The interpretation of the thanatological concept in the novel *All the Light We Cannot See* by the Pulitzer Prize winner Anthony Doerr is marked by a significant novelty due to many factors. Firstly, absence of reception of Anthony Doerr's creative works form a gap in the domestic literary criticism; although the analyzed novel is a bestseller, translated into many languages, including in Ukrainian in 2016, it has not yet become the object of interest in the works of local comparativists. Secondly, in the analyzed novel we trace a kind of breaking stereotypes about the representation of binary oppositions, where the blurring of boundaries between their structural categories dominates, and the categorical polarity of binary components erases, which motivates the need to apply the synergetic approach to the analysis.

The depiction of main characters’ – Werner and Marie-Laure – meeting is the culmination of the novel *All the Light We Cannot See*, creating a very complex plot structure. Retrospection to the events of previous years exacerbates the narrative tension. Each part of the plot reveals information in two perspectives – from the position of both characters.

Anthony Doerr is not limited to a certain monoimage of death. "Raw-boned death", according to Monsieur Etienne (Marie-Laure’s grandfather), "rides down the street, stopping the riding horse from time to time to look out the windows. Fiery horns on her head, smoke from her nostrils, and holding in her bony hand a list recently supplemented by new addresses"[2]. Thus, the recipient is presented with a Christian image of death. For Marie-Laure, death is an integral part of life during a war period, when destruction and the stench of corpses are not exclusively thanatological attributes, but, above all, the realities of Saint-Malo in particular and of life in general. As the girl often notes, she is "alive only because she has not yet died"[2]. In Werner's visions, death appears in the image of an innocently murdered girl from Austria, who transforms into an elderly Jewish woman: "She becomes an elderly woman; and Werner already curses the understanding of who she really is"[2]. For the boy as one of the German soldiers, death is a personified character. Moreover, her age and nationality are motivated by the shameful racist policies of the Reich, which often involved murders of innocent children. Thus, Anthony Doerr achieves the effect of polyphony of the thanatological category in the novel *All the Light We Cannot See* through the image of death in the worldview and given experiences of each key character of his creative work. However, the only thing that unites all variants of the death image is complete lack of fear of possible death.

Leveling the fear of death in the members of the Hitler Youth was brought up / "laid" from early childhood and adolescence through its sublimation into the
concepts of "glory", "Fatherland", "sacrifice": "Live honestly, fight bravely and die laughing" [2].

In the framework of thanatological motive the phrase "Our flag leads us to eternity" from the official anthem of the Hitler Youth Vorwärts! Vorwärts! should be interpreted also in two ways: as a patriotic slogan that glorifies the courage of a German soldier, and prophetic – as a song with which they will be led to death.

With the beginning of the war, the category of the future acquires a new sound in the analyzed novel – from the former category of vitalistic "will" it is transformed into a fatalistic "what will happen now with us".

To express the symbolism of the thanatological concept Anthony Doerr in his novel All the Light We Cannot See often refers to the expressive possibilities of the landscape. Or "bare trees stand… like skeletons pulling their hands out of the underworld" [2], or spring, which generally seems calm, "...but everything is full of tension, as if the city is on the surface of a balloon" [2]. The fatalism present in the descriptions of nature is deepened by the perception of the environment by the characters of the novel. "This May seems to Marie-Laure the most beautiful in her life" [2]: it is not accidentally that this last spring month is mentioned, because the girl is in the prime of her life, and because of the war not only month, but every next day can be the last. Thus, the writer brings the reader to the realization of the absurdity of the very category of life: "With each passing minute, the time left in this house, in this life, expires" [2].

In our opinion Anthony Doerr interprets the category of death in the analyzed novel, referring to the destructive strategy [1] aimed at maximizing the displacement of the theme of mass aimless death and death during the war from the inner horizon of human existence.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. The study of cognitive processes on the basis of verbal data, the separation of a separate layer of so-called tactile literature in the history of literature – one of the new milestones of literary studies. Anthony Doerr’s novel All the Light We Cannot See is very relevant in this perspective due to the specifics of the plot and the introduction into its outline of the image of a blind girl (by the way, according to critic W. T. Volmann, "exquisitely realized creation" [3]. That will allow to look at literature not only as the art of visualizing the world through its cognition by all sense organs, but also to create a certain reality only tactilely or with the help of the smell, which exacerbates the need to reconsider the category of "objective" in the process of cognition.

References: