

Territorial Identity: A Comparative Analysis Based on the Works of Alfred de Vigny and Alexandre Pouchkine

Basak Naz Simsek

Research fellow and Ph.D. student, Universität Bielefeld, Faculty of Sociology, Research Training
Group "World Politics" (GRK 2225/2)

Abstract

Geography inspires artists, leaving a mark on their works. Each artist has a different perception of reality, and geographical conditions play a decisive role in the construction of this imagination. Indeed, political geography is an essential factor that influences human imagination, and its traces can be observed in the artworks of artists. As for literature, geography offers authors an infinite range of subjects, and they express their imagination via their literary works. Political geography plays an important role here, as each country has its own unique characteristics that inspire artists, whether in terms of regional characteristics or social and political events. In order to observe the influence of political geography on authors and their literary works, a comparative analysis will be made of two writers from the same century but from different countries: Alfred de Vigny from France and Alexander Pushkin from Russia. To understand the construction of territorial identity, the research will begin with a review of Yves Guermond's theories on political geography. The theoretical part will be followed by the concepts of identity in the novels *Cinq-Mars* (Vigny) and *The Daughter of the Commandant* (Pushkin). The general characteristics of the countries in which these novels were written will be examined, as well as the novels themselves, in relation to geographical dynamics. The aim of the study is to point out the difference between two writers' perceptions of events in parallel to geographical and political factors. Alfred de Vigny's *Cinq-Mars* examines the conspiracy against Cardinal Richelieu that took place in France in 1642, while Alexander Pushkin's *The Captain's Daughter* focuses on the Pugachev revolt that took place in 1773. Although the two books deal with different periods, the observation of these two political events reflects the identity of the two writers, influenced by their geographical conditions.

Keywords: Political geography, France, Russia, perception, identity construction