

**REFUGEES-IMMIGRANTS-INTEGRANTS:
NARRATIVES ABOUT FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN BALTIC REGION
AT THE END OF WW2**

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ABSTRACT

The process of displacement and the large numbers of Baltic refugees due to the return of Soviet occupation at the end of World War II is an important theme in literature. In the literatures of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia after war a new and long-lasting phenomenon appeared – literature of exile. This paper will turn to three texts that are from different decades and are written in different styles about displacement. The research focus will be on the novel “After Doomsday” (1968, English translation 2017) [3] by Latvian author Gunars Janovskis (1916–2000) who started his career as a writer in the still independent Latvia. Due to this fact the refugee topic in his novel is based on personal experience and memories and from the perspective of a grown-up. Also the novel “A Woman in Amber” (1995) [4] by the American writer of Latvian origin Agate Nesaule (1938–2022) is autobiographical. She experienced displacement as a child and in her novel she restores the trauma of displacement on a child’s psyche. She has fully integrated in the American society and as her literary language she chose English, thus producing a kind of a hybrid text. A thoroughly different approach to the refugee theme is created in the novel “Salt to the Sea” (2016) [7] by the American author of Lithuanian origin Ruta Sepetys (1967). She is a descendant of Lithuanian refugees, who became immigrants in USA, and in her historical fiction she has no reference to personal experience of displacement.

In this paper these three novels will be compared from the perspectives of gender, different generations and textual strategies in the depiction of refugees, displacement and immigration, and a paradigmatic sketch will be provided of the depiction of refugee phenomenon in literature.

Keywords: Soviet Occupation of Baltics, refugee and immigrants novels, Sepetys, Janovskis, Nesaule.

INTRODUCTION

The aftermath of World War 2 that brought a relative relief to Europe and most parts of the world due to the surrender of Nazi Germany was much more complicated and contradictory in the Baltic States and East Prussia. On the one hand, The Germans from East Prussia fled from the Soviet army due to their ethnicity, on the other hand, people