

**„COMPROMISE” AS A CODE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE  
TEXTS OF THE COLLECTION OF SHORT  
STORIES „COMPROMISE” BY DOVLATOV.  
INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE TO THE COLLECTION**

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**Abstract:** *The study of the text „Compromise” by S. Dovlatov is important and relevant, because this work has not been studied before. At the same time, today there is an interest in S. Dovlatov's writing, including the Estonian period. It was in Tallinn that the first Dovlatov's festival was held; the first commemorative plaque on the house where Dovlatov lived was opened. Based on the collection, the documentary and feature films were shot. In this study, a proslusion to „Compromise” is analyzed, in which Dovlatov, on our hypothesis, determines the underlying principle for reading the short stories of the „Compromise” collection.*

**Keywords:** concept, character, context, impotence.

In I. Sukhikh's opinion, all the stories by S.D. Dovlatov can be united in the "Pentateuch" ("Zone" – "Reservation" – "Our" – "Suitcase" – "Branch"). Why this "Pentateuch" did not include "Compromise" (about the life of S.D. Dovlatov in Estonia) is still unknown. If you turn to thesis research or philological texts, it becomes obvious that the collection of short stories "Compromise" by S. Dovlatov is undoubtedly under-explored. So, there are articles of two different authors: Semenenko and Sagit Faizov in which the "Compromise of the Eighth" and the image of Bykover in the collection "Compromise" are analyzed. In recent years, the theme of Sergey Dovlatov's work has become popular in Russia. A lot of feature and documentary films are being shot about Dovlatov's life and his works, thesis research and monographs are being written, and festivals of his name are being organized.

In 2015, Satnislav Govorukhin shot the film "The End of the Belle Époque" based on the Dovlatov's "Compromise"; in 2018 Alexei German (Junior) shot the film "Dovlatov". In 2-4 September, 2016 in St. Petersburg on the occasion of Sergei Dovlatov the festival "Day D" was held<sup>1</sup>. In 2014 in the Pskov region the first Dovlatov's museum was opened in Russia in the house where he rented a room when he was working as a guide in the Pushkin Mountains<sup>2</sup>. Since 2015 the "Reservation" festival takes place in the Pushkin Mountains. In the

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<sup>1</sup> "Official site of the festival "Dovlatov D"". Available at: <http://www.dovlatovday.ru/>.

<sup>2</sup> "Fifth channel". Available at: <http://www.5-tv.ru/news/86392/>.

electronic database of this Russian State Library, 24 theses on the work of Sergei Dovlatov are presented. It is worth mentioning that there is no complete analysis of S. Drovlatov's work "Compromise" in thesis works<sup>3</sup>. We find only the references to this work. There are scientific articles, the authors of which refer to the "Compromise" by S. Dovlatov<sup>4</sup> (Lekmanov, 2013). In the English-language literature studies of the Estonian period of Dovlatov's work is also not enough. Thus, in the catalog of the library of the University of Tartu, we find only 37 sources relating to the Sergei Dovlatov's work, only two sources concerning the Estonian period of Dovlatov's work. There is no comprehensive study of this collection.

Collection "Compromise" consists of the proslusion and twelve novels, which are arranged according to the same scheme: a newspaper article and a literary text on a general theme. The texts of newspaper articles show the understanding of importance situation from the state's point of view. In literary texts, the same situation is analyzed from the in Soviet society point of view in the mid 1970s.

### Features of the creative way S. Dovlatov

The author of this article is a PhD student at the Department of Russian Literature at the University of Tartu. Theme of the thesis research is "Value-based relativism in Sergei Dovlatov's works of the Estonian period (1972-1975). The following articles are published: "Creating a managed image: Sergei Dovlatov's way from the writer to the brand", "Managed image – from the literary text to the brand (on the example of the story "Compromise" by S.D. Dovlatov)", Cultural approach to the comprehension of the value component in the S. Dovlatov's work "Compromise", Uncompromising "Compromise" S. Dovlatov<sup>5</sup>. The last

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<sup>3</sup> *Digital library: RSL theses library.* Available at: [http://sigla.rsl.ru/table.jsp?f=1016&t=3&v0=%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B2&f=1003&t=1&v1=&f=4&t=2&v2=&f=21&t=3&v3=&f=1016&t=3&v4=&f=1016&t=3&v5=&t=Cyr-Common&cc=c3&s=2&ce=.](http://sigla.rsl.ru/table.jsp?f=1016&t=3&v0=%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B2&f=1003&t=1&v1=&f=4&t=2&v2=&f=21&t=3&v3=&f=1016&t=3&v4=&f=1016&t=3&v5=&t=Cyr-Common&cc=c3&s=2&ce=)

<sup>4</sup> F. Lekmanov, "Sergei Dovlatov: Soviet journalist non-Soviet writer (based on the articles of S. Dovlatov in the newspaper "Soviet Estonia" 1972-1975)", in *The ninth international summer school on Russian literature. Lenin of the Radish Region*, Svoje Izdatelstvo, Tsvetoldubovo, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> *International conference of young philologists.* Available at: [http://www.ruthenia.ru/mol\\_fil\\_2018\\_programma.pdf](http://www.ruthenia.ru/mol_fil_2018_programma.pdf); "Uncompromising "Compromise" S. Dovlatov", in *Russian Philology*, 2018. Available at: <http://dspace.ut.ee/handle/10062/59783>; S.A. Zaitseva, *Creating a Managed Image: Sergei Dolvatov from the writer to the brand*, Sputnik+, Moscow, 2016; S.A. Zaitseva, "Culturological

article was published in the collection of the Department of Slavonic Philology of the University of Tartu.

In April 2018, the author of this article spoke at the International Conference of Young Philologists of the Department of Slavonic Philology of the University of Tartu at the Literary Section with the theme "Twelve Chairs" and Twelve "Compromises" by S. Dovlatov".

The object of research of this work is the text of the prologue to the collection "Compromise" by Sergei Dovlatov. Our supposal is that it was in the prologue that S. Dovlatov conceptualized his approach to understanding the meaning of the "compromise". The comparative analysis and analysis of texts are the research methods. Also, structural analysis will be used to determine the internal links of the texts of the collection "Compromise". The result of the study is the naming of the main code that discusses the connection between the meaning of the texts of the collection "Compromise" by S. Dovlatov. The novelty and significance of the research is that in Russian and Foreign studies there is no comprehensive study of both the Estonian period of Sergei Dovlatov's work and the collection of short stories "Compromise".

The first edition of the collection "Compromise" was published in New York in 1981. The collection consisted of eleven short stories. In the second collection, another "Compromise" was added, which became the tenth. It was the previously published story "Superfluous". Before the prologue of the collection of short stories, we read the epigraph: "To N.S. Dovlatova for all sufferings". According to I. Sukhikh's opinion this is the dedication to Sergei Dovlatov's mother<sup>6</sup>. S. Dovlatov in the seven chapter of story "Our" deleted the last paragraph in the final version: "Someday in the biggest publishing house of America I will publish the thickest book. And in the very first place of it I will bring out in huge letters: "To N.S. Dovlatova for all sufferings". Actually, Dovlatov realized his idea, publishing a collection of short stories "Compromise" in the "big publishing house of America".

The compromise is the author's surname. The author uses neither his mother's surname Dovlatyan, nor his father's surname Mechik. A compromise is the interpretation of twelve plots of stories simultaneously in the texts of journal articles and artistic texts. Compromise is autobiography and fiction. According to Young E.: "In practically all

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*approach to the comprehension of the value component in the Literary Work of S. Dovlatov "Compromise"*, in *SOCIETY: Philosophy, History, Culture*. Publishing House "HORS", Moscow, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> I. Sukhikh, *Sergey Dovlatov: time, place, fate*, Cult-Inform-Press, Saint Petersburg, 1996.

stories Dvlatov is the storyteller, choosing this role for himself quite consciously<sup>7</sup>.

The collection of short stories by S. Dvlatov is called "Compromise", and the novels are called "Compromise" as well. It can be concluded that "compromise" is a code for understanding texts. "Code" and "cultural code" are the basic concepts of Y.U. Lotman's teaching. Let's turn to the traditional communication model, improved R.O. Jacobson "the transmitting language is the receiving language". The purpose of communication is adequacy, which involves the use of the same code, the memory object of the transmitting and receiving. The code is not the history. "Language" unconsciously evokes an idea of history. "Language" is the code and the history. Lotman argues that communication is possible only when "... the codes of the participants are not equivalent". Communication is the translation of the text from the language of my "me" into the language of your "you"<sup>8</sup>.

"The very possibility of such translation is due to the fact that the codes of both communication participants, although not identical, but form intersecting sets". In the understanding of Y.M. Lotman's "cultural code" is an explosion, which is the relations of the minimum of two signs of culture. Signs interact with each other: they can collide in semiotic space as completely identical or absolutely different. Thus, the "code" implies an artificial structure created "on the basis of an arrangement" or an agreement the Latin "Compromissum".

### **Analysis of the introductory part of the „Compromise”**

The proslusion is not indicated in any way. There is no usual "introduction". In "The Compromise number night", we find the phrase: "I brought "Technology for her". The book is wonderful. Then you open the first page, you can read the "Introduction". It's already funny"<sup>9</sup>. In "Compromise" it was a book about "technology" of sex. It is worth to mention that wasn't an "introduction" in other six books by Sergei Dvlatov. Genis talked about Sergei Dvlatov: "He writes short, he writes

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<sup>7</sup> E. Young, *Sergei Dvlatov and his narrative masks*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Yu.M. Lotman, *Culture as a collective intellect and problems of artificial intelligence*, USSR AS, Moscow, 1977.

<sup>9</sup> S. Dvlatov, *Collection of prose in 3 volumes*. Limbus-press, Saint Petersburg, 1993.

sad, he writes funny"<sup>10</sup>. The first phrase of the prologue begins with ellipsis "...And I lost my job"<sup>11</sup>. The ellipsis is one of the most common punctuation marks in the Sergei Dovlatov's texts. The ellipsis is a special stylistic figure that "means" silence. S. Dovlatov emphasizes the use ellipsis in the "Compromise number Eight". Evie, one of the characters, notes: "I read a lot of your articles. It's a lot of fun. And often there are many dots... So many points...". (Dovlatov Compromise number eight). It is significant that there are thirteen ellipses on the incomplete page of the text of prologue. Another characteristic feature of the poetics of S. Dovlatov's writing is the laconism of sentences, which the reader encounters already in the first sentence of prologue of the collection.

The "and" at the beginning of the text implies that something has happened, but we do not know the beginning of the "history". Before the plot began, there was another story. Then the reader will learn about what has happened before the Tallinn stories from the "Compromise number ten". We can guess that the main character got the bounce not for the first time. We find the proof of that in the "Compromise Ten": "I was fired from my job in early October. There was no any reason. I was, as they say, fired "by the cumulation". Apparently, I stepped beyond of the limits"<sup>12</sup>. The information about the lost work can be understood as a plot. The job loss is an extraordinary and rather rare event in the Soviet period. On May 4, 1961, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the basis of section 12 of the Constitution adopted a decree "On Strengthening the control for people avoiding community work and leading the antisocial parasitic lifestyle". People who did not work for four months of the year were became criminals. Article 209 of the Criminal Code of the Russian SFSR ("social parasitism") could be applied to so-called undesirable elements, including writers.

In the early sixties of the XX century the first victims of the law on parasitism were the poet Joseph Brodsky and the historian and publicist Andrei Amalrik, who served their exile in Siberia on the verdict of the court. Sergei Dovlatov met Joseph Brodsky in 1959, and he was always authority for Dovlatov. It was Brodsky who helped Dovlatov with the publication of his story in the New Yorker. I think maybe to study for a

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<sup>10</sup> D. Genis, "Dovlatov's Way". *Paris review*. *Stivers V. Translating Pushkin bills: An interview with Katherine Dovlatov*, 2016. Available at: <https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/tag/sergei-dovlatov/>.

<sup>11</sup> S. Dovlatov, *Collection of prose in 3 volumes*. Limbus-press, Saint Petersburg, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, 1993.

tailor? I noticed that tailors always have a good mood..."<sup>13</sup>. Contradiction of writing to the tailoring is a quite often encountered idea in the literature. "The Tailor" is probably used by the writer as a metaphor referring to the Futurist Manifesto "A slap in the face of public taste: "To all these Maxims Gorky, Kuprin, Blok, Sologub, Remizov, Averchenko, Black, Kuzmin, Bunin, and so on. And so on – only need a cottage on the river. Such an award gives the fate of tailors" (Slap in public taste). Brodsky claimed: "Only the tailor can have a taste". In the collection about the tailor the story "Compromise number Seven" This is about the life of a tailor working in the theater, during the Second World War serving on the side of Hitler's German. And the life course of the tailor himself, the attitude of others around him, can be interpreted as an indirect confirmation of the Kecskemeti hypothesis: "Insurgent compaigns have shifted from military compaigns supported by information operations to strategic communication compaigns supported by guerilla and terrorist operations"<sup>14</sup>.

### **Analysis of dialogues in the collection of short stories „Compromise”**

Further in the text the character Loginov appears. In the very proclusion there is a small text presents several characters: a protagonist (anonymous), Loginov, Loginov's wife, Kashirin. Both Loginov, Kashirin, and the protagonist-narrator have real prototypes. Loginov is really TV person", Kashirin is the magazine's editor "On Guard of the Motherland". The prototype of the protagonist-narrator is the author himself. From the proclusion we also understand that the characters Loginov and Kashirin, the protagonist – narrator know each other:

- "- Hi. Well, how are you?  
- Well, I'm looking for a job.  
- There is a vacancy in the newspaper "On Guard of the Motherland". Write the name Kashirin.  
"Is that bald?"  
- Kashirin is an experienced journalist. He is rather gentle person.  
"Shit is also gentle", I said.  
"Do you know him?"

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>14</sup> P. Kecskemeti, "The soviet approach to international political communication", in *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1956, vol. 20, no. 1, p. 23-25.

- No.
- But you say... Write down the name.
- I wrote down<sup>15</sup>.

It is clear from the text that Kashirin isn't respected by the protagonist-narrator. Loginov tries to "improve" the image of Kashirin in the eyes of the protagonist-narrator with good sides. Loginov and protagonist-narrator speak about the same thing but in different words. Loginov tries to paraphrase protagonist's words in favor of Kashirin. "Experienced" in combination with "gentle" we can understand as a hint that it is a person ready for compromises. The protagonist expressed his attitude to the characteristic "gentle" using a rough comparison of Kashirin's quality.

Further in the prologue we read:

"- You would dress properly. My wife says if you dressed properly...

By the way, his wife is calling once... Stop! Open a wide exciting topic! Open a wide and exciting topic. Take us far to the side..."<sup>16</sup>.

Again, an ellipsis is an understatement. With the fact that the protagonist-narrator is not dressed properly, we read again in the "Compromise number eleven": "Comrade Dovlatov, do you have a black suit?" "No, I have a jumper" – I said. "Not right now, but at home". – <...> I don't have a suit at all, – I say. I could explain that there was no home, no shelter. That I rent a room God knows where..."<sup>17</sup>.

There are seven sentences, three of which end with ellipsis, two of which are incomplete. And the "exciting theme" clearly points out to emotions, and the new character entry assumes the appearance of a new storyline. We learn that Loginov and the narrator know each other closer, and Loginov's wife knows protagonist. However, the author refuses to develop the plot. This is the author's method do not develop "minor" story lines to keep the brevity of the presentation.

Then, the concept of the "tall hat" appears.

"I'll earn and I'll get dressed. I'll buy a top hat..."<sup>18</sup>.

The top hat as a method was introduced by Mayakovsky in the autumn of 1913. Leivshits recalls: "Accompanied by a crowd of curious, amazed at an orange cardigan and a combination of a top hat with a bare neck, we began to walk. Mayakovsky took to it like a duck to water. I admired the calmness with which he met the eyes fixed on him. Not a hint

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<sup>15</sup> S. Dovlatov, *Collection of prose in 3 volumes*. Limbus-press, Saint Petersburg, 1993.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

of smile. On the contrary, he had shown the bleak seriousness of a man who was being bothered with lawless attention. <...> In 1925, during one of the disputes to Mayakovsky turned from the gallery: " – Where is the yellow jacket and a top hat?" "I sold it ten years ago to another," Mayakovsky replied immediately. "whom?" – "To Mariengof"<sup>19</sup>.

With the concept of the top hat we meet in the story "Reservation": " Everything lives and breathes with Pushkin here," said Galya, "literally every twig, every grass blade. So, you expect that he will come out of the turn now... A top hat, man's loose cloak, familiar profile... Meanwhile from behind the turn left Lenya Guryanov, a former university fink"<sup>20</sup>.

Further the author writes:

"<...> I got my cuttings. I selected the worthiest ones... "The profession is clear a journalist, and a newspaper one. He takes work seriously, he keeps the cuttings. Maybe he forms something like a portfolio.

"I did not like Kashirin. He had the pale face and military humor. He looked at me and said:

- Are you, non-member, of course?

I nodded with guilty. With some idiotic simplicity, he added:

– Twenty people claimed the position. They talk to me, and disappear. Leave me a phone number.

I gave the dry-cleaning phone number that I recalled by chance..."<sup>21</sup>.

In the newspaper "On the Guard of the Motherland", which actually exists to this day, during the Soviet period, the management team was usually formed from retirees. So, the "real" Kashirin is a retiree. Nowadays still there is the same situation of appointing retirees to similar publications in Russia. "Pale face" and "Military humor" perhaps this is the metonymy of the individual, perhaps of the estate. With the characters of the officers we come across in the "Compromise number six". "Even the military has a decent face..."<sup>22</sup> and "Compromise number eight": "One Major said to another:

"A scale of values is needed, Vitya, true scale of values. Plus the starting point. And without a scale of values and a starting point, just think...

The another still objected:

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<sup>19</sup> V. Mayakovsky, Complete works of Vol. 12, Nauka, Moscow, 2014.

<sup>20</sup> *Reservation*. Available at: <http://www.lib.ru/DOWLATOW/zapowednik.txt>.

<sup>21</sup> S. Dovlatov, *Collection of prose in 3 volumes*. Limbus-press, Saint Petersburg, 1993.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*.

"This is a fact, Kolya!" But the fact is a fact, as it is not up-and-turned. Fact is the reality, Kolya! This is the real fact..."<sup>23</sup>.

Kashirin just saw pale face of the protagonist.

During the Soviet period the absence of a party membership card was considered ambiguous. The non-member, in certain circumstances, should demonstrate his own non-membership as guilt. The Kashirin's simplicity is estimated as idiotic. The word "idiot" is not definitely negative. The order of words is the first is idiotic then simplicity can be explained by the fact that the negative is mitigated by a more positively colored word.

The situation is fantastic because twenty people gave up this job. And the protagonist-narrator doesn't see any prospects for himself here as well. We see a peculiar demonstration of intelligence. The intellectual sometimes performs such actions like instead of his phone number gives the dry cleaning's number to avoid unpleasant explanations or not to refuse. At the same time "dry cleaning" can be a "laundry" or the "Ministry of Culture". "At home I unfolded my newspaper cuttings and reread some. I posed to think... Yellowed sheets. Ten years of lies and pretense. But any way some people are behind this, some conversations, feelings, reality... Not in the sheets themselves, but there, on the horizon..."<sup>24</sup>. The protagonist-narrator looks through his newspaper cuttings for the second time. Perhaps, while rereading "something" he thinks that it's necessary to change the profession and to become, for example, a writer. We will learn about this from the "Compromise number three":

"- What is your name?

- Alla Meleshko. Is it true that all journalists dream of writing a novel?

- No, – I lied"<sup>25</sup>.

From the "Compromise number ten" we know: "I was a suitable person for repression. And they fired me. At the same time, an almost ready collection of my stories was destroyed in the printing-office"<sup>26</sup>. The protagonist-narrator estimates strongly his activities. He is a neat man, takes work seriously as he collects his texts for ten years and emphasizes his experience by the color of the sheets. The phrase "yellowed sheets" can be considered as a metaphor, since yellow is a symbolic color in the

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*.

context of a conversation about journalism. "Yellow Press" is cheap, lying and corrupt.

Describing ten years of work the protagonist-narrator uses such words as lies and pretense, which can be interpreted as synonyms. Lie is conscious distortion of any information. Lie is an instrument for constructing a situation, an opinion or an idea. Pretense is also a distortion, but with the objectification of distortions "through" oneself. Pretense occurs here and now, corresponds to the situation "here and now", unlike the lies. We find an assessment of the evolution of lie and its typology in "Compromise number three". "How nobly lie has been evolved for the last two hundred years! Previously, they lied about a groom, a millionaire and a horse breeder. Now they lie about the director from Yugoslavia. Once a man was proud of his trotters, and now... velvet slippers from Poland. Khlestakov was in with Pushkin and my friend Genych returned from Moscow, depressed and quiet because he saw Olzhas Suleimenov in TsUM. Even intelligent people lie that they have a decent salary. I always add twenty rubles, although I earn enough... Okay... She began to lie. I keep silence in such situations and let it do. Disinterested lie is not lie, it is poetry"<sup>27</sup>.

Newspaper texts are the parallel reality, which shows the "different" life. We know about this from the "Compromise number eleven". "There is beautiful, painful life full of tragedy and there is a well-paid job. This job helps to create a different, more distinct, out of tragedy, harmonious life. On paper". The phrase "Not in the sheets, but there, on the horizon..."<sup>28</sup> can be understood as a horizon, "edge" for the reader. It's not about the information itself, but about the process before gathering the information.

"The road from truth to real truth is hard. You cannot enter the same river twice. But through the thickness of water you can distinguish the bottom dotted with cans. And behind the magnificent theatrical scenery you can see a brick wall, ropes, a fire extinguisher and drunken workers. This is known to everyone who has ever been behind the scenes... Let's start with a penny newspaper information".

The author again uses words truth and real truth that can be interpreted as synonyms. Real truth is objective. It does not depend on circumstances, people, time, etc. It does not refer to emotion. But the truth is different. The truth depends on the situation, time, and person. So, the truth is subjective. The author turns the words "truth" and "real truth" into antonyms, pointing to the difference. In addition, the word "truth" in

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

the Soviet context has a very definite connotation of newspaper's name "Pravda". The author determines the differences between truth and truth this way: "The road from truth to real truth is difficult. The alternative of truth is a lie. The alternative of real truth is another real truth. It is deeper and more viable"<sup>29</sup>. By Roger Cohen: "Sergei Dovlatov, a leading Soviet years of lies and dissembling"<sup>30</sup>. Dovlatov changed paraphrase of the Heraclitus's aphorism "You cannot enter the same river twice" and corrected it for the different situation. Heraclitus talked about life as a whole (the river), but Dovlatov talked about journalist life (trivial). The author is interested in life, the atmosphere, in which you can "read" through the comprehension of the past. The main thing in this process is attention to everyday life, which determines the atmosphere, but it is difficult to "read". For the author, everyday life is comparable to air, which we notice only when it is not enough. The author's purpose is to convey the idea of the importance of this everyday life with its compromise.

It can be assumed that Dovlatov is the successor of the line developed by A.M. Gorky in the play "At the Bottom". Let us again refer to the "tailor" metaphor mentioned in the text of the introductory article, which, as we have suggested, can refer to the Futurist Manifesto "Slap in the face of public taste". It also stated that the dreams of giving – the lot of "all Gorky Maximov"<sup>31</sup>. The play is a social and philosophical work, which, in the opinion of many thoughtful critics, is most significant Gorky's work. "No matter how to treat to Gorky's work the drama "At the bottom" will overcome both the abuse of his enemies, and the hysterical delights of servile friends," wrote D.V. Philosophov. Gorky claimed: "The main question I wanted to put is what is better – the truth or compassion?"<sup>32</sup>. "Its main theme is truth and lie," Khodasevich wrote many years later<sup>33</sup>. Gorky brought to the stage characters that refer to the "bottom", Dovlatov wrote about the situations realized "at the bottom". We find continuity between S. Dovlatov and A. Chekhov line. Chekhov explain the situation in which it is possible to "swim" to the truth: "Nobody knows the real truth," thought Laevsky... In seeking the truth

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<sup>29</sup> S. Dovlatov, *"From childhood we were told"*, 1980. Available at: [http://www.sergeidovlatov.com/books/s\\_detstva\\_nam\\_tverdili.html](http://www.sergeidovlatov.com/books/s_detstva_nam_tverdili.html).

<sup>30</sup> R. Cohen, *Sergei Dovlatov, soviet emigre who wrote about his homeland*, Times, New York, 1990.

<sup>31</sup> Slap the public taste, 1912. Available at: <http://www.futurism.ru/a-z/manifest/slap.htm>.

<sup>32</sup> D. Philosophov, *Gorky about religion*, 1907. Available at: [http://dugward.ru/library/filosofov/filosofov\\_gorkiy\\_o\\_religii.html](http://dugward.ru/library/filosofov/filosofov_gorkiy_o_religii.html).

<sup>33</sup> V. Khodasevich, *Gorky*, Pravda, Moscow, 1925.

people take two steps forward and a step backward. The suffering, mistakes and boredom of life throw them back, but the longing for truth and the stubborn will drive ahead and forward. And who knows? Perhaps they will reach the real truth..."<sup>34</sup>.

With the river and the cans on its bottom we will meet in the "Compromise number eight". "Zhbankov suddenly stood up, opened the door and awkwardly and quickly rushed downstairs to the water. He froze for a second, waved his hands, made an animal, indecent shriek and fell down... He created the fountain of moiré splashes. Some cans, driftwood and rubbish have emerged from the bottom of the disturbed river"<sup>35</sup>. The theater metaphor is important. The phrase "The life is the theater and we are actors in it" belongs to Gaius Petronius. Marcus Aurelius (Stoic) described the person's life as the acting of his role. "Act well what was entrusted to you." Shakespeare borrowed the phrase by posting it on the facade of the Globe Theater. Andrei Aryev talked about Sergei Dovlatov: "Being a descendant of the actor's name he observed the theater from behind the scenes from childhood. He had loved the wrong side of the theater but he had hated the sham life. As an unsuccessful suicide or as an artist he disgusted with falsity forever"<sup>36</sup>.

Thoughts about compromise between truth and real truth are important. Understanding of words "truth" and "real truth" has always been interested not only for writers but also for philosophers and culture experts<sup>37</sup>. In certain situations, nonobjective truth was opposed to relative and subjective truth but contrary the real truth became relational and conditional and the truth became unconditional and absolute. We can make the following conclusions: a compromise is a collective, group or personal agreement. It can be concluded between colleagues, friends or relatives. The most significant compromise for S. Dovlatov is a compromise between personal and state. He defined the boundaries of the compromise in the article "I think, Reagan...". "Ethics and morality begin with the willingness to sacrifice personal interests for the sake of a worthy

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<sup>34</sup> A.P. Chekhov, "The duel", 1968. Available at: <http://lib.ru/LITRA/CHEHOW/duel.txt>.

<sup>35</sup> S. Dovlatov, *Collection of prose in 3 volumes*. Limbus-press, Saint Petersburg, 1993.

<sup>36</sup> A. Aryev, "The Story of the narrator", 1996. Available at: <http://www.sergeidovlatov.com/books/ariiev3.html>.

<sup>37</sup> R. L. Ivie, *Cold war motives and the rhetorical metaphor: a framework of criticism*. Michigan State University Press, East Lansing, 1997.

goal. And state principles require certain and unchanging criteria. Not every matter can be the subject of a compromise<sup>38</sup>.

### Conclusion

Another interpretation of the compromise we find in Victor Hugo's work that the book kills the cathedral. Dvlatov-author's approach to understanding the features of literary images' the interaction in search of a compromise is in incorporation to the way of life of real people. The result is a compromise about the "fact" and the "code" between the meanings of a newspaper article and a literary text. The ways are the content of the article and the content of the literary text. As Ivie argued: "That the Soviet are likely to have understood the argumentative implications in ways roughly similar to the above is a functional both of timing and of access".

Culture expert James argues that the declared real truth is not final; together with objective reality we "create" real truths. These are two of its features: 1) the truth is changeable and 2) the truth depends on the conceptual scheme into which we place it.

In the collection "Compromise" we see how Marxist-Leninist philosophical influence affects the social life, not forming new ideals, norms and cultural values, but the keeping the existence of those that have lost value. In fact, Dvlatov gives a philosophical interpretation of the fact, an "explosion" between the existing and the broadcast. Philosophy always faces the creation with many types of justifications and refutations. Dvlatov explains his idea: "I know that freedom is a philosophical concept. I'm not interested in it. After all, slaves are not interested in philosophy. The freedom is opportunity to go wherever you want!.." Exactly as the philosopher Dvlatov understands the cause and consequence, necessity and chance, possibility and reality.

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<sup>38</sup> S. Dvlatov, "I Think, Reagan...", in *The New American*, 1981. Available at: <https://public.wikireading.ru/3733>.