

THE THEMES OF AMERICAN AND UZBEK WAR NOVELS

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ABSTRACT

This paper is dedicated to analyze the specific features of novels especially written in the years of wars in America and Uzbekistan. The researcher indicates to give the methods and materials which used to write war novels as well as the themes which were essential in war times.

Keywords: naturalism, realism, the Civil War, military, combat, friendship, love, absurdity of war.

INTRODUCTION

We know that realism in Europe started early in the 1830th and in the second half of the 19th century naturalism became apparent. However, at that time intensive development and blossoming of romantic art took place in the United States. The prerequisites for the emergence of realistic aesthetics in American literature were formed only in the 1860s in connection with the Civil War between the North and the South. The war destroyed two established social orders: not only the notorious slave-owning order of the South, but also the old democracy of the North. Those social orders were replaced by a modern, imperialist, industrial society.

The civil war - the greatest crisis in the life of the nation, a radical change in its history - dramatically changed and directed the development of American literature in a new direction. Military experience demanded incarnation. It was only possible to describe this rude, bloody and dirty war and the complete confusion that started behind it in the Romantic key in lyrical poetry with its high degree of abstraction, but not in prose.

Attempts at mastering the American realism of military experience began in the late 1860s. Essential help in solving this problem turned out to be more numerous than ever, descriptions of this war in the memoirs of its participants, chronicles and soldiers' diaries. The language of these testimonies, simple, sometimes even vernacular, roughly expressive, paved the way for a new method in US literature.

In the works of the first military novelists, as in all the post-war realistic prose of the United States, there is a desire to heal the wounds, recognized as an important

task of literature: the wounded nation needed to restore mental strength in order to move further along the path of industrial progress.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The need for US literature to assert traditional national optimism was theoretically formulated by William Dean Howells, the greatest writer and critic of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries: "The most optimistic outlook on things is the most American." Howells's statement, like his own creativity, summed up the experience of realistic post-war prose and strengthened the position of the century of "gentle realism" characteristic of US literature and its "smiling" tendency, which smoothed over the contradictions of national life.

A very productive opportunity for the development of a new method in American literature turned out to be a realistic rethinking of the traditions of romantic nativism - the "mirror" (ideally) reflection of the nature and life of a particular region. At the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, criticism places H. Beecher-Stowe with her "new British" realistic novels ("Priesthood Matchmaking" 1859) at the origins of this line of American realism, which was then widely developed in the so-called "local color literature". Meanwhile, a close and sober interest in the material signs and spiritual characteristics of the life of New England were noted and two early novels J.W.

DeForest "Sea cliff" (1859) and the historical novel "The Witch Times" (1857), where religious fanaticism in Salem of the end of the XVII century receives a rationalistic explanation. An important means of developing "local" material was the speech peculiarities of the inhabitants of a particular region: reproduced by many authors, they gave their works a unique local flavor. The pioneers of this very fruitful approach were the writers-humorists of the Old South, who in the 1830-1840s made a series of short stories-sketches of the southern life: OB Longstreet ("Pictures of Georgia", 1835), TB Thorpe (The Big Bear from Arkansas, 1841), W.T. Thompson ("Matchmaking of Major Jones", 1843). These authors, who innovatively developed the romantic nativist tradition, are sometimes considered to be "forerunners of realism in the USA": the simple rough life of the farming South was consciously portrayed by them directly and even pointedly primitively. (It is noteworthy that all of them were educated people, and Augustus Longstreet was the rector of the university in Oxford, Mississippi, where William Faulkner lived a century later, in 1840-50s.)

METHODS AND MATERIALS

It is essential to mention that all war novels seem to be highly descriptive with a great emphasis on detail in order to make the reader feel as if he were present in the war himself. A perfect portrayal of the environment can be regarded as one of the writers' major goals. In this sense, everything looks very vivid and close to reality. It is often whole paragraphs that contain information serving to depict the concrete situation fully and with all nuances. One may object that there is no point in discussing this feature since all war novels logically make use of various war events and the war in general becomes the primary theme. However, it is possible to find instances of books in which this particular topic represents only one type among others, equally important. Although Waldmeir finds it unfortunate to categorize war novels because "they refuse to hold still, and they tend to flow into and through one another" (p 10), he learns from John T. Frederick and

Chester Eisingers' divisions so as to make an organization of his own, which is as follows:

- novels concerned primarily with a realistic portrayal of combat;
- those which are principally studies of the effects of war upon an individual psyche
- those which are above all else ideological.

The idea of war, seen as the major focus, is what all militarily-oriented novels apparently have in common but the way it is integrated into the story can be understood as a distinguishing trait.

The war conditions, which a great number of soldiers was forced to go through, would be completely unbearable unless there happened to be someone capable of giving a helping hand; someone, who could be trusted and relied on. Strong bonds called 'friendship' were usually created among soldiers this way and the idea that they were not left just on their own made a lot of things easier for them. In the war novels, it is possible to find couples or small groups of people who stick together throughout the story at all costs in order to survive. Focusing on the whole troop of servicemen placed on the Pianosa island, Joseph Heller (the writer of "Catch-22") directly teams up private Yossarian and a soldier named Orr. Despite different personalities, frequent disputes and making fun of each other, their friendliness is quite explicit. Whenever they are together, they argue and quarrel but whenever one of them is somewhere on-duty, the other speculates what it would look like, if he did not manage to come back.

In addition, 'Love' is another theme frequently appearing in war novels and there seems to be certain balance between violent and love scenes as well. Letters or

various talismans carried in soldiers' breast pockets, snaps hidden in helmets, thoughts on spending night with their girlfriends and wives or even the imagination of their darlings' perfume scents – these are some of the forms of how the motif of 'love' is usually integrated into the storyline. Moreover, nearly all war novels connect the idea of love to whorehouses and sex, about which characters talk explicitly and their dialogues clearly reflect the way a man starts to perceive such issue when nothing but guns, explosives, wound-dressing, and polishing boots keeps occupying him for a long time.

The topic of absurdity of war is employed in war novels usually in connection with other topics, some of them being touched upon in this thesis and its purpose is to suggest that “the Army does things its own peculiar way” (Shaw 345). Military conditions gave soldiers basically two options to choose from – acceptance or rejection of the rules. According to the authors, either decision could have meant trouble because of the exceptions to other exceptions, which consequently started to puzzle everyone but the high-ranked officers who were in charge of making up the strange and hard-to-understand regulations. Although it may sound a little exaggerated, it could be said that besides surviving the war itself, the soldiers were struggling to survive mostly its absurdity.

However, the Second World War was the greatest tragedy of the 20th century in Uzbekistan. The human race was divided by more than 50 million people in the war 5 times more than the deaths of First World War. The amount of funds spent for the damage and the war on terrorism has amounted to \$ 4 billion.

The Uzbek people, having a deep sense of love for their country during the Second World War, hated the hostile attitude of the enemy who inflicted on the besieged land a painful situation. The people felt that it was the only force capable of stopping and abandoning the enemy. In the war years, humanitarian science also developed a lot. The great historian, archeologist, lawyer, orientalist, literary scholars who moved to Tashkent worked with Uzbek counterparts on important issues of history, culture and literature of Uzbekistan's people.

V.V Struve, V.A Shishkin, E.Bertels, I.K.Dodonov, V.Yu.Zohidov, X.Inoyatov, A.Yu.Yakubovskii, M.E.Masson, S. P.Tolstov, Ya.G.Gulomov and others have prepared a number of works on the history of Uzbekistan, the most ancient and medieval history, material culture and spirituality, etnogenesis of the peoples of Central Asia.

The literary and linguist H. Zaripov, G.Karimov, H.R.Yakubov, A.K.Borovkov and others conducted researches in the field of history of Uzbek literature and

contemporary Uzbek grammar, Uzbek-Russian, Russian-Uzbek dictionaries , Writing a dictionary of Alisher Navoi's works and so on.

The focus is on collecting, editing and publishing folklore. During the war years, "Shirin va Shakar", "Kunduz and Yulduz", "Dalli", "Murodhon", "Malika ayyor" and other dostons have been published. They were fond of humanism, liberty, love for the Motherland, and the feelings of hatred and hostility towards the enemies and the wicked. Literary critics have published several works of Uzbek classic literature (Lutfi, Bedil, Gulhaniy and others).

It is noteworthy to say that the main idea of war novels in Uzbek literature is that to show the respect and love for the country and motherland in terms of devotion. The several themes which given in the above are also available to the war novels in Uzbek literature, however there are some differences between them. For example, a famous writer Shukhrat's novel "The years in Chinelli", this was written in the years of "cold war" and wholly depicted the difficulties of war and how war impact to the society and nation. Furthermore, "the feeling of miss" particularly, mothers desperately missed their sons during the years when they were in combat. It is impossible imagine parents feeling when they got the letter from their children.

It is highly appreciated that Hamid Olimjon created poems and ballads such as "Sending young men to the battle", "Turner of the Battle of Tursun" and "Tears of Roxana" using the Uzbek poetic style and language. The Uzbek spirit of poetry had reached national spirit because of his works and this spirit has led to the influences of Uzbek poetry, especially Hamid Olimjon's poems. One of the peculiar features of this period is that writers and journalists like M. Ismail, Ilyas Muslim, Nazarmat, Adham Rahmat, N. Safarov, Ibrahim Rahim, Z. Fatullin, Adham Hamdam, are involved in the Red Army. They published their poems and stories about their fellow soldiers' courage in the newspapers such as "Front fact," "The Red Army Fact," "Forwarder," and "For the Motherland". One of the well-known writer of Uzbek literature Oybek was eager to write a novel about the World War II which play a great role in the fate of many people. For this purpose, he went to the Uzbek military zone fighting in the threshold of Moscow and closely studied the military life of his future heroes. From December 1942 until the last days of March 1943 he was in the front, and during this trip he wrote a series of poems full of bitter realities of war.

CONCLUSION

For postmodernist writers, the Second World War became the realistic background on the basis of which they usually built their fictitious stories. The real line mixed up with the fictional one could be seen as components forming the central

frame of the book. By the addition of other elements presented in war novels such as the authors' points of view expressed by means of characters' own feelings about the war, frequent insights into the protagonists' minds with the intention to clarify their actions, or the necessity to face and cope with uneasy situations full of pain and suffering, writers tended to make their books demanding as well as they tried to provoke readers to think. This complexity might lead to the idea that war novels come under the category of high literature but at the same time, it is possible to claim that war novels qualify as belonging into the low- or popular-literature type too, because of the themes they generally depict. In this sense, finding the exact location of war novels across the literary spectrum is obviously not effortless, since they often seem to occupy the very borderline between high and low literature. Concerning the themes themselves, a majority of war novels make use of those being discussed in previous chapters, i.e. friendship, love and sex, death and cruelty, and the absurdity of war. However, it can be stated straight away that this list is not complete because some of the novels are filled with other issues, such as political propaganda, ideology, or various analyses of history. The themes, the setting in a broader sense, or the tendency toward detailed portrayals and explanations are traits that appear to be generally unifying all war novels. On the other hand, the authors' individual approach to the depiction of various historical events as well as different ways of treating the events and integrating them into made-up story lines, are features that set one war novel apart from another. The six years, during which the Second World War kept raging, affected millions of men, women, and children. It is said that those who did not experience the war in person cannot truly express what it was actually like either. Novelists, having taken part in the conflict, seem to be giving first-hand evidence about the period, the people – both common and famous, and the actions, some of them having had a radical impact on the history. In this sense, there is no wonder that with the use of appropriate writing techniques and skills, their novels have become so gripping.

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