CONCEPT OF THE AUTHOR’S PERSONALITY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE IMAGE SYSTEM AND NARRATIVE STRATEGIES OF THE MODERN WRITER (ON THE EXAMPLE OF LUDMILA ULITSKAYA’S PROSE)

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Abstract

The purpose of the article: The purpose of the article is to identify the peculiarities of the concept of the personality of the author within the framework of the system of images and narrative strategies of the writer (on the example of the prose of Lyudmila Ulitskaya).

Materials and methods: The leading approach to the study of this problem is the analysis of key problem issues of the history course.

Results of the research: Based on the analysis conducted by the author, it is noted that the personality of the author in the works of Ulitskaya manifests itself both in the form of a biographical personality and in the form of the expression of the author’s perception of the world, and the author does not enter into polemics with her characters and does not give an assessment of either their character or their actions.

Applications: This research can be used for the universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, the model of the concept of the author’s personality within the framework of the imaging system and narrative strategies of the modern writer (on the example of Ludmila Ulitskaya’s prose) is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: the concept of the personality, image system, L. Ulitskaya, narrative strategies, author's speech, expressive means, work of art, author’s position.

INTRODUCTION

Today, one of the most important and significant problems for literary criticism is the study of the author’s personality concept in the system of images and narrative strategies of the writer. The relevance of this problem is due, first, to 1) the need for a more detailed study of “signs of the presence” of the author behind all the elements of a work of art; 2) the ambiguity of the theory of reconstructing the author’s image based on the author's style and his point of view, presented in the text of a work of art; 3) insufficient scientific elaboration of the specificity issues of the author’s personality concept. In addition, this problem reveals many other equally relevant issues, such as, for example, the degree to which the author’s personal attitudes influence the specifics of expressing the author’s position in a work of art.

What happens to the author throughout his life remains in his memory, not in the depersonalized form of any event, but as a product of moral, value, logical analysis, personal processing, and attitudes. That is why the work of art bears a pronounced imprint of the author’s personality, creating unique originality of the text, intuitively captured by the reader, attracting or repelling his attention.

In this sense, particular interest presents the problem of the author’s personality concept, presented in the prose works of Lyudmila Ulitskaya, which (the problem) is not fully considered to date. So, among the works devoted to various aspects of creativity, including the specifics of the author’s image in the prose works of L. Ulitskaya, the studies of M.V. Bezrukava and Yu.S. Baskova (2017), S.A. Grigory (2012), T.A. Novoselova (2012), T.A. Skokova (2010) and others should be highlighted. However, these works do not fully reveal the problems we are considering.

All of the above determined the choice of the subject/object, as well as setting the goal of the article: the subject is the author’s personality concept in the framework of the system of images and narrative strategies of L. Ulitskaya; the object is the prose works of L. Ulitskaya. Accordingly, the purpose of the article is to identify the features of the author’s personality concept within the framework of the writer’s image system and narrative strategies (using Lyudmila Ulitskaya’s prose as an example).

The author’s image is a complex text-forming category that forms the unity of all components of a multi-level system of a work of art, as well as denoting, according to N.K. Bonetskoy, “the real moment of any aesthetic perception”. The fact that
such a perception can be implicit, unconscious, and characteristic of each person is evidenced by phrases such as “I love Pushkin”, “I don't like Mayakovsky,” demonstrating the attitude not to the works, but to the author. Accordingly, the aesthetic experience includes the “author’s image”, since the content of the work is comprehended by the author and this meaningfulness “explodes from the inside it’s lifelike” the author's "I" is the main core of the work.

**METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

The basis of the study consists of the following principles and methods:

1. The comparative pedagogical method, which includes the study of key problem issues of the history course, competent understanding of which is important for the development of professional competencies of economists;

2. Analysis and synthesis, on the basis of which directions for improving history teaching are highlighted and considered in detail to improve the quality of future economists training;

**RESULTS**

The author’s image is not immediately revealed to the reader; the degree of disclosure is determined including due to: the focus of the reader's attention, the depth of reading, its completeness, etc. More clearly the author’s image is manifested in the repeated appeal to his works. Accordingly, the author’s personality is presented in the image of the characters, purely external moments of the work, artistic techniques, writing strategies, etc. Moreover, along with the implicit presence of the author’s personality in his work, i.e. with the presence that was not intended by the author himself, one can also speak of the author’s strategy (concept) of the work, which forms its ideological center. The author’s strategy is a category of literary criticism used to “indicate the way the author relates to the character’s image and the reader’s image in the process of artistic interaction” (Akimova T.I., 2015, p. 13). The idea of “author’s concept” is on a par with such categories as “author’s position” and “author’s image”.

M.M. Bakhtin, considering the author’s position in a work of art, distinguishes its following forms (Bahtin M.M., 2017, p. 8-10): 1) the author reveals the character’s consciousness as alien, but located next to the author’s one; 2) the character owns a self-developing idea; 3) the author enters into a dialogue with the self-developing idea of the character. He also describes how to demonstrate the author’s position: 1) the author does not enter polemics with his character; 2) the author avoids a direct assessment of the character; 3) the author argues with the character on an equal footing. A. A. Vorontsova-Maralina distinguishes the following types of authorial presence:

1. Biographical personality. Consideration of the relationship between the creator and the creation lies in the borderline between aesthetic reality and real life. The figure of a human writer, in its secrecy and unknowability, does not allow penetrating into the depths of his inner world, but the author provides this opportunity to the reader.

2. The author of “creator” is an existential center, primary in relation to artistic images, as the creator of a work of art. The author not only receives signals from the outside and gives them a certain form, but he also represents a certain view of reality, the expression of which is the whole work. It is the author’s perception of the world that is the semantic and structure-forming center of the work, but it becomes visible to the reader only through the work (Kahn, A., Lipovetsky, M., Reyfman, I., & Sandler, S. (2018)).

3. A depicting subject is a direct exponent of the author’s point of view and defines the author’s position, etc.

Before starting consideration of the author’s image in L. Ulitskaya works, one should note that the interest for studying her works (in different aspects) is connected not only with the enormous popularity but also with peculiarities of the author’s development (unlike most of the colleagues, Ulitskaya entered profession being already very mature person, her first work was written in the age of over fifty). For many writers, professional development is a step-by-step process, and the chronology of their creations reflects personal growth of authors, connected directly with own life experience, mature capability for analysis and reasoning. Often, this is connected (in a sense) with the naive or excessively maximalist “author’s position” in early works, the desire to emotionally evaluate one’s characters, condemn weaknesses and exalt virtues. Over time, sharpness and emotionality give way to more balanced feelings and differentiated assessments: characters become more complex and multidimensional. And the more mature the author’s personality is, the more difficult it is to “discern” it in the work, the less it dominates the reader, imposing own opinion on him.

In the case of L. Ulitskaya, this entire process of personal and professional growth remained “behind the scenes” of her work. She entered it already mature, with great life experience. Ulitskaya herself notes that all her works were written or conceived in the 70-80s of the XX century, and the events described in them belonged to the 50-60s, and this time period allowed her to relive them more than once being more detached, without those emotions that accompanied what was happening in the author’s life 20-30 years ago (Grigor’ S.A., 2012, p. 3). Perhaps that is why numerous researchers of her work draw different conclusions about the artistic techniques and level of the author’s writing skills, the style of her texts and their relevance to high literature (Diaz, J. (2013)).

At the heart of each work of Ulitskaya, there are real events and living people who surrounded the author on her life's journey. Her works are not documentary, but the connection of everything described with the writer’s personality is undeniable. Here is the most obvious biographical reference found almost at the very beginning of the story “Sonechka”:
“A month before the child’s birth, the term of the indefinite trip of Robert Viktorovich, which he extended to the last opportunity, ended, and he received an order to immediately return to the Bashkir village of Davlekanovo, where he should have reached the exile in a hope for the future that still seemed beautiful to Sonya and which Robert Viktorovich strongly doubted”. To this very village, the family of Lyudmila Ulitskaya was evacuated, and she herself was born there. In this case, it can be assumed that the author’s personality was partially reflected in Tatyana’s daughter Sonechka, which is confirmed by her description of “her talents were revealed late” - a characteristic that can be applied to Ulitskaya herself, who devoted many years to biology before recognizing her writing talent (Rubins, M. (2019)).

The story "Sonechka" was published in 1992, and in 1997 the story "Fun funeral" was published. Their comparative analysis allows us to find several intersection points, both superficial and deeper, which can also be considered as a reflection of the author’s personality in the plot and narrative strategies of the author. Robert Viktorovich in “Sonechka” and Alik in “Fun Funeral” are two artists, creators, two people about whom one can say: “man in the moon” (Levantovskaya, M. (2013)).

Their inner world is rich and multifaceted, they are far from material issues, go through life relying solely on their intuition, while both are able to attract people of completely different types - from those who need to be endlessly patronized (Yasya for Robert Viktorovich and Nina for Alik), to those who ensure their own well-being and survival in a cruel material world. Both characters do not have high moral principles, in the life of each, there were many women who did not quarrel with each other, and even interact well, from time to time providing mutual support. And characteristic of these works is the lack of censure, a negative assessment of adultery, as if everyone around forgives such behavior to a creative person, they understand that this is a necessary condition for "creation". Even in the words of minor characters, such behavior is approved: “Old man, and he died on a woman. Young one, - said one. - And what? Better than rotting in the hospital, - the second responded”. Perhaps a reflection of the author’s personality is tolerance for human weaknesses in general, as well as for the weaknesses of creative people with whom L. Ulitskaya had to intersect many times throughout her life (Nekrasova, A. (2013)).

Both in “Sonechka” and in the “Fun Funeral”, the author used an artistic technique of hanging pictures of the deceased creator by the character who was spiritually closest to him, understood him. For Robert Viktorovich, this is done by his wife Sonia, for Alik - the girl Tishort, a daughter who does not know about blood relationship, but who feels a connection with her father. Only they can hang pictures in the best way, honor the deceased, reconcile with him. And then fame and recognition come to the creators posthumously, their works are appreciated, collectors hunt for them. Perhaps for Ulitskaya as a creator, it is very important that the person’s works receive well-deserved recognition, even after the end of his life.

The story in "Sonechka” is built in such a way as to show the possibility of maintaining the spiritual harmony of the main character, despite the problems she has to endure. For this purpose, in addition to the speech of an external narrator, the work uses Sonechka’s internal speech and offers the positions of other characters: “Sonya, pushing Yasya a little ahead, mechanically answered: “Yes, such grief ... Such grief fell upon us ... And Timler accompanied by a young lover who came to say goodbye to his old friend, said in a somber thin voice: “It's beautiful ... Leah and Rachel ... I never knew how beautiful Leah is” (Afanasev, A., Breeva, T., & Vinnikova, M. (2018)).

Ulitskaya is also actively using the narrative transition from one character to another in the “Fun Funeral”, due to which each of the many characters in the story can tell their own story of acquaintance and relations with the main character, the degree of their attachment to him. This approach allows us to imagine the multiplicity of positions and ratings, among which the reader can find the one closest to him, but it is impossible to say for sure which position corresponds to the author's one - the narrators or one of the characters. It should also be noted that in the analyzed works of Ulitskaya there is no gender identification of oneself with one or another character. Where it would be possible to show a conflict between “male” and “female”, the author refuses to choose the “side”, and sometimes even demonstrates a more emotionally positive, “maternal” attitude to the male character: “Alik himself lay on a wide ottoman, so small and so young, as if the son of himself.

CONCLUSION

According to biographical information, Lyudmila Ulitskaya considers herself a Jew who converted to Christianity, and the topic of Jewry goes through all her works. The internal dialogue of the two religions in the personality of the author, quite possibly, in a somewhat satirical form, was reflected in the conversation between the Orthodox priest and the Jewish rabbi in the story “Fun Funeral” “Here they are, new times: neither Jew nor Hellenic, and in the most direct, in the most direct sense, too ...” - the priest rejoiced. The rabbi stopped, threatened him with a finger: “Well, for you the most important thing is that not a Jew ...” In general, the whole work of L. Ulitskaya is so diverse and multilayered both thematically and in terms of using various expressive means and strategies of narration that it cannot be attributed to a specific category, for example, “women's prose” or “mass literature”.

Thus, the author’s personality in the works of Lyudmila Ulitskaya manifests itself both in the form of a biographical personality and in the form of expressing the author’s perception of the world, while the author does not enter into polemics with her characters and does not give an assessment of their characters or their actions. The narrative strategies of the author are quite diverse. L. Ulitskaya shows the reader the distance between the writer and the characters by including
the author’s position in the narrative space. Such a strategy reflects the desire of Ulitskaya to show her worldview without exerting pressure on the reader. It is also associated with the desire to exclude the perception of the work through the prism of “female prose”. In order to enhance the reader’s perception, the author combines various types of narration, the author’s speech and direct speech of the characters, present, past, real and fictional.

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