

# Characteristics of the Image System in N.S.Leskov's Novel "On Knives"

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## ABSTRACT

the article is devoted to the characteristics of the system of images in the novel "At the Knives" by NS Leskov. The novel "On Knives" in the creative system of NS Leskov "- examines the existence and development of the poetics of the novel" On Knives." ideological content.

**KEYWORDS:** Roman, Leskov, artistic system, creativity, Russian literature

**How to cite this paper:** Nargiza Salimovais "Characteristics of the Image System in N.S.Leskov's Novel "On Knives"" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-6 | Issue-1, December 2021, pp.1453-1455, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd48071.pdf



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## INTRODUCTION

Nikolai Semyonovich Leskov has long been considered a "demiurge of the second row," although "Leskov's genius is undeniable even for a cautious and evasive mind." Therefore, it is natural that interest in the writer's work is growing every year.

In the last decade, the most important subjects of study are Leskov's worldview, mythological, folklore, ancient Russian and Christian traditions, characterology, genre, artistic and stylistic originality, intertextual connections. At the same time, researchers most often turn to the mature period of the writer's work, while not enough attention is paid to his early works[1].

Meanwhile, it is obvious that the study of the early period makes it possible to more fully and adequately comprehend Leskov's artistic system as a whole, to understand the regularity of his creative evolution.

In this regard, the motivic analysis of the writer's works is fruitful, which allows solving the problem of studying the integrity of an individual work, a certain period or the whole of creativity.

Identification and interpretation of complex textual and intertextual connections, interpretation of the content and characterization of the poetics of Leskov's works can be more adequate due to the study of the motivic complex that has developed in them,

## LITERATURE ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

Individual motives of Leskov's creativity in modern literary studies have been studied quite thoroughly.

However, few Leskov works are involved in the sphere of motivic analysis: the stories "The Life of a Woman", "Musk Ox", the novels "Nowhere", "On Knives", the chronicle "Soborians", the cycle of stories "The Righteous", Yuletide stories and some other works of Leskov in the early 1860s did not become the subject of special study, therefore it is advisable to introduce them into scientific circulation and determine[2].

The work of N.S. Leskov, due to his special position in Russian literature, has been on the periphery of literary criticism for almost a century. Separate

monographs dedicated to this writer, who is just now finding his place among Russian classics, appear only in the forties of the last century, and a wide interest in the study of his artistic heritage dates back to the sixties and seventies. It can be argued that to this day Leskov's work remains insufficiently studied, although the number of studies devoted to the writer's work is steadily growing.

## DISCUSSION

A special, dramatic role in Leskov's creative fate, both during his lifetime and after it, was played by his so-called "anti-nihilistic" novels, and among them - "On Knives". This layer of the writer's artistic heritage began to be actively developed only in the last decade and a half. The subject of our research is the novel "On Knives", which we tend to consider as a phenomenon extremely important for the creative formation of the writer, which has made a significant contribution to Russian classical literature.

Until recently, this novel by Leskov was listed among the most extreme manifestations of "anti-nihilistic" fiction. With the increasing dissatisfaction of researchers with this concept itself, "At Knives", however, is considered exclusively as a product of the socio-political polemics of the sixties, which, in our opinion, hinders both its objective study and understanding of the genre nature of a whole range of works of Russian literature[3].

In our opinion, this problem can be solved only by making adjustments to the modern methodology of studying typological systems, sometimes also defined by the concept of "literary school". It seems to us impossible to construct an objective classification of historical and literary phenomena without a thorough study of the literary process, in other words, without solving the question of the genesis of a particular work of art. Only in this way can one avoid violating the elementary laws of cognition, which make it a necessary condition for understanding the essence of an object to understand "what it was" before it became "what it is"[4].

Thus, the presented article has two levels of tasks - the first involves the study of the novel "On Knives" as a separate work in the totality of this literary phenomenon, that is, we consider what this novel was outside the boundaries of Leskov's creativity, what it objectively is within its boundaries and how its poetics is then refracted in the subsequent work of the writer.

It should be noted that the genre nature of Leskov's work, gives new criteria for the periodization of his work, determines the role and place of the novel "On Knives" in the system of the writer's creativity,

justifies the overdue rejection of the term "anti-nihilistic" novel, reveals some mechanisms of assimilation of literary tradition, introduces into scientific circulation such an interesting phenomenon of Russian literature of the nineteenth century as the work of S.A. Burach[5].

The history of the question the belonging of the novel "On Knives" to anti-nihilistic fiction, and to its most extreme manifestations, was established for the novel almost simultaneously with its publication. At the same time, it has always been considered exclusively in the context of other works that fell into the category of "protective", and Leskov's work itself remained, in fact, completely unread by critics and literary historians, which gave rise, in our opinion, to a completely false idea about this most interesting creation of the great writer.

The novel "On Knives" was considered, in this regard, among extremely heterogeneous material closely related to the concept of "literary school", and when trying to classify such material, methodological weaknesses were very clearly manifested - literary studies faced fundamental difficulties, overcoming which, in our opinion, is still on the agenda.

Therefore, it seems to us correct and timely to systematize scientific ideas related to the so-called anti-nihilistic fiction to the maximum extent possible, both in order to determine the place of Leskov's novel in the literary context of its contemporary, and in order to analyze the scientific validity of the concept itself, without which the topic of our research would not have received the comprehensive coverage that we are striving for.

The special place of the novel "On Knives" in Leskov's creative system seems obvious to us, and we are ready to suggest that a work like this exists in the artistic world of any writer - it is precisely such phenomena that make it possible to objectively periodize creativity. "On knives" marks the boundary of early Leskov, and we can identify the characteristic features of such a border phenomenon - first of all, a special concentration of "growth zones". This assumption requires, of course, verification and clarification on a broader historical and literary material.

The importance of the novel "On Knives" in the formation of Leskov's creative universe is difficult to overestimate. We would define this novel as a kind of DNA of the writer's creativity, which unfolded its spiral throughout his literary development. "On Knives" occupies a special and extremely important place in Leskov's creative universe; the novel in a

concentrated form contains those creative motives that are destined later, in unambiguously recognized.

N.S. Leskov's novel "On Knives", as we tried to prove, is extremely closely related genetically, and the nature of this connection allows us to say that there are objective laws of the development of the literary process, and determining their nature is a matter of time and the volume of the analyzed material.

The knowledge of these patterns opens up prospects for a new solution to such issues as the periodization of the literary process, the tradition and the nature of its inheritance, the development of the genre in various conditions of national literatures.

### CONCLUSION

A promising direction of scientific research seems to us to be the knowledge of the laws of the formation of large creative systems, their interaction with the "literary soil", the nature of the creative mastering by the "generals" of the victories of the "captains" and "privates" of the literary army, as well as the internal logic of the development of the creative universe of a writer. We have made observations on such a process

in this work based on the material of N.S. Leskov's creativity.

Thus, it seems to us that the methods we have proposed for solving topical scientific problems deepen the understanding of modern literary criticism about the evolution of the genre of menippe satire in Russian literature of the nineteenth century and allow, in the future, to develop more objective criteria for its periodization.

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