

THE CONCEPT OF LONELINESS IN NEOROMANTIC FICTION

The article is dedicated to the function of loneliness in the literary method “romanticism”. The concept of loneliness is viewed as one of the key notions for the method. The evolution of the concept’s functioning is followed throughout two periods: end of the XVIII — beginning of the XIX c. (romanticism) and end of the XIX — beginning of the XX c. (neoromanticism). The two periods are compared and on the basis of this comparison some conclusions are made as to why and how the views of neoromantics on the role of the individuality had changed.

Romanticism is most often associated with the literary trend which conquered Europe in the beginning of the XIX c. Here the term is used also in the meaning of the literary method “romanticism”— which can refer to any age or period of time, provided that the characteristic features are there [1, 4].

The analysis of the works by the most prominent representatives of both romantic and neoromantic trends convince us that loneliness is one of the basic conditions for the existence of the romantic hero.

Dividing his protagonist from society the author obtains good opportunity to criticize it, for as his hero does not belong to the society, he does not share its sins. Then, the unfeeling or corrupt surroundings bring tragedy into a novel, and the tragedy will add significance and some grandeur to the individuality. Moreover, the void made by the lack of social relations gives more opportunities to emphasize the individuality. And finally, the independence of such a hero from the rules of society and sometimes even from the laws of nature allows the author any subjectivity [2, 4, 5].

This idyllic freedom must bind to the other kinds of laws — to the laws of story-telling. The hero, however much his individual powers be glorified however strange be the world in which he lives, must still abide by the laws of the universe created for him. He lives, fights and dies according to the rules prescribed by the romantic method [4].

While both the romantic and the neoromantic hero are lonely, and not simply lonely but individualistic, the very state of romantic and neoromantic loneliness differs greatly. The aim of the romantic is to establish the value of the individuality, to defend the right to differ. Therefore the characters of Byron,

Shelley, Maturin etc. do their best to be really different, glorify in their strangeness, find trouble and exalt in sufferings, which let them stand out from the crowd. They live in the bright footlights of fantasy and would never come down to the common world [1,2]. Now, a neoromantic has to deal with the individuality whose rights are more or less acknowledged, and his dilemma is what the man should do with this freedom of his. The hero, therefore, seeks to find the purpose of his existence and the degree of his responsibility for his existence. Basically he has nothing against being like all — but he just can't. As a rule, some sort of psychological trauma keeps him apart from his likes. We see him trying to get back — and perishing in the fight.

The romantic, according to his aim, describes the development of his hero up to the moment when he finds himself in total opposition of the society. Here all development ceases — this is the culmination. To the neoromantic the separation from the society is the starting point for the most important part in the hero's development, since the aim of a neoromantic author is to investigate what happens to a personality after its alienation.

The scale of a neoromantic hero is quite private compared with a romantic one. If a romantic hero changes or, at least, wants to change the whole world, a neoromantic one is content with changing his own self. As to the world around, both generations of romantic writers are less ostentatiously concerned about what goes on in the society than the most of their literary contemporaries. And yet a neoromantic hero shows some responsibility for what happens to him and around him. He has social conscience, the feeling quite alien to his predecessors [3, 4, 5].

The change of the ultimate goals is clearly reflected in the author's attitude towards his hero. If a romantic would identify himself with his main character, a neoromantic author prefers to keep a bit away, always ready to assess, sometimes even to

laugh. The neoromantic hero is being judged throughout the story. Moreover, the trivial morals of the trivial society so much scorned by a true romantic seem to be good enough for a neoromantic hero to be judged by them [6,7].

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КОНЦЕПЦІЯ САМОТНОСТІ В ЛІТЕРАТУРНІЙ ТЕЧІЇ НЕОРОМАНТИЗМУ

У статті досліджується поняття самотності як однієї з типових рис літератури романтизму. Порівнюється функціональний зміст самотності у творчості романтиків кінця XVIII — поч. XIX ст. та романтиків кінця XIX — поч. XX ст. і на цій основі робляться деякі висновки про те, яким чином і чому змінилися погляди на роль особистості у неоромантиків.