: “*Despite the fact that Junkers have been still bombing the rears and some ones have been dying there, Kuznetsov felt a brief relief, as if he had broken free from the unnatural state of depression, disability and humiliation that is called at war the expectation of death.*” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 393). Both the passing of danger and the approach of the moment of death make the soldiers in the novel feel free. For instance, Vesnin feels relief as a result of being wounded: “*With his hand in which the gun was clamped, he touched his chest helplessly, thrusting the inevitable thing that had happened to him. ‘Really? Is it really that? Has it really caught me so quickly?’ thought Vesnin. With a relief from the sudden, irreversible and already clear understanding of what had just happened to him, he wanted to look at his hand in order to see blood on it... But he didn’t see any blood.*” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 490). Vesnin feels relief here because he does not have to wait for the minute of his death anymore and he is conscious of the approach of his death.

The soldier characters of the novel *The Hot Snow* constantly consider the possibility of death at war, only wishing they can be strong and look honourable while dying. That is the case with Kuznetsov as well: “*While thinking of death Kuznetsov wished just one blow to the head, in the temple. He was most of all afraid that in case of him being mortally wounded a grimace of pain, an inhuman grin of fear would not disappear but would stay on his face as it often used to be on the faces of the killed ones, somehow humiliating their deaths.*” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 505). Apparently Kuznetsov does not want to have any trace of fear on his face when he dies. A fighting man is not only afraid of the fear of death, but he is also afraid that his fear of death may be noticed by others. In this case Kuznetsov wants to look honourable because he considers death an insult at war. In fact, this perception comes from the Western culture: “*In present-day Western culture the self is held sacred and death is considered an unspeakable insult.*” (Peck, 1992, p. 71-72).

## 2. DENIAL OF DEATH AND REFUSAL TO KILL

Along with the fear of death the novel *The Hot Snow* demonstrates another kind of psychological shock – the denial of death. People at war are inclined to deny the reality of death. This is one of the behaviours related to the denial of death, namely the behaviour of “*narcissistic defence.*” (For a detailed information on the subject see: Göka, 2009, p. 91-93). The person demonstrating this behaviour ignores death and believes nothing will happen to him or her. Such a denial takes the form of challenging death, hiding one’s fear by ostentatious joy and mockery. This may be illustrated by Kuznetsov’s mood at the beginning of the air strikes: “*And at the same time almost gloating thought flashed in Kuznetsov’s mind as he was expecting a*

*blow in his back or head: 'Passed by, passed by!'*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 391). This behaviour reflects the boldness his subconsciousness was trying to produce in him against the fear of death. This is the reason why a smile appeared on Nechaev's face when he ran out of shells in the novel: "*Half an hour ago, after Nechaev cried that they had run out of shells, he sank to the ground beside the gun with a strange laugh and sat so with a meaningless smile.*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 494). The people who deny death are confident that they will not die and they believe this confidence will save them from death. From this standpoint it is interesting to see what kind of thoughts come to Kuznetsov's mind when the tanks break through to the battery: "*Do we really all have to die now? The tanks will break through to the battery and begin crushing the gun crews and artillery!.. No, no, I have to do something!.. And what is death going to be? No, I should only think that I won't be killed, - and then I won't be killed!*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 405).

Another mental state encountered by the readers of the novel *The Hot Snow* manifests itself in questioning death and the act of killing. People are shocked by the reality of death and question if they have the right to kill others. Dying, killing, or granting somebody life by a high-rank officer is unthinkable for such people. The episode in the novel where General Bessonov questions his right to kill others and grant them life may be a good illustration: "*...as if he, Bessonov due to some perverted whimsy had the right to take and give life, and by giving it brought uncontrollable happiness to others. 'Something is wrong with me, not the way I would like it to be... It should not be that way,' Bessonov thought...*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 298). This mental state can make some soldiers refuse to kill the enemy. In the novel Kuznetsov questions the case and concludes that everything is meaningless. When Davlatyan tells Kuznetsov he is lucky because he has fought with the enemy and has never been wounded, Kuznetsov's answer indicates that he has discovered the meaninglessness of everything: "*Why? What all of that was for? Why did I then shoot and see some meaning in it? I hated them, killed them. I fired their tanks, and I wanted that meaning!.. But Zoya's death – it's meaningless. Impossible meaningless! Why her?*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 588).

### **3. DESIRE TO CONSCIOUSLY EXPOSE ONESELF TO DANGER AND TO CONSTANTLY EXPERIENCE THE DANGER OF DEATH AT WAR**

Another psychological state of the soldier characters of *The Hot Snow* reveals itself as they consciously exposure themselves to danger. This behaviour is based on the desire to discover to what extent dangerous things are harmful. Thus exposing oneself to danger is done in order to feel what real danger is like. The part of the novel where Kuznetsov undertakes the task of searching for the lost guy from his scout party provides a good

illustration of this psychological state: “*It’s some madness, some craziness, he thought, being soberly conscious of inconsistency of his decisions. ‘What’s happening to me? Have I stopped controlling myself? I know it’s no use to look for the scout, nonetheless I agree to it and I want to do it myself?!’*” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 562). Kuznetsov undertakes this task with the desire to feel the real danger. This desire is related to feeling secure amid the danger. Psychiatrist Rudolf Bilz (1898-1976) reported that a patient told him he never felt as good as he did at war. The following statement in Bilz’s report is important: “*I am treating a patient presently who has been suffering since childhood from the severe anxiety of thunderstorms which borders panic. Whenever he hears about ‘thunderstorm’ in the weather forecast it makes his hair stand on end. And that man says, ‘None of it ever disturbed me at war. I was feeling free!’ Nothing made his hair stand on end during the war, because he was in the midst of a thunderstorm anyway.*” (von Ditforth, 1991, p. 24). This kind of psychological state shows itself in the novel as well. In the beginning everything loses its meaning for the soldier; after a while the loss of meaning produces in him the desire to adjust to the conditions, to become insensible, even to constantly experience the danger of death. The following words of Kuznetsov are significant in this regard: “*This is nonsense. Something is wrong with me,*” Kuznetsov thought in surprise. *‘I kind of regret that the fight is over. Since I no more think I might be killed, then I will probably be killed indeed! Today or tomorrow...’* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 496). We see Kuznetsov’s longing for confusion, and this longing comes from the selfish inclination of human soul. “*Schelling explains that human nature is determined by its selfish inclination, that is by its love of evil. The man – separated from everything as a result of the selfishness – has a longing for confusion. But at the same time the man specifically wants to get back to the source of all order and to take pleasure in destroying everything that was formed. There’s a certain pleasure and horror that people feel only by destroying themselves with the anxiety of life. Schelling said, ‘This pleasure makes you feel dizzy as if one stands on the brink of a precipice and a mysterious voice calls you to go down.’*” (von Ditforth, 1991, p. 11-12). In such cases the voice calling the person to go down is the failure to be one’s own master. People often choose death because of the feeling of anxiety about their failure to be their own masters. In the novel orderly Chibisov shares a memory from the days when he was taken prisoner by Germans. The reader here sees how suicide may be committed because of the crisis arising from hating one’s enemies and losing one’s freedom in their hands: “*The Germans drove us into a ravine. It was around Vyazma. And when their tanks came up close to us and surrounded us while we had run out of shells then the regimental commissar jumped on top his vehicle with a gun in his hand. He shouted, ‘Better dead than a prisoner of the fascist swine!’ and shot himself on the temple.*” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 230).

#### 4. OUTBURSTS OF ANGER AT WAR

Another mental disorder witnessed in the novel is the anger caused by battle fatigue. "*Anger is an emotion bred into us by countless generations of evolution in order that our survival may be encouraged. We experience anger whenever we perceive another organism attempting to encroach upon our geographical or psychological territory or trying, one way or another, to put us down. It leads us to fight back.*" (Peck, 1992, p. 64). Accordingly the soldier characters of the novel feel anger towards the Germans who make an attempt on their lives and limit their freedom with their trenches. And because they are unable to properly show anger to their enemy, and their anger is increased by their hunger and fatigue, - they bring it down on the people who are near them. A good illustration of such anger is found in the way Osin talks to Kasyankin: "*Kasyankin, you cowardly bastard, people are being killed, and you are still alive? Are you going to crawl on your knees before the Germans? To save your life? Has your leg prevented you from shooting? Get out, you scoundrel! Get out!*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 491). Osin gets angry at Kasyankin because he is frightened and idle. As a matter of fact Osin realizes that this fear is natural. Because as German psychologist Heinrich Meng put it, *fear makes a person stupid* (Zulliger, 1997, p. 44). The nerves of the person shocked by war are strained, and he relieves the strain by yelling at someone. As we can see in the novel human soul's anger towards the reality of death often manifests itself in the form of an irony and expressions of mockery. For instance, it is interesting to notice the words uttered by one of the soldiers about the kitchen officer's delay when the soldiers had to set out tired and hungry: "*We should have something to eat, but the kitchen officer can't be seen anywhere. He must be fighting in the rear!*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 285).

#### 5. FEELING HATE TOWARDS THE ENEMY

Another psychological issue, destructive problem observed in the novel *The Hot Snow* is hate. Hate may be defined as a destructive reaction displayed by someone to his or her environment. Two kinds of hate are differentiated: "rational reactive" and "irrational character-conditioned" hate. (For a more detailed information see: Fromm, 2010, p. 237-238). Rational reactive hate implies a person's reaction to the threats for one's life and freedom, while character-conditioned hate is a personal characteristic and someone in this state is constantly ready to hate. The character of Rubin in the novel is significant for showing the readers the character-conditioned hate. Rubin is angry with everything and full of hate for everybody. And Kuznetsov is wondering about this attitude displayed by Rubin: "*Where did you get this anger at everyone? I can't understand.*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 541). The reason of such hostile attitude of Rubin is that he is always ready to hate by his character. And the rational reactive hate in the novel is the hate

towards the enemy. Kuznetsov expresses his reactive hate towards the Germans in the following words: *“Bastards! Bastards! I hate them!”* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 413). The hate soldiers feel towards the enemy is so huge that even a German woman cannot arouse interest in them. We can see it in the words of lieutenant Davlatyan as he looked at a German lady’s photo: *“The ugly face! What can be pleasant about it? An SS wife and an utter fool for sure. Smiling as a cat. I hate those fascist muzzles. How can she smile?”* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 354). The hate towards the enemy expressed in the examples from the novel also takes the form of attributing all different evil characteristics to the enemy and all the positive ones to themselves. Such behaviours are considered “mirror-image perceptions” (Budak, 2009, p. 97) in psychology. In the mirror-image perceptions behaviours are projected on the other party. The projection here is *“an attempt to deny some negative or hostile feeling in oneself by attributing it to someone else. Thus a person who hates someone will project that hatred onto another, perceiving that person as being the one who hates.”* (Berger, 1996, p. 80). In this regard Kuznetsov’s words are worthy of note: *“‘Shall we take the watch, Lieutenant?’ - ‘Leave it to hell! And the lighter, and the cigarettes! And all this!’ quickly and with disgust uttered Kuznetsov. ‘To take from the lousy fascist bastard?..’* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 555). Similarly Germans have the same feelings towards Russians. It can be better seen in the feelings of a German prisoner in the following example: *“At the edges of his frozen blue mouth a sinister smile showed anger at himself and his hatred of the Russians who had made him abuse himself, suffer from the cold and urinate under himself in the crater the whole day.”* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 604-605). Hate as a destructive emotion is at the same time a psychological power motivating soldiers at war. As long as the soldier holds hate inside him he is able to fight boldly. However lack of hatred makes fighting against the enemy more difficult. For instance, hate is the power that makes Kuznetsov fearless before the enemy. *“But after he started again, the same as when he was shooting tanks, he felt the uncontrollable rage and hatred of the battle. He realized the special and the only value of his life... He lost the sense of heightened danger and instinctive fear of tanks, of all this shooting and killing world, as if fate had carelessly given him eternal life...”* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 426-427). The image of ‘German’ as the hated enemy in the novel is related to another psychological shock established in the soldiers’ subconsciousness at war. The word ‘German’ is imprinted in the soldiers’ minds as the sign of danger and death. In this regard the following words of Stalin to Bessonov are interesting: *“The word ‘German’ has sounded as a very active force for a long time. That’s a psychological factor. It should be reversed in consciousness. Forever!”* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 315).

## 6. PSYCHOLOGY OF PRISONERS

Another psychological shock which manifests itself in the novel *The Hot Snow* is found in the psychology of prisoners. The psychology of the German prisoner in the novel, the mood he displays has the following reflection in the novel: "*The German, like with a heart attack, was breathing more and more quickly, gaping, his mouth widely open, unexpectedly staggered sideways. He fell in the snow as if shot, while wheezing some inarticulate words of which could be understood only: Russian, swine, I am dying. It is cold.*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 564). In another example the readers' attention is drawn by the prisoner's efforts to look strong despite his condition as a prisoner: "*The German still did not change his chosen posture: being indifferent to everything, and his extinguished eyes deadly soldered into the dugout corner. His right hand in a fur glove supporting his newly bandaged left hand. He was still seeking to keep the decent image of a disarmed, captured German officer who was nonetheless completely indifferent to his fate, as the Russians had to imagine him...*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 602). The author here describes the condition of a prisoner by exposing the German prisoner's inner world. The prisoner is not happy to have survived. Being a prisoner causes him a great distress. For instance, when Bessonov tells the prisoner to be thankful for his luck, the prisoner answers: "*No, I was not lucky, Mr. General. Your soldiers who had not killed me in the crater, kept me as a pig in the cold and were getting cold themselves. They are fanatics. They are merciless even to themselves! I asked them to kill me. Killing me – it would have been an act of kindness, but they didn't kill me.*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 606). These expressions make it clear that the prisoner would rather die than live as a prisoner. Another good example illustrating this in the novel is Kuznetsov's always keeping a charged bullet in his gun in order not to be taken prisoner, but to die an honourable death: "*More than once in the first battles around Roslavl, Kuznetsov imagined himself being killed like that, mentally saw a German coming up and touching his body with his boot rudely and with disgust. While thinking of it he then wished just one blow to the head, in the temple. He was most of all afraid that in case of him being mortally wounded a grimace of pain, an inhuman grin of fear would not disappear but would stay on his face as it often used to be on the faces of the killed ones, somehow humiliating their deaths. And he believed in the last cartridge, which he had always been keeping since then, in his gun almost superstitiously, as his rescue, his help.*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 505).

## 7. PSYCHOLOGY OF TRAITORS

Another psychological shock in the novel *The Hot Snow* is observed in the psychology of traitors. Since the ancient times treason has been considered an absolute evil and from the moral standpoint it is viewed as an



immoral behaviour and crime (For a detailed information see: Ozel, 2012, p. 92). Stalin's words in his talk with Bessonov about general Vlasov in the novel clearly refer to the perception of the immorality of treason: *"To my mind, comrade Bessonov, those who allow themselves to be taken prisoner often include politically and morally unstable elements, to some degree dissatisfied with our system... There are exceptions of course. Do you agree?"* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 317). Vlasov was widely shown in the novel and thus the immorality of treason was emphasized. Vlasov's treason violates morality and this violation implies his spiritual death: *"Betrayals, cowardice, army treasons, and disclosures of secret documents happen on all wars. Vlasov's treason in June 1942 was not a treason of the army which had been fighting to the bitter end around the village of Spasskaya Polist, - the remains of the divisions freed themselves with battles from the ring. Vlasov's treason was a cowardly betrayal of a general who left the headquarters secretly at night and came to the village of Pyatnitsa that was captured by Germans, with the words of fear and humiliation: 'Don't shoot, I am general Vlasov!' He was rescuing his life which had become death since that moment, for any betrayal is a spiritual death."* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 319-320). At the same time treason is a behaviour which is imprinted on people's minds and is not easy to forget. Someone who experienced betrayal develops a psychological problem in trusting others. Such person believes the one who betrayed him or her in the past will betray him or her again, and has difficulty in trusting him or her. In the novel we can see this in the actions against Chibisov. When Chibisov goes to bring some water and does not return for a long time Rubin says: *"Maybe the prisoner has rushed to the rear?.. Running back and having thrown the pots into ditches. Why not?"* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 343). Treason does exist in the battlefield and its existence causes difficulty for both the betrayer and the betrayed. Therefore both parties usually do not want to even consider the possibility of treason. When Osin gives Vesnin the leaflet stating that general Bessonov's son was taken prisoner by Germans, Osin does not presume that Bessonov's son is a traitor, but neither does he disregard the possibility: *"Tell me, comrade Osin, do you believe this leaflet?" asked Vesnin in a low voice. 'Do you believe that this boy... has betrayed, committed treason?..' - 'I don't think so,' answered Osin and waved his hand lightly. Then he corrected himself, 'But ...at war everything is possible. Absolutely everything, I know that as well.'* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 473). In these lines we can see how war destroys the feeling of trust in people and causes conflicts in their minds. Chibisov's example is worthy of note in this regard. He accidentally shoots a fellow countryman and wounds him without realizing it. This behaviour crushes his soul: *"I've killed him. I did kill him!" Chibisov was repeating while rubbing his chest with his gloves, his eyes blinking in shock. 'He was running, shouting, 'I'm yours. I'm Russian!' But I... How could I believe it? I was shooting him, shooting him!.. He was running, shouting, but I..."* (Bondarev,

2011, p. 528). Apparently, soldiers in the novel endure mental sufferings because of losing the feeling of trust and treating everyone with suspicion.

### 8. PSYCHOLOGY OF LOSSES

The next mental state which draws our attention in *The Hot Snow* manifests itself with the lost soldiers. Losses make people angry, increase their hate, and everything loses its meaning. For instance, in *The Hot Snow* Kuznetsov experiences this depression when losing his people: “*He still remembered their looks, voices – they sounded within him, as if their death had been cheating him and he had to hear them, to see them again... And it seemed to have had to happen because he had not had time to get close to them, to understand each one, to get to love them...*” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 501). Here such processes as loss and mourning appear to us in mutually interpenetrating form and the desire to be recapture the lost person in this process is experienced as a psychological shock. Kuznetsov provides a good example in this case. He seeks to recapture Zoya when she is wounded: “*And it seemed to him that Zoya was there, somewhere near. That she was alive and nothing had happened that night, and that she was going to come out of dusk right then. With her waist being tightly squeezed with her officer belt, in her half-length sheepskin coat... Her lips and thin eyebrows would reel in a smile and she would whisper, ‘Kuznechik, you and me dreamed that I died. Will you be sorry for me, at least a little?’*” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 590). These words also indicate Kuznetsov’s action of denying Zoya’s death. At her death Kuznetsov himself actually experienced a psychological death. Psychological death is what Norman O. Brown (1913-2002) referred to when he said: “*The fear of death is the fear to die with the lives that haven’t been lived in our bodies.*” (Göka, 2009, p. 103). During the war Kuznetsov was not able to experience anything he wanted in his relationships with Zoya and after her death he withdraws into silence. As a result of this feeling he gets angry with himself and blames himself for everything he hasn’t experienced.

### 9. SUBJECT-CENTRICITY, CAREERISM AND INFERIORITY COMPLEX

The conflicts between Drozdovski and Kuznetsov in *The Hot Snow* deserve attention due to their psychological dimension. These conflicts arise from people’s constant desire to obtain a position and to control rather than to be controlled, and from applying efforts to this end. Such a desire to control causes a clash between Kuznetsov and Drozdovski in the novel. In this respect Drozdovski’s following words to lieutenant Kuznetsov are interesting: “*Kuznetsov! Remember, it’s me who gives orders in the troop. Me!.. Only me!*” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 287). At the same time these words demonstrate Drozdovski’s desire to show his superiority. Subject-centrism lies at the root of the conflict between Kuznetsov and Drozdovski. Subject-

centrism is manifest in the novel as a mental state. Rudolf Bilz in his discussion about fear and anxiety considers an episode from *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (La vie de Gargantua et de Pantagruel, 1532) by F. Rabelais (1494-1553). He draws his readers' attention to a madman's behaviours: "*The madman's behaviours display subject-centricity. The madman in a deep sense of insecurity and anxiety takes every action of the Greek man as something done against him. Whatever the foreigner does – it all focuses on the subject.*" (von Ditforth, 1991, p. 106). Similarly the subject-centricity shows itself in the novel when everything Kuznetsov says to Drozdovski is taken by him to be said only to humiliate him. Kuznetsov cannot bear to hear his commander talk in a superior tone and he always believes he's trying to humiliate him: "*Each word uttered by Drozdovski, his implicitly embossing voice raised such a powerful and surd resistance in Kuznetsov as if whatever Drozdovski did, said or ordered to him was a stubborn and calculated attempt to remind him of his power and humiliate him.*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 287). As a result the desire to show one's superiority, to be promoted and make career which is observed in the heroes after a while becomes a psychological obsession. Sergeant major Skorik is also one of the soldier characters with such ambitions. Their dialogue with Kuznetsov is interesting for the way it reveals this state: "*Skorik: 'You are setting the soldiers non-politically, Comrade Lieutenant! That is not according to the ordinance. The soldiers against the petty officers? I will complain to battery commander Drozdovski. Kasymov has even threatened at gunpoint.'* Kuznetsov: '*Complain to anyone, even to devil! But right now rush down to gun crews! Give food to the battery quickly!*' Skorik: '*Don't boss me around too much, Comrade Lieutenant. I am not a soldier of your plat.*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 346). This behaviour of Skorik is caused by his inferiority complex. A person with the inferiority complex considers himself or herself inadequate and longs to obtain superiority, to look important, and to be held in respect.

#### 10. ATTRIBUTION THEORY

In the novel *The Hot Snow* we see changes occurring in people's souls due to external attribution. The fighting men undergo changes caused by their battle fatigue and shock of war. For instance, Drozdovski used to stand firmly on his feet at the beginning of the war, but enthusiasm cooled off as the war was drawing near to its end. In regard to his changes it is interesting to notice the "attribution theory." (Budak, 2009, p. 815). According to this theory a person demonstrates behaviour very different from oneself; when someone acts in a very different way than one usually does it shows that he or she makes an external attribution. Drozdovski undergoes a moral change in the course of war: "*The general and the commanders who were accompanying him were walking away along the steppe towards the bridge, while Drozdovski was walking at the height of the waterside – to the steps of the dugout for the wounded soldiers. He was quite unlike that slender,*

*habitually trim battery commander; it apparently cost him great efforts to run up to the general and even with erstwhile ease throw his hand to his temple, and make a report. He was walking with a jaded – sluggish, relaxed gait. His head down, bent shoulders, never looking in the direction of the gun, as if there was nobody around.*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 636). In the given example Drozdovski made a negative external attribution. And the next example shows the fighters in the beginning of the war rejoice because they were going to fight against the enemy: *"When they were being unloaded from the train 4 hours earlier... they were experiencing the flush of a wonderful joy, responding with laughter to jokes and good natured swearing too willingly."* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 263). As the war is drawing to its end the same characters undergo a change in their souls – their joy is replaced with looks full of suffering and battle fatigue. Consequently war can produce both positive and negative changes in people. In the course of war people – affected by battle fatigue in addition to all their experiences – make positive or negative attributions and perhaps become completely different persons.

## 11. DAYDREAMS

Another psychological state occurring in the novel *The Hot Snow* is the soldiers' daydreams. *"According to Freud, dreams consist of desires which could not be satisfied in the daily life and were transfigured into a form acceptable for the conscience... It has been established for certain that dreams reflect the experienced reality... The sensations that one didn't attach importance to in the everyday life and that one thought to have half perceived are completed by one's dreams."* (Hançerlioğlu, 1988, p. 132). Kuznetsov is significant in this respect. The author shows how Kuznetsov was in a bad shape in the time when battle fatigue increased and how he looked around as if he were in a dream. His daydreams occur especially after Zoya's death: *"'Kuznechik, honey!.. Do you know where we are going? Are you forcing the soul?.. No, where are we going? Where have we been going that long? Where to?'* And Kuznetsov woke up, opened his eyes. All around is silence, snow and the crunch of steps in the ears..." (Bondarev, 2011, p. 568). As the quotation makes it clear, Kuznetsov is shocked at Zoya's death. In his heart he wishes Zoya had not died and it all had been just a dream. *"According to Freud's theory all the behaviours, gestures, and dreams are based on certain reasons. They are connected to the person's inner world and life. No matter how hard one tries to hide the things which take place inside of him or her – he or she cannot hide them. Because the person's outside bears the traces of his or her inside."* (Akot, 2010, p. 229). Kuznetsov's dream reveals to the readers his inner world, his longing for the past life and for Zoya. Thus dreams are in a sense conditions developing outside of people's consciousness, fulfilling their wishes to revert to their past life, to the things and people they are missing. Vesnin's experience may serve as another example of daydreams. The dream Vesnin had when he was

wounded gives the readers some hints regarding his past life: “Purple waves were moving before his eyes, rolling upon something immensely great, shimmering black, similar to either a hot burned down desert or the southern, low night sky. And painfully trying to understand what it was, he saw with piercing clarity himself and his daughter Nina in the black darkness of a southern night on the seashore around Sochi where he had brought her after having divorced his wife... And feeling of his daughter’s shaky, clinging hands, her small weak body pushing at his legs, he wanted to tell her that nothing had happened and that everything was going to be well, but could neither say nor do anything – the firmness of the ground was going out from under his feet.” (Bondarev, 2011, p.490). In view of the fact that dreams give some hints about peoples’ lives, the dream Vesnin had when he was dying reveals he was missing his past life and his daughter, and suffering from being unable to see her for the last time. Another characteristic of daydreams to be mentioned is the fact that dreams are based on the reality. Freud said regarding this: “The actual purpose of dreams is to move us away from things which belong to everyday life such as the joys and sorrows of this world. And whatever the dreams present to the person they take the material from the reality and the intellectual life revolving around that reality. That is, dreams take their material from reality.” (Imamoğlu, 2010, p. 23-24).

## 12. RATIONALIZATION

The next mental state observed in *The Hot Snow* is the defence mechanism of *rationalization*. *Rationalization* in psychology refers to “finding logical and rational reasons and excuses for the behaviours caused by the subconsciousness. This way an individual finds excuses for his or her behaviour and makes an effort to present it as less wrong or even right.” (Cüceloğlu, 2004, p. 301). In this respect lieutenant Azhermachev is a significant person. He tries to provide a logical reason to explain Bessonov his flight from the front with his soldiers: “There is no defence there... The Germans have captured the village. They came round from the rear. Just three trucks have been left of my squadron. Two of them have got shell-holes... Crews are incomplete... I have managed to escape along with the rest of the squadron...” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 295). And again, when Kuznetsov comes down on Drozdovski because of Sergunenکو’s death, Drozdovski is well aware of his guilt, but he makes excuses and tries to deny it: “‘Did I want his death?’ Drozdovski’s voice rose to a shriek, and tears sounded in it. ‘Why did he stand up? Did you see how he stood up?’” (Bondarev, 2011, p. 426).

## 13. REACTION/OPPOSITE BEHAVIOUR

Besides rationalization in *The Hot Snow* there appears the psychological defence mechanism of *reaction*. Reaction is the expression of

behaviour totally opposite to the person's actual feelings. In the novel reaction is mainly seen in relation to the psychology of jealousy; it is basically a kind of reaction that consists of the desire to keep what we own in jealousy. Kuznetsov is disturbed by seeing Zoya and Drozdovski together. His jealousy increases when he sees them side by side. He can relieve the feelings of jealousy inside him only by tormenting the young woman. By that reason he lies to her about his sister: "*I don't have a sister! And don't talk nonsense! I've never had one!..*" And for some reason avenging her with the lie and hating himself for it, he almost pushed her away having moved along the path." (Bondarev, 2011, p. 526). Similarly, Drozdovski is jealous of Kuznetsov because of Zoya and that's why he wants to torment her: "*Get awa-a-y! Why are you barging in? I hate the front-line soldiers barging in. You better calm Kuznetsov! He is too kind, and you are too kind, as well!.. Both of you are like Jesus Christ! But all your boys – especially Kuznetsov! – should know that you aren't going to sleep with any of them. Don't hope, sister of mercy! After the battle you will leave the battery for medsanbat. You will stay in the battery not even for a single day. You will leave immediately!*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 565). These expressions make it clear that Drozdovski reacts to Zoya because of jealousy. Reaction as a psychological defence mechanism at the same time can be viewed as "*regarding others indeed responsible for events, explaining one's own unacceptable desires, aggressive attitudes and emotions such as selfishness as if they were the characteristics of the other party.*" (Corey, 2008, p. 72). For instance, when Zoya dies Drozdovski believes the German prisoner to be responsible for her death: "*All because of that toad! All because of him!.. Because of that filth, she died!.. Oh, bastard!*" His shoulder was twitching. His back was swinging" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 580-581). Here we also need to look into the feelings existing between Kuznetsov, Drozdovski and Zoya. Drozdovski's behaviour is not a reaction produced by love. Drozdovski's emotions are dependency rather than love. "*Dependency may appear to be love because it is a force that causes people to fiercely attach themselves to one another. But in actuality it is not love; it is a form of antilove... It seeks to receive rather than to give. It nourishes infantilism rather than growth. It works to trap and constrict rather than to liberate... Dependent people are interested in their own nourishment, but no more... Neither do dependent people care about the spiritual growth of the other, the object of their dependency; they care only that the other is there to satisfy them.*" (Peck, 1992, p. 107-108). Drozdovski wants sexual satisfaction from Zoya – he neither values her emotions, nor respects her as a person. He tried to put restrictions for her relationship with Kuznetsov and his platoon. "*She's a fool, a fool! Idiocy!.. What on earth have I found in her? If she were at least pretty – but she isn't even that. Why do we have such an idiotic relationship? It should be broken off once and for all!*" (Bondarev, 2011, p. 370-371). Such behaviour void of respect shows that his emotions are mere

dependency. His jealousy for Zoya against Kuznetsov and his platoon is not a sign of love. It is widely believed that the more someone is jealous the less he or she actually loves. The more someone is jealous the more he or she lives for possession. Because *“jealousy arises with the effort to make the person who is ‘the object of love’ a part of the sphere of the things belonging only to oneself.”* (Lauster, 2000, p. 123). However love has a definition totally different from such emotions. Erich Fromm gives the following definition of love: *“Love is the productive form of relatedness to others and to oneself. It implies responsibility, care, respect and knowledge, and the wish for the other person to grow and develop. It is the expression of intimacy between two human beings under the condition of the preservation of each other’s integrity.”* (Fromm, 2010, p. 126). If we view love from that standpoint Kuznetsov and Zoya’s attitude to one another proves to be love. We see them often show one another attention, respect and care in the novel. For instance, Kuznetsov warns her to be careful: *“Zoya, you have to leave. While it is quiet. You have to leave. You will go together with Ukhanov! Do you hear?”* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 566). And Zoya feels concern about him in the same way: *“For God’s sake, do not get caught by the Germans... Stay alive. Catch us up, Kuznechik!”* (Bondarev, 2011, p. 566). All these examples emphasize that love cannot be separated from responsibility, respect and attention.

#### 14. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have examined Yu. Bondarev’s works from a psychological perspective in this paper, and we have observed the way the author gives proper attention to the moral motif of the behaviours which accompany human life at war, on the border of life and death. By approaching the novel from psychological perspective we observed in its characters such psychological states as fear of death, denial of death and refusal to kill, desire to consciously expose oneself to danger and to constantly experience the danger of death at war, outbursts of anger at war, feeling hate towards the enemy, psychology of prisoners, psychology of traitors, psychology of losses, subject-centricity, careerism and inferiority complex, attribution theory, daydreams, rationalization, reaction and opposite behaviour. Even more than the scenes of battles and war we witnessed moral change of the soldiers who experienced all the mentioned psychological state at war. As we witnessed that, we understood that when facing death, standing on the border of life and death, a human person can make good or bad attributions and experience transformations. Similarly we considered personal characteristics of the soldiers in the novel from this perspective and disclosed the soldiers’ opposition to war and their personal changes in the course of war. We examined the ways physical, social and mental deterioration occurs in people at war and we made the psychological analysis. The results confirm the possibility of analyzing works of literature

with the scientific methods of psychology, and the existence of a psychological basis for human behaviour. Thus it becomes clear that especially the narrator's and characters' psychological states in a work of literature should not be neglected. It has also been observed that the characters of literary texts may be treated as phenomena for the science of psychology. Besides everything else, this paper is also important because it emphasizes once again the meaninglessness and destructiveness of war.

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