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THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN THE WORKS OF GEROLD BELGER

In the article the features of a genre of the art autobiography on the example of the novel of the Kazakh writer Herald Belger «Wanderer’s home» are researched. The signs of autobiographical art prose at the level of plot, compositions, chronotope, system of characters of the work are revealed. According to the authors of the article, interaction of elements of documentary and artistry make individual style of the writer, define specifics of his creativity. In the article the conclusion that the art autobiography represents a special genre in literature is formulated. The authors of the article consider that the work based on the documentary facts from the writer’s life which turn into artistic characters and become not only the subject, but also the object of the character should be referred to such a genre. The degree of documentation or artistry of the autobiographical text is defined by the level of deviation of the literary character created in the work from the real author’s character.

Key words: autobiography, artistry, documentalism, genre, character.

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Автобиографизм в творчестве Герольда Бельгера

В статье исследуются особенности жанра художественной автобиографии на примере романа казахстанского писателя Герольда Бельгера «Дом скитальца». Выявляются признаки автобиографической художественной прозы на уровне сюжета, композиции, хронотопа, системы образов произведения. По мнению автора статьи, взаимодействие элементов документализма и художественности составляет индивидуальный стиль писателя, определяет специфику его творчества. В статье формулируется вывод о том, что художественная автобиография представляет собой особый жанр в литературе. Автор статьи считает, что к такому жанру следует отнести произведение, основанное на документальных фактах из жизни писателя, которые превращаются в художественные образы и становятся не только субъектом, но и объектом изображения. Степень документальности или художественности автобиографического текста определяется уровнем отклонения созданного в произведении литературного образа от реального авторского облика.

Ключевые слова: автобиографизм, художественность, документализм, жанр, образ.

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Герольд Бельгер шығармашылығындағы автобиографизм

Мақалада көркем автобиография жанрының ерекшеліктері қазақстандық жазушы Герольд Бельгердің «Дом скитальца» романының негізінде зерттеледі. Автобиографиялық көркем прозаның негізгі қасиеттері сюжет, композициялық құрылым, хронотоп, шығармадағы образдар жүйесі арқылы аңғарылады. Мақала авторының ойынша, документальдылық пен көркемдік

элементтерінің өзара арақатынасы жазушының өзіндік стилі мен шығармашылығының өзіндік қырларын анықтауға септігін тигізеді. Мақалада көркем автобиография әдебиеттің ерекше бір жанры ретінде қарастырылады. Автордың ойынша, мұндай жанрларға жазушының өміріндегі документалдық фактілерге негізделген көркем образдарға айналған, көркем бейнелеудің субъектісі ғана емес, объектісіне айналып үлгерген шығармаларды жатқызуға болады. Автобиографиялық мәтіннің документалдық және көркемдік деңгейі шығармадағы әдеби образдың автордың шынайы бейнесінен қаншалықты алшақ тұруымен анықталады.

Түйін сөздер: автобиографизм, көркемдік, документальдік, жанр, образ.

Introduction

Autobiographism is called distinctive feature of the prose of the XX century. It is caused by the fact that in the second half of the XX century autobiographism began to play essentially different role, than during the previous literary periods. Formation of individual consciousness, personal attitude, inclination to realistic art reconstruction of the world around were shown in literature more fully at the beginning of the 20th century when destruction of traditional structures of feudal society, development of the bourgeois relations and activization of cultural dialogue with the West, development of ideological and esthetic experience of the European literature led to understanding of worthiness of the human personality and its individual rights.

Autobiographism as refraction of biographic material in art creativity represents reflection in the literary work of events from life of the writer, proximity in any relation to the author of the hero of the work. Special completeness of its presence arises in the work when there is an autobiographical beginning, a certain substance of autobiographism. The autobiography is crystallization of this substance in a genre. It seems, such provision does not require special justification. However, it must be kept in mind that some difficulties which are found in the course of theoretical judgement of a concept. According to researchers, autoreferential connections in the autobiographical text are most often shown in exact coincidence «I» of the author and «I» of the character. But they can be under construction and as a system of replacement. At times author's «I» is concealed by pronouns «You» or «It» or designates itself as a pseudonym [1], [2].

Besides, the author of such work can state the biography, the process of formation of the personality and by means of display of the fictional person in this connection it is difficult to define unambiguously whether the text belongs to autobiographical genre. The degree and signs of interaction of documentary and art material in structure of the literary work are also various and require special studying in each situation. The detection of specifics of this

interaction, features of a ratio of the author and hero of the autobiographical text, specifics of a genre of the art autobiography define the problem.

Autobiographism that is testified by the history of its development in literature was one of forms of historical memory of civilizations, the basis of spiritual link of generations, the indicator of the level of development of consciousness. Many works of fiction are penetrated by autobiographism, and the identity of the author is often a prototype of the main character. Autobiographism as artistic method was used by authors of literary texts in different degree. Some writers included a lot of things in the works from real life, others – only small details of household character. To some extent it is explained by the historical realities which required another level of assessment of the events, than earlier. This new feature of verbal creativity was noted by researchers: «The documentary prose of the future is also emotionally charged, painted by soul and blood memoirs document where everything is the document and at the same time represents emotional prose ...» [3].

Autobiographism in autorology is considered as one of forms of author's figurative word game. Literally-etymologically «autobiography» means «the description of the life» («auto» – himself, «bio» – life, «grapho» – I write). The main criterion of definition of the text as autobiographies is existence of the description of the filling human life in it, concrete events stated by him. According to the definition given in the book by F. Le Jeune «The autobiographical contract» «the autobiography is the narrative text with retrospective statement in which the real personality tells about own life, and besides the accent puts on the private life, especially history of formation of the personality» [4].

To qualify similar cases theoretically, there is the necessity to pay attention to the concept «autobiographism». Here, the concept formulated in the work by M. Medarich is submitted very productively: «Autobiographism can be called stylistically marked literary method representing autobiography genre echo; it appears in the texts which are not autobiography themselves, they were

not written and perceived as autobiographies». Differentiating adjacent concepts acutely, the author of this work speaks of the further: «The autobiography includes the personality as a subject of the description in space and time, the personality who is at the same time the subject and object of the description. Autobiographism as an echo of the autobiography can be searched only where the author of the text about himself is defined both as essentially possible object of historiography (the specific empirical personality in time and space), and at the same time as the subject of self-informative disciplines, philosophies and psychology (the transcendental personality)» [5].

The Kazakhstan scientists allocate as one of the main signs of belonging of works to the autobiographical genre of the reference to documentary materials. At the same time the existence of individual addictions of authors, differences in the course of creation of the art picture of the world based on real events are mentioned. Researchers consider that the structure of the character of the hero with prevalence of elements of the «internal» plan at existence of the elements of the «external» plan caused by influence of ideological factors is characteristic of works with elements of autobiographism. Thus, the autobiographism problem in literature continues to remain ambiguous and requires further development.

Experiment

In the autobiography genre depending on the degree of exposition of a figure of the real author in the text and on degree of reliability of the stated events, that is from the measure of compliance of literary material to vital two subtypes are distinguished: documentary and art. In the documentary autobiography the narration reproduces the empirical facts, tends to transfer real vital events with documentary accuracy. The art autobiography subjects the outline of the real autobiography to poetic processing and transforms the concrete reliable event into the art fact. In the autobiographies of this kind the invented, imagined moments of life often play more significant role than documentary testified ones.

Autobiographism is characteristic feature of works of such Kazakhstan writers as I. Shukhov, M. Simashko, V. Shegolikhin, G. Belger and others. Let's address Gerold Karlovich Belger's creativity, the German by origin, but deserved the unconditional authority and love of Kazakhs whom he got to like as the fates decree and on a need of the heart. The

most part of novels, stories, essays by Belger is autobiographical, documentation and artistry are united in plot and composition, reality and fiction, philosophical reflections and sincere feelings. In the novels «Wanderer's home» and «Tuyuk Su» the main subjects that worried G. K. Belger meet together throughout all his creativity. These works, being multidimensional, with the branched plot lines having a peculiar composition sum up a peculiar result of the subjects developed earlier, raise them to the new level of art documentalism as the whole layers of history, including repression, war, labor army, post-war time and modern reality experienced by the writer are reflected in these works.

The biography of Gerold Belger in many respects coincides with the events described by him in art texts. He was born on October 28, 1934 in the city of Engels, the capital of the Germans of the Volga region. In 1941 under Stalin's decree he was deported to Kazakhstan together with other Russian Germans. He studied at the Kazakh secondary school, then at philological faculty of the Kazakh Pedagogical Institute, worked as the teacher of Russian, then in the literary journal, since 1964 he has been a writer and translator. Belger knew Kazakh perfectly and he was an expert in the Kazakh literature, got huge recognition thanks to the translations of books from German into Kazakh and Russian languages. Journalism took a specific place in his creativity and was held by the devoted to topical issues of our time. Artistry and documentation were inseparable in works of the writer and translator, such synthesis gave the chance to express the personal relation to the historical events which defined his destiny. Peculiar feature of Gerold Belger's creativity is that he devoted many works to historical research and art reconstruction of deportation process of Germans of the Volga region to the Central Asia during the World War II and tracked their future, especially their integration in Kazakhstan. He published books and articles on this theme in the Russian, Kazakh and German languages.

The novel «Wanderer's home» is a shrill history of the person in which the destiny of the whole people was reflected. «But where is my house and where is my mind?» – the author together with heroes of the work begin searching for the house, homeland with the epigraph of lines of Anna Akhmatova. Chapters of the novel begin with the quotes from documents, generally confidential. Documents acquaint the reader with the historical and political background of the novel – deportation of the Volga Germans right after the attack of the Hitler Germany on the USSR and deprivation of their civil rights which

lasted till 1956, when the action of the novel comes to an end. The author in real life at six-year age gets to a whirlpool of events which leaves him in one of the Kazakh auls and therefore the description of actions in the novel, in the work of art, is perceived so authentically [6].

From first lines of the work tragedy of the narration is felt that is in contrast of the sharp documentary order on deportation (the epigraph to chapter 1) and emotional art fabric of the text, in absurdity and hopelessness of the first represented situation – distribution of the deported German paramedic David Ehrlich to work to the far Kazakh aul. As one of the most shrill episodes in the novel the scenes of eviction of the Volga Germans in 1941 appear. The author emotionally describes how silence hung over the Volga – because of the grief all were silent as if they pledged silence. People kneeled and kissed their home threshold, someone took the darkened Bible which remained from ancestors colonists.

The novel consists of three heads called in accordance with the names of heroes – David, Khristyan, Harry, the destinies of three generations of the German family Ehrlich-Walter are described in them. Before the war David Ehrlich was a military man and the member of the Communist Party. Just before the war he was dismissed from military service only because he was German by the nationality. During deportation he loses his wife and son because the wife is the Russian by the nationality, she does not want to share his lot with him. Having got to Kazakhstan, he works as the paramedic in out-patient clinic which serves several villages. The external framework of the narration does not limit David's character by present time. David mentally comes back to the past, the Volga homeland, his native village Gnadenflur and life in this village are in the mind all the time.

At the same time the author describes how the new realities surrounding the main character in the Kazakh steppes gradually become native and close. In the novel the nature on the Ishim River, dwellings of Kazakhs, life and customs, and also the events which were taking place are described colourfully. David after long doubts marries on Olkye Walter who is much younger than him. The house built with the help of Kazakh neighbors becomes the real homeland for their children. The story of the relations of David and Olkye is interwoven into art text by notes of lyricism, geniality, true feeling which smooth the impression of the severe documentary facts of the biography of heroes of the work.

The reader sympathizes to clever, sincere, hard-working, respectful David. One of Ehrlich's features

is the gaining sincere purity, even childishness: «... the traveler smiled trustfully, childishly, slightly sadly». On the way to the aul the paramedic meets the child first, the herdboys Zharas and the old man, postman Nurkan: the logic of introduction of characters characterizes David brightly. Further the compassionate paramedic shares a roof with Zharas, the orphan, for a while replacing the father's child. For example, the situation of the meeting of David and Zharas is shrill, when the paramedic recalled by labor army comes back to the aul once again. When meeting Zharas burst into tears with joy, called David the elder brother. In the Kazakh mentality the elder brother has the special status, he is both the defender and friend, and the example for being in future. The Kazakh proverb conveys the meaning of it best of all: «If you have an elder brother, so there is a collar on your clothes». Just the presence of the elder brother near you makes you sure, protected from struggles of life that is the sense of the proverb. The reader, observing relationship of the German Ehrlich and the Kazakh boy Zharas, sees that they completely correspond to the proverb. So, gradually David becomes loved by people living in the aul, deserves their trust and authority.

The following documentary material is shown through the description of challenges of labor army from the viewpoint of another character – Khristyan, lyrical, intelligent, sincerely fragile young man. The daily routine of a worker of labor army described by the author shows how it was hard to survive even for the strong people got used to physical labor, not mentioning Khristyan, the young teacher, or, for example, the musician Oscar. Both of them didn't bear the severe conditions of life and die. Delirious sick Khristyan mentally says passionate monologues: «Where are you, the Milky Way in the cold sky? Where has my star got lost? Perhaps it went out long ago, abandoned me, threw, and I, restless, toil in the unknown and alien region in vain?» Missing home, impossibility to have the homeland, the compelled wandering in this world, restlessness, inescapable thirst for home, lonely destiny of the eternal wanderer, tragic element of feeling homelessness is the most widespread motive of the German songs, it is embodied in Khristyan's destiny. Here the historical truth of the German evictions is connected to the method of grotesque during creation of artistic characters. Not casually David's character and other immigrants is followed by the song about little Gans who wandered on the foreign land for seven long years.

Khristyan was glad to see the photocopy of the map of the Volga region which by miracle was saved

by David. The brothers Ehrlich consider the map, and the author describes the Republic of Germans of the Volga region that was wiped out, its capital the city of Engels, the meadow and mountain parts, cantons, rivers, woods, roads. «The map of the homeland which is absent ...». The brothers even have no right to hang up the map of the homeland on the wall: «They will be seen, informed, not be patted ... on the head». Khristyan diligently reproduces a paternal home on the drawing, not able to say goodbye to the native dwelling.

The map, laws of the Constitution, orders of the government, newspaper cuttings, being organically interwoven into art fabric of the work, strengthen the historical, «museum» part of the novel, force of its truth. Documentation of the narration allows the author to include real people in the text of the novel, for example, the teacher of German Victor Klein, information on whom can be found in the biobibliographic reference book of Belger «The Russian German writers». Harry's character is autobiographical too, David's prototype is the father of the author Carl Belger who the book is devoted to. So, lit up by art aura, the facts of life become brighter and more reliable.

From the different points of view the author looks at the represented events, and nearly the most interesting is the position of the child, Harry Walter. The German boy studies at the Kazakh school best of all. But he was rejected not only an opportunity to get a medal for excellent progress in study, but also an opportunity to enter the university. Excellently speaking Kazakh, knowing Russian, the applicant Harry Walter remains the German for reception committee first of all, that is the person without the homeland, without passport, without rights. Young Harry goes through severe initiation into happy life – eviction, «ritual» conversations with the commandant, disputes with the rebel Wagner, humiliations when leaving school and admission to institute. The novel finishes with «happy end», clear only to the Russian Germans who endured deportation. The German Harry Walter not only becomes a student, but also receives the passport. No other event could become more full-fledged happy final for Belger's work.

The tragedy of the novel of Gerold Belger «Wanderer's home» is paradoxical, light, penetrated by kind belief in life. From the art metaphor it turns into reality of life by David «The house of the wanderer»: the man builds up the strong, sound house in the aul. Harry's dream to become the citizen of the Soviet power, to get higher education. But Khristyan who died at young age is eternal reminder on the severe challenge which fell to lot

of the Soviet people, and in particular, the Russian Germans, innocent citizens who had to pay for predatory attack of fascist aggressors.

The opposition and duality are characteristic of the work. The novel is under construction on the basis of opposition. The present constantly corresponds to the past by the author and heroes (the narration is penetrated by the words «now» and «then»). The Kazakh aul is compared to the German village. The life of the main characters is conditionally divided into two periods: before and after deportation. Duality of situation is their characteristic. At the level of David, Khristyan and Harry's chronotopes real time space quite often merges with oneiric time-space. The novel chronotope constantly changes the limits. It is narrowed to limits of private destiny, then extends to universal scales. The opposition is observed in descriptions of the nature. Describing the winter day which came in dream to Khristyan, the author notes: «Above there was malice of winds and weather, and below, in the shadow of the century-raged wood, the silence ringing and ominous reigned» [6, 210].

Opposition is shown also at the level of the author's concept of the person. The opposition makes the basis of the subject of life and death upon which the writer repeatedly touches in the novel. The work is filled with the ideas about unity of the person and the nature. Characterizing state of mind, spirit of heroes, transferring the movement of their feelings, the author constantly addresses the reality surrounding them. He draws parallels between the world of the nature and the world of the person. Its character arises in comparisons. So, Khristyan is associated with winter, David – with the sun. Thereby the writer shows that individual time space of the person is a part of time-space stream of life of the nature. On pages of the novel Belger raises the problem of alienation, orphanhood of people. Practically all his heroes are lonely. Some owing to the fact that they lost the homeland and lost the house (for example, David, Khristyan, Olkye, Zharas' characters, etc.), others – because became isolated in their own world (for example, David, Khristyan). Sometimes alienation is caused by «unconsciousness» of people (the relation of representatives of the Soviet power to the historical and literary heritage of the German people living in the Volga region).

The important place in the text is taken by characters-symbols and first of all clock, home, window, letter. The clock, on the one hand, shows current of time, on the other – reflect state of mind of heroes. The house has several meanings. First,

it is associated with the homeland; secondly, it is presented as «keeper» of life; pledge of the new birth; thirdly, it is a peculiar temple of soul of the person. The window is the border lying between «internal» and «external» world of the house and the world of the street. The letter reflects destinies of people, incorporating and connecting their individual time and space. Thus, Belger's novel «The house of the Wanderer» has rather complex composition.

Discussion of results

The concept of autobiographism is extended often to a wide range of texts, that are not autobiographies according to the formal background. If actually the autobiography requires the most exact keeping to the documentary outline of author's life, then autobiographism allows to disclose specifics of the author's personality, having placed it in the space of fictional events and having supplied it with the thought-up biography. In other words, autobiographism can take place in any literary genre. However in the autobiography where the author directly and fluently speaks about himself and about the process of personality formation, autobiographism is shown most brightly. In what way in works of autobiographical character is there transformation of the real vital fact into the artistic character?

Speaking shortly, this process is caused by mainly author's selection of material and its processing. The selection of these or those vital events for artistic realization is caused, first of all, by the concept of own biography inherited by the author, his psychological-esthetic approach to the course of life. Artistry in the autobiographical text is shown in individual selection, the organization and transformation of historical documentary material which is supplemented with art fiction, author's imagination and his subjective interpretation.

The autobiographical text from the point of view of modern literary criticism is based on the identity relation between the subject and object of the character. The complete destruction of this identity leads to transition of the text from the category autobiographical to the category of purely art ones. In other words, keeping individual traits of own personality in the autobiographical text, the author on material of the biography creates the generalized and standard character of the contemporary personifying problems and features of time.

The analysis of contents and structure of the novel by Belger ««Wanderer's home»» gives the reason to consider that before us there is an example

of the work built in a genre of the art autobiography. Summing up the preliminary result, we define the art autobiography as the work based on the documentary facts from the author's life which turn into artistic characters and become not only the subject, but also the object of depiction. The degree of documentation or artistry of the autobiographical text is defined by the level of the deviation presented in the text «I» from real author's shape. In the novel «Wanderer's home» the ratio of the mentioned criteria is equivalent, but features of the plot creation and composition, the chronotope and system of characters, the specifics of interaction of the author and hero of the work give the background for interpretation of the text as the art autobiography including some documentary materials.

Conclusion

In our opinion, the prospects of the research of this theme can be connected with identification of the ratio of personal and public beginnings in the works of art autobiography. Historical, social circumstances have significant effect on the description of destinies of heroes of the work. The writer designs an autobiographical character as a literary portrait of organic and at the same time unique representative of the epoch, tends to present the personality as an integral part of the whole public and historical process. The characters-contemporaries of the author of the autobiographical text also have the certain socially significant figures reflecting important ideological tendencies of time as prototypes. The characters interact with each other, argue on the central questions of the time, express the ideas, and, eventually, enlighten the epoch, process of historical development. The expressiveness of the literary portrait, according to V. Barakhov, «depends on the ability of the artist to find characteristic features of the whole category of people in individual character of the person, to create some kind of public type» [3].

Thus, manifestation of autobiographism in literature assumes volume reconstruction of the author's personality and reconstruction of its subjective psychological, emotional, intellectual and other lines and features. Therefore the writer tends to represent plastically his internal and empirically often not quite expressed relations with surrounding reality. In a broader sense, autobiographism in literature can be defined as the artist's viewpoint of the world, himself and his place in the world embodied in the work.

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