

ORIGINALITY OF GENRE-SPECIFIC FEATURES OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORKS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13219087>

Abstract: This article examines the genre-specific features of autobiographical works. The history of the formation and development of Russian autobiographical prose goes back several centuries. Against the background of the widespread dissemination of notes, diaries, and biographies in the public consciousness in the second half of the XIX century, Russian autobiographical prose flourished. This time in Russia was marked by changes in socio-political life, which contributed to the revitalization of cultural and literary life. A remarkable fact of Russian life was the increased growth of social and personal self-awareness. The reasons that prompted the creation of autobiographical and memoir literature in the second half of the 19th century were due to increased attention to the inner life of a person. Thus, the author's personality became the object of introspection and analysis. The genre of autobiography is traditionally viewed as an attempt to study the author's state of mind in certain life conditions of interaction and the influence of the cultural sphere and historical situation on a person's personality. Autobiography is one of the main types of memoir literature.

Keywords: literary process, genre, autobiographical prose, social consciousness, Russian literature

1 INTRODUCTION

When analyzing any literary text, the category of genre is key. First of all, genre is a structure-forming element of the text, thanks to which what is read is perceived. Since the object of our research is texts whose structure contains features of fiction and documentary prose, there is a need for theoretical illumination of the specifics of their genre. The genre of autobiography interests researchers primarily because literature and reality are closely intertwined and give rise to special genre forms that include a small part of artistic fiction. Writers working in the genre of autobiographical prose depict historical events and draw artistic images of contemporaries. As a rule, historical material enters into synthesis with emotional material. The task of literary scholars is to determine where artistic fiction prevails over the criterion of truth, which becomes the leading one in a classic autobiographical work. Yu. L. Sapozhnikova notes that in modern literary criticism there is a wide range of concepts that are used to generally refer to diaries, biographies, memoirs and other related genres [4].

Researchers give different interpretations of the genre of autobiography and this, in our opinion, is the main problematic issue that does not allow us to clearly define the boundaries of the genre of memoir literature. In autobiographical prose, authors use means that allow the presentation to be subjective. Here the category of artistic time plays an important role, which establishes a distance between the author writing the text in the present and the participant in the events of the past.

Thus, the principle of linking episodes and scenes that recreate the narrator's memories is established. This principle forms the basis for the definition of the genre, which was formulated by the authors of the literary encyclopedic dictionary: "An autobiography is a consistent description by the author of his own life..." [2]. Thus, some researchers emphasize the documentary beginning in autobiographical literature and make an attempt to study the phenomenon of autobiographical text from the first signs of "awakening" to the fact of acquiring the status of a sovereign literary genre. The term "documentary literature" is used by E. G. Mesterghazi, emphasizing that the phenomenon of autobiographical prose consists precisely in the existence of a dominant documentary component that exists along with artistic fiction [6].

2 Literary review

L. M. Nyubina, speaking about works of the autobiographical genre, uses the term "literature of memories." E. M. Boldyreva prefers to separate the concepts of "autobiography" and "autobiographicism". The researcher explains that "autobiography" as a principle of the relationship between fiction and reality and reality consists in the author changing life material in his own texts, and "autobiography" as a special literary genre that includes "biography" [5]. The fact that in literary practice these concepts are used as synonyms is explained by E. M. Boldyreva by the fact that the term "autobiography" is inextricably linked with the categories of "truth" and "confessionality" [4].

N.A. Nikolina, in a broad sense, defines autobiography as “a kind of micromodel of culture, reflecting the main stages of the path to oneself.” F. Lejeune in his monograph “The Autobiographical Agreement” (“Le pacte autobiographique”, 1975) lists a list of features that are characteristic of texts related to autobiographical prose. According to the researcher, a text is an autobiography if it has a prose form; the theme of the work is the facts of private life. At the same time, the biographical author (a real person) in the text of the autobiography acts as a direct narrator and the main character of the work.

Autobiographical works, according to F. Lejeune, have a retrospective orientation. Despite the fact that the mentioned authors prefer to use different terms, they generally come to unity in defining the main characteristics of works belonging to the literature of memoirs. As a rule, all researchers note various aspects of autobiographical prose. Let us highlight a number of general provisions. Thus, in the center of a work of art in the autobiographical genre there is one egocentric consciousness, and the key content of autobiographical prose becomes the illumination of the internal evolution of the individual. This leads to the fact that the author, narrator and protagonist collide in one person. This splitting is typical only for literature of the autobiographical genre. This conclusion leads to the fact that the material presented by the author can be called subjective. All described events, even if they contain historical fact, are passed through the author's consciousness.

Literature of memoirs, as a rule, chooses retrospective as the overriding principle of the movement of a temporal narrative from beginning to end. Researcher N.A. Nikolina calls such a time perspective complex and emphasizes that in autobiographical prose the main factor is the narrator's attitude to his past. In this regard, two time plans can be distinguished: the plan of the present narrator, who creates the text, and the plan of his past, which he remembers. The relationship between these plans determines the time perspective of the text [3]. Autobiographical texts are characterized by the presence of common lexical and phraseological units that provide an orientation toward autobiography.

Such units include, for example, the words “memory”, “store”, “memories”, “remember”. A collection of individual units forms semantic fields. In the system of types of narration, two polar forms can be distinguished that differ in the way they are depicted - narration from the first person and narration from the third person. Of course, the nature of autobiography requires the use of a first-person narrative as a

sustainable form [7]. This form is becoming leading in Russian autobiographical prose. Third-person narration reproduces both internal and spoken speech. The next feature, characteristic not only of autobiographical prose, but also of any other literary genre, is the expected presence of a reader. But unlike other genre forms, the communicative attitude of autobiographical prose is more aimed at qualitatively increasing the mutual connection between the author and the reader, since often an autobiographical work presupposes the obligatory presence of a potential reader, usually distant from the author in a time perspective.

The general principle that determines the unspoken attitude towards frankness between the writer and the reader can be recognized as the “autobiographical agreement”. This concept was proposed by the French researcher F. Lejeune. Despite the fact that he analyzed texts primarily of French literature, his theoretical works on the study of the genre of autobiography “Autobiography in France” (“L'Autobiographie en France”, 1971) and “The Autobiographical Pact” (“Le pacte autobiographique”, 1975) became a landmark phenomenon in the development of the theory of studying the autobiography genre. Philippe Lejeune puts forward a theory about the need to conclude an agreement between the author and the reader within the framework of any text. At the same time, the reader is obliged to perceive the text within a certain direction: novel, autobiographical, etc. [2].

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A peculiarity of works of the autobiographical direction is the type of contract that implies an orientation towards documentary, the necessary criterion for the implementation of which is the “faith” of both participants in the communicative act. Works created within the framework of fictional pacts (novels, essays, stories, stories, etc.) are an artificially derived form. The reader accepts the author's conditions and perceives the text as fictitious, not having an attitude towards truth. We can argue that the narration in an autobiographical work is characterized by a relatively complex form of addressing.

Firstly, the text has a secondary addressee - any reader who perceives the work as a complete whole.

Secondly, a text of the autobiographical genre may have a primary addressee who correlates with the narrator at the text level. This addressee can be presented as a specific person or as a contemporary of the writer or his descendant. In the first case, autobiographies, the content of which is an appeal to the reader, contain an appeal to the recipient of the text, as a rule, in the author's preface.

The main content of autobiographical prose is the coverage of the internal development of personality; in the author's consciousness the external, eventful side of life is refracted and turns into the facts of his biography, into his inner life.

One of the most important and most clearly visible characteristics of an autobiography is the trinity of "I", which unites the author, the narrator and the main character.

The author's main task is to talk about significant events in his life, which also implies the need to evaluate what happened. Thus, the writer not only records some events, but also looks for criteria for evaluating them, which can be not only his own feelings and ideas, but also the points of view of other people, philosophical ideas and everything that can be called "looking from the outside." The writer is simultaneously both the subject of the narrative and its object; therefore, two planes interact in an autobiography - the plane of the "mature" narrator in the present and the plane of his "I" in the past or "me today and me then" [2].

This coexistence of two planes of "I" determines the specific temporal organization of the text, which is characterized by the following:

1) time is reversible, since the narrative is based on retrospection;

2) in the text there is a juxtaposition of two-time plans: the time about which they write, and the time in which they write;

3) important features of the autobiography are the openness of the ending and the openness of the life story, although the first-time boundaries (for example, birth) are clearly established;

4) the narrative describes both isolated and recurring situations;

5) segmentation of time is observed at the will of the author (only part of the facts and events of the past is preserved, their sequence can be transformed);

6) not only situations that form a linear sequence, but also pictures of memories, between which there is not always a connection, serve as units of time;

7) the subjectivity of the organization of the chronotope manifests itself depending on the starting point and the will of the author;

8) personal biographical time is connected with historical [4].

In the history of Russian literature and criticism, the end of the XIX - the first half of the XX century is a special period, the distinctive feature of which is a pronounced tendency towards inter-genre synthesis and the emergence of new genre forms. Autobiographical prose is a fusion of metagenre associations.

Autobiographical prose becomes heterogeneous due to the interaction of this genre form with related modifications: diaries, memoirs, literary portraits, notes. It is no coincidence that the theory of autobiographical prose emphasizes a flexible genre structure, which "is difficult to systematize and classify and stubbornly resists them" [7].

The autobiographical principle unites the listed adjacent genre forms. Researchers have put forward various classifications for delimiting intra-genre manifestations of autobiographical prose. L.M. Nyubina notes that the difference between genres is the focus of the writer's epic attention and time distance. Thus, temporary distance from the remembered events is the main feature in distinguishing genres. Thus, diaries are characterized by a minimal time gap or its complete absence, while memoirs and autobiographies are characterized by a rather significant one [6].

N.A. Nikolina, classifying intra-genre movements in autobiographical prose, identifies four groups, but does not give specific examples. The researcher chooses fiction as an indicator distinguishing types of autobiographical prose:

The first group of "autobiographies proper" includes documentary texts that contain biographies and belong to the official business style. This group includes letters from writers, the genre of autobiographical essays, and autobiographies devoid of artistic fiction.

The researcher includes autobiographical texts in the second group, which simultaneously include detailed memories of the past, realities and persons associated with it. Unlike the first group, intra-genre forms of autobiographical prose, which are included in the second group, are based on a small content of artistic fiction and contain not just facts, but are based on a subjective beginning. This group includes memoirs and diaries.

The third group includes autobiographies and memoirs, which tend to be fictionalized. These works contain, for example, figurative characteristics of the realities described. This group is represented by the literary portrait genre [4].

The last group of the classification includes works of art that use the genre form of autobiography and are based on the real facts of the authors' lives. Here, fiction is often contained in equal proportions with factual material. This group is represented by an autobiographical novel and literary works using the form of a diary.

We are convinced that the boundaries of the genre-specific features of autobiographical prose are fluid. All genres, despite their literary and genetic proximity, perform different tasks: memoirs reproduce individual

episodes from the life of a writer with documentary accuracy, the main goal of a literary portrait is a detailed description of a person, an essay reproduces the biography of a specific person with the addition of the author's subjective opinion, and a diary reveals to the reader the world of the writer's emotional experiences.

An autobiography cannot be considered an indisputable source of information: every person can be wrong, or sometimes he simply ignores some facts of his life, sometimes he forgets some interesting facts. A writer who begins to write an autobiographical novel, often at the end of his literary career, sees through different eyes events that happened in childhood or youth. In most cases it has no list of facts of his life with the place and date noted. In addition, one should not lose sight of the achievements of psychoanalysis, which explained that it is impossible to be objective and give a holistic image of oneself.

Thus, autobiography has an ambiguous character, combining many opposing features. A generalization can be made regarding the typical structure of this genre: autobiographical works are most often first-person narratives and written by world-wise authors, and already in the first lines the reader learns that we will be talking about the life of the author.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Autobiography is a genre form that includes a small part of fiction. In autobiographical works, historical material enters into a synthesis with emotional material. At the center of a work of art in the autobiographical genre is one egocentric consciousness, and the key content of autobiographical prose is the illumination of the internal evolution of the individual. In the system of types of narration, two polar forms are distinguished that differ in the way they are depicted - narration from the first person and narration from the third person. Of course, the nature of autobiography requires the use of a first-person narrative as a sustainable form. This form is becoming leading in Russian autobiographical prose. The narration in an autobiographical work is characterized by a complex form of addressing. Appeals to the implicit reader in an autobiographical text are contained in the author's introductory notes and accompany the text throughout the entire narrative.

In the history of Russian literature, the end of the 19th - the first half of the XX century is a special period, the distinctive feature of which is the tendency for the emergence of new genre forms. The genre forms of autobiographical prose are the following genres: literary essay, literary portrait, memoirs, diaries. The boundaries of genre and specific features of autobiographical prose are fluid. Each of the identified intra-genre forms of autobiographical prose performs

different tasks: memoirs reproduce individual episodes from the life of a writer, the main goal of a literary portrait is a detailed description of a personality, an essay reproduces the life story of a specific person with the addition of the author's subjective opinion, and a diary opens up to the reader a world of emotional experiences.

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