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THE ROMANTIC ORIGINALITY OF W. IRVING'S BOOK «THE ALHAMBRA»

The subject of this article is the identification of the romantic originality of W. Irving's short stories from the book «The Alhambra.» In connection with this, the following characteristic features of the aesthetics of romanticism are clarified: the problem of the romantic hero, his opposition to society, the break of the ideal with reality, the role of folklore, the reception of contrast, etc. In the context of revealing the peculiarity of romanticism W. Irving, the creative evolution of the writer and the artistic structure of his short stories, reminiscent of a fairy tale. The problems and the subject-composition structure of Irving's works, based on the motive of adventure, are considered in detail; the uniqueness of the artistic chronotope with elements of magic, the combination of myth and reality in the depiction of heroes; the plot-forming role of the reception of contrast, the specificity of cultural, historical and spiritual realities borrowed by the writer from Arabic and Spanish legends and fairy tales; the importance of fiction and irony as a means of understanding the contemporary writer of reality. All this gives grounds to draw a conclusion about the romantic context of the works of the writer – the founder of American romanticism.

Key words: romanticism, national, folklore, tradition, plot, image, motive, irony, history.

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В. Ирвингтің «Альгамбра» кітабының романтикалық ерекшелігі

Осы мақаланың негізі В. Ирвингтің «Альгамбра» кітабындағы әңгімелерінің романтикалық өзіндік ерекшелігін анықтау болып табылады. Осыған байланысты романтизм эстетикасының мынадай ерекшеліктері анықталды: романтиканың кейіпкері, оның қоғамға деген қарсылығы, шындыққа деген ұмтылыс үзілуі, фольклордың рөлі, контрастты алу және т.б. В. Ирвингтің романтизм ерекшелігін анықтау контекстінде автордың шығармашылық эволюциясы және оның ертегілерді еске түсіретін әңгімелерінің көркемдік құрылымы айқындалды. Ирвингтің шығармаларының себептеріне негізделген туындылары мен композициялық құрылымы толығырақ қарастырылады; сиқырлы элементтермен көркем хронотоптың бірегейлігі, кейіпкерлердің суреттерінде миф пен шындықтың тіркесімі; контрастты қабылдаудың сюжетті қалыптастырушы рөлі, жазушының араб және испан аңыздары мен ертегілерінен алынған мәдени, тарихи және рухани шындық ерекшелігі; қазіргі заманғы жазушы шындықты түсіну құралы ретінде көркем әдебиеттің және ирониялық маңыздылығы. Мұның бәрі америкалық романтизмнің негізін қалаушы – жазушының туындыларының романтикалық контекст туралы қорытынды жасауға мүмкіндік береді.

Түйін сөздер: романтизм, ұлттық, фольклор, дәстүр, сюжет, образ, мотив, ирония, тарих.

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Романтическое своеобразие книги В. Ирвинга «Альгамбра»

Предмет данной статьи – выявление романтического своеобразия новелл В. Ирвинга из книги «Альгамбра». В связи с этим уточняются следующие характерные черты эстетики романтизма: проблема романтического героя, его противостояние с обществом, разрыв идеала с действительностью, роль фольклора, приема контраста и др. В рамках выявления своеобразия романтизма В. Ирвинга была исследована творческая эволюция писателя и художественная структура его новелл, напоминающих сказку. Подробно рассмотрена проблематика и сюжетно-композиционная структура произведений Ирвинга, основанная на мотиве приключения; своеобразие художественного хронотопа с элементами волшебства, сочетание мифа и реальности в изображении героев; сюжетообразующая роль приема контраста, специфика культурно-исторических и духовных реалий, заимствованных писателем из арабских и испанских легенд и сказок; значение фантастики и иронии в качестве средств постижения современной писателю действительности. Все это дает основание сделать вывод о романтическом контексте произведений писателя – основоположника американского романтизма.

Ключевые слова: романтизм, национальный, фольклор, традиция, сюжет, образ, мотив, ирония, история.

Introduction

In the history of culture, the era of the turn of the century (1790-1860) was named as an era of romanticism, which is based on a sharp protest against bourgeois reality (Paul, 1984: 41). American romanticism was recognized to reflect the new laws of social life, the emerging norms of new social institutions (McGann, 1983: 5). A characteristic feature of the aesthetics of romanticism is the gap between ideals and reality, romantics seek their ideal in the field of dreams, oppose the unattractive bourgeois world to a fictional world, their dream. Romanticism in literature and art is a way of realizing romance as one of the properties of a person's thinking. The essence of romance is a dream, an ideal idea of the relationship between the inner reality of the person and the surrounding reality. In the center of a romantic world relationship, there is always a human personality capable, according to researchers, with the help of a dream to overcome any external forces – natural and social (Fenster, 1984: 22).

Great importance for the development of American literature and critical realism was the work of the writer Washington Irving. When it comes to the literature of American romanticism, his name is called one of the first. He rightly is considered the founder of American fiction, the father of an American novel. Irving is the first American novelist to have won European fame (Aderman, 1990: 52). This is the first romantic, which American literature has put forward. At that time, it was just beginning to acquire its own national identity. And

it was to the generation of romantics that it was an honor to win international recognition for American literature.

In today's writer America, there have been great changes, in all there was uncertainty. This required an artistic rethinking. A new hero was needed – an ideal being, highly moral, passionate, charming and free from public vices. In real life, he was not, he had to be an abstraction, a dream of the beautiful, the fair, the true. Irving succeeded in solving this problem – he was a pioneer, he developed a novel – a favorite genre of American writers, according to scientists

The aim of this work is to reveal the peculiarity of the romantic world relation of Washington Irving on the basis of an analysis of his works from the Alhambra collection.

To achieve this goal, it seems necessary:

- a) consider the writer's work in the context of American romanticism;
- b) investigate the creative evolution of the writer;
- c) to reveal the features of his romantic aesthetics on the basis of the material of the collection of short stories «Alhambra».

Experiment

Irving's first book destroyed the traditional for European criticism of America as a country capable only of producing material values, and completely sterile in the sphere of spiritual values. Nevertheless, it is quite obvious that America, as a young state,

did not have such a history and such cultural traditions as Europe possessed, that is, there was a lack of national culture. This encouraged the Romantics to create paintings that reflect the national identity of European and Eastern peoples, penetrate the cultural, historical and spiritual world of exotic countries (Myers, 1984: 9). Consequently, America's romanticism has the same historical background and aesthetic basis as the European one:

1. attention to the inner world of man;
2. The principle of romantic two world is romantics affirm the idea of imperfection of the real world and oppose the world of their imagination. Both worlds are constantly compared, compared;
3. interest in folklore – one of the forms of protest against the prose and prose of everyday bourgeois existence becomes the idealization of European antiquity, ancient cultural life;
4. Full creative freedom of the artist, rejection of normativeness – from the very beginning, American romantics began to vigorously consider the traditional foundations of English prose, which was facilitated by the reference to the material of national life. In this regard, the romantics mixed abstract essays with a specific description of the essay, picturesqueness of landscapes with the dynamism of the plot of national legends and legends (Kasson, 1982: 12).

Thus, American romantics developed the best that was in European culture, and at the same time they studied American history and the thinking, psychology and character of Americans. It is known that for romantics, the genre of travel is of primary importance, which opened the cultural and national image of the country, asserted the idea of finding new lands. The structure of many of Irving's romantic novels, stories and stories is based on the adventures that occur during travel. American writer poeticized pioneering, perseverance and courage of pioneers. In 1826, as a member of the American diplomatic mission, Irving was sent to Spain. He settled in Madrid with great joy, he was attracted by the heroic past of countries, the opportunity to work in the Spanish archives (Bowers, 1980: 210).

Irving intended to inspect the Alhambra in five days, and lived there for four months. The «Alhambra», consisting of thirty-one novels, each of which represents sketch or novel. It was this book that marked the beginning of American novellistics (Bowers, 1980: 42), it refers to the second stage of the work of Washington Irving and most fully expresses the romantic aspirations of the author. This famous work takes the reader into the world of fairy tales and legends about old Spain. The writer simply

reworked the Spanish and Arabic legends, which gave him material for essays and stories. In this work the reader will find a wide variety of material: the impressions of an enthusiastic observer and traveler, information collected by inquisitive historians, everyday scenes, and finally legends and stories that affected the imagination of the writer and passed to them with special grace.

Before the reader stands a fairy world, where we meet Arab astronomers, rulers, soldiers, Spanish governors, artisans, priests. In the foreword to the book, Irving in the Eastern manner calls novels «arabesques», then «sketches», taken from life by stories based on folk legends. The main storyline of the narrative is the description of the Alhambra and the false stories heard here. In the description of the palace Irving brings a touch of magic, a combination of myth and reality (Irving, 1991: 3). Irving's novels are very similar to fairy tales and correspond in many respects to their criteria: «a long time ago ...», «lived-was ...». In the narrative there is a feeling of enthusiasm, sentimentality, a romantic mood, and all this is mixed with irony. A similar example is the episode when the author, observing from the window the scene of the dedication of a girl in a nun, imagines her grief, unwillingness to tonsure, sympathizes with her lover. Later it turns out that «the heroine of a touching story was not at all young and beautiful; she had no beloved; in the monastery she went of her own free will ...» (Irving, 1991: 26).

The very fact of the writer's attention to the genre of the fairy tale is interesting: the fantastic fantasy becomes for the Romantics a means of comprehending the present, so the realistic element in the fairy tale is so obvious. Irving's interest in the fairy-tale genre is most evident in the novel Alhambra.

The place of action of Irving novels is «The Kingdom of Granada», but this Granada is so old that it appears that the action takes place in the «Far-away Kingdom», that is, Irving emphasizes the timeless nature of the problems of fairy tales. Thus, the novel «The Legend of the Three Beautiful Princesses» is distinguished by the absence of fantastic fantasy. The atmosphere of unusualness is created by appealing to the world of the East. Here Sultan Mohamed is called Lefty, because «he is doing everything in the wrong hands». The main actor is the three sisters, and the youngest of them becomes the true heroine of the fairy tale.

Here Irving removes the traditionally sharp contrast between the older and the younger, because the age difference between girls is small – only three minutes, and all three princesses are endowed with beauty and intelligence. All the sisters are in love

with Christian knights, so the stories of their love are similar, like their names – Soraaid, Soraid and Said (Irving, 1995: 13). Consequently, the way of contrasting the heroes in this novel characterizes the author as a kind of romanticist going his own way.

It is curious that the younger sister of Soraaid is endowed with all the qualities of a genuine romantic heroine – she is timid, hovering in the clouds. However, it is for lack of determination, a sober view of the world, timid Soraaida remains with nothing. At the same time, her less sensitive sisters achieve success in life and best suit their destiny with their beloved. The sad fate of Soraaida accentuates the fact that Irving again refuses the traditional «happy end», when exactly the youngest of the three heroes turns out to be the most successful and becomes happy.

Irving gives a romantic color and contrasts of his stranger, when in the novel Christianity is opposed Islam. Romance is that Moorish princesses and Christian gentlemen find themselves united by a love affair, and it is known to be much stronger than religious and national contradictions. In general, the love theme is very interesting for Irving. He introduces into the story the love story of the girls' educator – Kadigi and the chief of the guard of Hussein-Baba, which depicts the idealized feelings of the princesses and their cavaliers. Relationships of this pair begin with money talks. Kadig arranges the escape of his pupils, and runs away along with his chosen one. But this ritual comes to an end with the dropping of the maid into a stormy stream, and Hussein-Baba does not move a finger to help her «beloved». This situation reveals the true value of love as opposed to monetary calculation, which enhances the romantic perception of the novel.

In the «Legend of the Three Princesses» there is no element of fiction, and in this respect it is interesting to compare it with the novel «The Rose of the Alhambra.» So, in the «Rose of the Alhambra» there is an element of fiction, manifested in the episode of the apparition of the Moorish princess. The storyline of the novella tells of the wanderings of a girl – minstrel, who, having bypassed the whole kingdom, conquered the king with her art. In parallel, she heals the king from a heartache, and receives a rich groom as a reward.

This tale has a sharp social connotation: the grief-monarch Philip V is healed from his illness not because of the dexterity and resourcefulness of the girl, but thanks to her art. The peculiarity of the romantic consciousness of the writer in this novel is revealed in his refusal from the traditional method of obtaining the bride, here the presence of the femi-

nine is more emphasized (Cracroft, 1994: 54).

Results and discussion

In the story there is a traditional attribute of a fairy tale – a magical subject that contributes to the success of the hero. The girl is so wonderful playing on her musical instrument, because it is inspired by love. Thus, the miracle unites the concepts of «love» and «art», bringing them closer. And as a result, the fairy tale is crowned with the romantic motif of the eternity of art, its magical power.

It is the girl-musician who is the ghost of the Moorish princess, the heroine of the «Legends of the Three Princesses». This unites both tales according to the principle of mirror image: the main character of «The Roses of the Alhambra» is perceived as the embodiment of the heroes of the fairy tale «The Legend of Three Princesses» (it is casually mentioned that Soraaida's beloved was ancestor of Rosa Alhambra). We can say that the «Rose of the Alhambra» repeats the plot of the fairy tale about the princesses: the girl traditionally marries and finds happiness (Cracroft, 1994: 103). Obviously, the «Legend of the Three Princesses» performs the role of a false myth in relation to the «Rose of the Alhambra», as the action in the first novel takes place in the distant past, but has a direct continuation, and tragic events eventually find a happy solution.

In the lyrical and philosophical and witty fairy tale «The Legend of Prince Ahmed al-Kamel» there are also all the effective attributes of fairy-tale – magic knight armor, enchanted horse, carpet-plane and other, whose meaning is deeply humane – the role of love and fidelity in a person's life, his courage. Here Irving again draws a high ethical ideal of a loving person. Prince Ahmed calls himself «assistant of love» and performs knightly deeds, winning a beautiful beloved, although the young man grew up in complete isolation from life. This idea was borrowed by Irving from the work of P. Calderon «Life is a dream.» The prince's father wanted to protect the young man from women's enchantments and disappointments of love and explained to his son what love is: «So love is the cause of half of the misery of an unfortunate humanity ... Caring and grief, dreary days and sleepless nights – that's her companions» (Irving, 1995: 75). Later the enamored pigeon gives another explanation of love: «These are torments for one, happiness for two, enmity for three.» Having learned love, Ahmed is convinced of the correctness of both statements.

Subsequently, after verifying in practice the wisdom of the philosopher owl, the prince gives her the post of minister in the new state. Another

character of «The Legend of the Prince», a parrot, unusually courageous, gossipy, skilfully cites other people's verses, witticisms, lets go of insolent jokes. However, this character is depicted by the author with irony. In particular, the prince, describing the picture of the future and promising to give the parrot an important position, when he becomes the ruler, also entices the parrot to his side in an attempt to win the princess.

In the form of seemingly innocuous tales, Irving criticizes modern American reality. The conversation between the prince and the parrot is very reminiscent of the cynical conversation of politicians, when one bribes another, giving all kinds of promises. In Irving's tale, the parrot gets its own.

Thus, in the novels of the writer harmoniously merge various components: irony with sincerity, criticism with idealization, a fairy tale with reality. As the analysis of some short stories, carried out by us, shows, the book of Washington Irving «Alhambra» is by all signs a romantic work. «The Spanish book of sketches» called «Alhambra» Prescott, as the main story, which gave the title of the book, was motivated by Spanish-Moorish folklore, whose subtle expert was Irving, who lived for many years in Spain. At the same time, the Alhambra is a vivid example of American artistic thought.

Irving stood at the source of a new, romantic trend in US literature, and his work absorbed the brightest moments of the national romanticism of this country.

Let us highlight the following fundamental features of the romanticism of the American writer:

- folklore motifs of European countries, artfully

crafted and received national identity;

- protest against unsightly bourgeois reality by idealizing European antiquity and culture, where love, art, courage, harmony reigned;

- a combination of the fantastic with the realistic, the transition from everyday to magical, while the mysterious appears as something natural;

- interest in the genre of travel-adventure while moving from place to place;

- a combination of soft irony, humor, parody, grotesque and satire, facing the image of the modern writer of American life.

Conclusion

Summarizing, we can conclude that Irving «presented» America novel, distinguished by the liveliness of the story, the entertaining story, combined with irony, the charm of the landscape. The writer proceeded from an optimistic view of the world and human nature, did not set out to save the world. None of his compatriots had such a total lack of rebellious spirit, like Irving. He broke with the bourgeoisie as a young man, because he could not reconcile himself to how much revolutionary mood is engendering much harm and harm.

Turning to the image of the past, the folklore of other nations, Irving, for all his «Europeanization» developed a national theme and was a harbinger of a critical realistic trend in American literature. This is what brings Washington Irving to the list of the most outstanding romantics of the USA and confirms his deserved fame as the first original

American writer.

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