

Image as a Literary Category

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ABSTRACT

The artistic image is one of the key concepts in those areas of literary criticism that proceed from the aesthetic nature of art. Meanwhile, in the definition and application of the concept, there is a lot of obscure, debatable. A literary work appears to the reader as a text, in a linear sequence of linguistic signs, but images appear behind words, sentences - why? always? what are the criteria for their selection? This range of issues is discussed in this article. But first, let us recall the provisions that, apparently, can be considered generally accepted in the theory of the image.

KEYWORDS: *role, history, clear, philosophy, one of, nature*

The origins of this theory are in antiquity (the doctrine of mimesis). But a detailed justification of the concept, close to modern, is given in German classical aesthetics, especially in Hegel. The philosopher saw in art a sensual (i.e., perceived by the senses) embodiment of the idea: "Artistic comprehension differs from theoretical, scientific study in that it is interested in the subject in its individual existence and does not seek to turn it into a universal thought and concept". In that time is single, individual (i.e., indivisible) in art is able to vividly, tangibly, visibly convey the general. Hegel draws a memorable analogy - he likens a work of art to the eyes as a mirror of the soul: "... one can say about art that it reveals the spirit and turns any image at all points of its visible surface into an eye that forms the receptacle of the soul ... It turns into an eye not only a bodily form, facial expression, gestures and demeanor, but in the same way actions and events, modulations of voice, speech and sound throughout their entire length and all the conditions for their manifestation ...". The artistic image, according to Hegel, is the result of the "cleansing" of the phenomenon from everything accidental, obscuring the essence, the result of its "idealization". For example, not only the Raphaelian Madonnas, but all mothers experience "reverent and humble" love for their child, "however, not every form of a woman's face is capable of fully expressing such a depth of soul".

The highlighted provisions of Hegel's aesthetics turned out to be more durable than their methodological context, and they enter - in a transformed form - into modern literary criticism, where the image is interpreted as an indecomposable unity of the general, special, individual, as a reproduction of objects in their integrity, which they possess in primary reality. The illusion of reflecting integrity is achieved, despite the inevitable fragmentation of descriptions in a verbal text, usually by selecting characteristic, expressive details (according to the principle of synecdoche: pars pro toto). The general properties of an artistic image can be confidently attributed to the generalization contained in it (the terms characteristic, typical, typification are usually used for its designation), expressiveness (i.e., the expression in the very structure of the image of the author's ideological and emotional attitude to the subject) and ambiguity.

The content and scope of the concept of "image" are being clarified thanks to other, related areas of knowledge, where this word is also used as a term. In different systems of terms, its meanings are not identical, and in essence we have homonyms: an image in the theory of knowledge is any reflection of reality (both conceptual and sensual); in psychology, representation, i.e., the mental contemplation of an object in its entirety (its "imagination"); in semiotics, a kind of sign, namely the "iconic sign", where the signifier is similar to the signified. Unlike representation, the image is created with the help of a system of signs: in literature, its material carrier is the word, speech. As a kind of sign, the image is correlated with one or another object (referent), although the function of the image is not exhausted by this.

The aesthetic is wider than the artistic, and images as objects of aesthetic contemplation exist not only in art, in particular, not only in fiction, but also in other verbal works. On this basis, the classification of images is built. So, G.N. Pospelov contrasts the factual images of documentary films and illustrative images in scientific works with self-sufficient images in fiction, created with the help of fiction. However, it is difficult to draw a clear line between these types of images, historically it is mobile, and along with the "literature of fiction", they distinguish aesthetically organized documentary literature ("The Past and Thoughts" by Herzen), where, according to L.Ya. Ginzburg, "the quality of the artistic image" also arises. A huge role in identifying the type of figurativeness is played by one or another attitude of the reader's perception. It is formed by the author with the help of a frame (frame) of the text, in which the title is especially important (in its absence, the first poetic line, the first phrase). For example, 7 words included in the title of one of Dostoevsky's early works: White Nights. Sentimental novel. (From the memoirs of a dreamer) - "these are, as it were, seven keys to his artistic secret." The title and genre subtitle prepare the reader to enter the conventional, artistic world and, more specifically, to meet the lonely hero-dreamer.

We emphasize the organic connection between the image as a reproduction of the integrity of the subject and its ambiguity. This is precisely the initial objective prerequisite for the plurality of interpretations of a work. In the history of Russian literary criticism, this idea was persistently pursued by the psychological school headed by A.A. Potebney, who considered images to be allegories, the meanings of which vary from reader to reader. That is why, for supporters of "exact" literary criticism, the image is too shaky, indefinite concept, unreliable as an analysis tool. So, in 1919 V.M. Zhirmunsky builds a new poetics without using the concept of "image" "art requires completeness and precision and therefore cannot be left to the reader's imagination; not the reader, but the poet creates a work of art"; in poetry, the image is "the subjective addition of the perceiver to the meaning of the words he perceives."

Strengthening in literary criticism in the last third of the XX century. The dialogical concept of art contributes to the revival of interest in the traditional problem of the artistic image.

Let us dwell in turn on three interrelated questions: about "arguments" in the composition of a literary text; about the typology of images; about the correlation of images and tropes, as well as other stylistic devices.

And yet, with all the brightness and expressiveness of the syllable, colored with well-aimed epithets and comparisons ("Our audience is like a provincial ...", "we need bitter medicines, caustic truths"), Lermontov's preface is an explanation of the goals and poetics of the novel, an answer to the bewilderment of criticism and public, that is, it is a non-artistic type of utterance, or discourse (to use the now common term). Here the author, according to V. Iser, "seems to cross over to the other side, i.e., reproduces the expected horizon of understanding"; the German scientist considers such prefaces to be the norm for the "literary practice of the 18th century", in general, in his opinion, they are "naive", their authors "are not among the most prominent world writers."

The last statement is more than debatable: after all, for a writer - in any century! - the force of impact of his work can be much more important than artistry as such. This is also confirmed by insertions into the main text (digressions on philosophical, historical topics in Tolstoy's "War and Peace"), equal parts of the composition of artistic and journalistic works (G.I. Uspensky's essay "A Quarter of a Horse", etc.). After all, the authors understood that they were sacrificing imagery, but deliberately went for it. "... I would like to express a few thoughts, even if my artistry perished," Dostoevsky admitted while working on the novel "Demons".

Secondly, in the works of all kinds and genres, there are a lot of arguments (including lengthy ones) woven into the artistic verbal fabric, for example, into the statements and internal monologues of the characters. Here they form part of the context that creates the image. So, in the story of L.N. Tolstoy's "The Death of Ivan Ilyich", the main character's internal monologue includes a syllogism proving the inevitability of death. But the "correct" reasoning does not console the dying person in the least, his feelings protest: "That example of the syllogism that he studied in the logic of Kizeveter: Kai is a man, all people are mortal, therefore Kai is mortal, seemed to him in his whole life correct only in relation to Kai but not to him. It was Kai - a man, a man in general, and it was absolutely fair; but he was not Kai, and not a man in general, but he was always quite, quite special from all other beings; he was Vanya with his mother, with his father, with Mitya and Volodya, with toys, with the coachman, with the nanny, then with Katenka, with all the joys, sorrows, delights of childhood, youth, youth. Was it for Kai that smell of a leather-striped ball that Vanya loved so much? The syllogism is subordinated to the general mood of the character. In the lyrics, the composition sometimes resembles the course of a proof. In Lermontov's poem "It's both boring and sad, and there is no one to give a hand to ..."

the lyrical subject, it would seem, consistently convinces himself that life is "such an empty and stupid joke." According to Belinsky, this is "a soul-shattering requiem of all hopes, all human feelings, all the charms of life ...". However, in addition to the harmony of the verse, the gloomy conclusion is contradicted by the very intensity of reflection on the "sweet disease" of passions, on the futility of "eternal" desires and the impossibility of "eternal" love. This is an attempt by a person who knew not only "a moment of spiritual hardship", to judge life "with reason", to evaluate it "with cold attention". The essence of life is non-rational - is this not the most important of the meanings of the poem? The feelings of the lyrical subject argue with logic.

Reasoning and just judgment in a literary work are involved in recreating the integrity of the inner world of a certain person. "The Volga flows into the Caspian Sea" - this phrase is perceived differently when reading the educational text and Chekhov's story "The Teacher of Literature", where the history and geography teacher Ippolit Ippolitich repeats it in her dying delirium. "An island is a piece of land surrounded on all sides by water," a definition clearly taken from a textbook or reference book. In Chekhov's story "Darling" this is, indeed, a quote from a geography textbook, which is said by the high school student Sasha and after him "darling" Olga Semyonovna. But the quotation becomes an artistic detail only in the light of the narrator's commentary on the words of the heroine: "A piece of land is called an island ..." she repeated, and this was her first opinion, which she expressed with confidence after so many years of silence and emptiness in her thoughts. In "War and Peace", Pierre Bezukhov expounds Herder's ideas to inspire his friend with them, but it is not philosophy that enlivens him: "Yes, this is Herder's teaching," said Prince Andrei, "but not that, my soul, will convince me, but life and death, that's what convinces. Herder's concept (as presented by Pierre) is given a large paragraph. And in L. Leonov's novel "The Russian Forest" Professor Vikhrov's lecture on the forest, introducing a whole section of botany, with many facts of Russian history, occupies almost the entire chapter (seventh). Taken out of context, this is precisely a lecture, but in the work it characterizes Vikhrov (both as an enthusiastic scientist and as a patriot), as well as students who sympathetically listen to him, who will soon go to the front to defend the "Russian forest"; among the listeners is Vikhrov's daughter, Polyana, who grew up without a father and now, no longer in absentia, evaluates him. Thus the lecture is introduced into the artistic context of the novel.

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