

LITERARY CENTRISM OF THE NOVEL “T” BY V. PELEVIN

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Summary: The peculiarities of metaromanian story in the novel “T” by Pelevin are considered in the present article. The main attention is paid to the analysis of the author’s reflection of the literary work creation process and novel engagement through finding main constants of plot creation into the general context of works by Pelevin.

Key words: literary centrism, metaromanian story, text creation.

Анотація: В статті розглянуті особливості метароманної оповіді в «Т» Пелевіна. Основна увага приділяється аналізу рефлексії автора над процесом створення літературного твору та включенню роману через виявлення основних констант сюжетотворення в загальний контекст творчості Пелевіна.

Ключові слова: літературоцентризм, метароманна оповідь, текстотвір.

Аннотация: В статье рассмотрены особенности метароманного повествования в «Т» Пелевина. Основное внимание уделяется анализу рефлексии автора над процессом создания литературного произведения и включению романа через обнаружение основных сюжетообразующих констант в общий контекст творчества Пелевина.

Ключевые слова: литературоцентризм, метароманное повествование, текстопорождение.

Now there is a great number of reviews on the Pelevin’s novel (A. Shepeleva, D. Proskuriakova, D. Bykova, V. Kyrycyna, A. Stepanova, V. Kostirko, P. Basynskogo, L. Danylkina, V. Kavtoryna, V. Gubaylovskiy, A. Narinska, T. Kyrylina, A. Korotkova, etc.) and the majority of them still has the character of critical reviewing.

"T" is a novel about how a book is written and about the production of an artistic text as such. The protagonists are an imaginary author Ariel and the object of his work, the count T. Ariel falls into a talk with the personage created by him, tells him about the peripeteias of his creation. Having gone through various adventures, the hero understands the sense of existence and grows into an author himself, destroying illusiveness of the false world and finding genuine objective reality space.

The autoreflexion above the process of work is increased in “T”. It is literature about literature. Books creation process, so called technology of modern artistic texts “preparation”, is explicated in the novel. Metaromanian structure of narration allows inclusion of literary autoreflexion. The search of author-hero-reader as a single indivisible semantic unit becomes the basis of the plot.

In a novel everything plays with a reader, not only the text itself, but also the dust-cover, the flyleaf, the annotation, the name of the novel ("t" or "T"), the output data, where one of heroes is indicated in a mourning frame in as an editor, imagining himself the author, false data are written in about the picture used on the flyleaf. Thus, the interface between the text and reality of a reader is diffused.

The whole book is the description of the fictional process of text creation, the reflections about the essence of the person creating the text. The Universe of

letters becomes an objective reality space of the hero, the creation of which almost all heroes apply.

Heroes-creators of the book about the count T. imagine themselves the creators of the world. They are Ariel, the editor-in-chief, writing almost nothing, only "brushing" separate parts of the text in something the whole, Mitenka Bershadsky, who is responsible "for an erotica, glamour and non-resistance to the evil by violence", Grisha Ovnuk, "the man of action", Gosha Pivorilov, "the creator of psychedelic content used between quotation marks", the fifth "metaphysician of the absolute", creating the "stream of consciousness" and the sixth of which is episodic, hired for writing the realistic chapter. In general, their collaboration is as follows: "usually novels are written by groups of specialists, where each of them is responsible for the separate aspect of narration. And then the parts put together are "brushed" by the editor, in order not to make them look separately" [7, p. 90]. Under their auspice "literary work grew into letters combinations art of drafting, being well-sailed" [7, p. 89].

"Makers" work of is a modern variant of plurality of God in Tarakanova's point of view. These personages, as well as in the theory of princess, create the hero in turn. They function the same way, such as of Apollo, Mars, Venus and other. Ariel becomes the supreme God. It's not by chance that his last name Brahman means the "principle of all real", "the world soul" (the allusion per the Soul of the World by V. Solovyov).

The narrator pays attention that Ariel has the Jewish name, but actually he is not a Jew. There is the epigraph from Leonard Cohen: "I'm a little Jew who wrote the Bible" in Pelevin's novel "Pineapple water for a beautiful lady" [5, p. 7]. Just as Brahman appears to be a false Jew, he appears to be a false and an unreal creator of the book. Following the logical development of the plot, where everything is inverted and becomes the opposite (the sleep – into reality, the reader – into the author, Nothing – into Everything, the victim – into the executioner), the exchange of roles between the hero and his creators takes place.

The heroine of creator's novel Aksinia, trying to create detectives about the count, claims for the role of the writer.

But however, the count T., appears to be the veritable Maker of the Universe. Understanding it, he finds his Monastery of Optina – "the desirable emptiness". The count makes the world from letters, rendering the expression "the Word at first appeared" into literal, realizing the metaphor the "world as a text": "Really, where to hurry, if everything in the world is simply a text" [7, p. 163], "I began to create the world as a text, because it was necessary to begin with something" [7, p. 209].

The narrator is worried about "the person, who writes the Book of life, and the person, who reads it, and the person, who is told about by this Book" [7, p. 374]. The hero, the author of himself, gets the possibility to exist only in reader's consciousness. Pelevin, exposing the ordinary books reading process, tries to clear up the mystery of life. The act of reading becomes a sacral process of world creation from letters, not yielding on the degree of human reality.

In spite of all narrator's slender deductions about the possibility of T. to create the worlds, the abilities of the count are canceled by the forms of verbal utterance, the third person narration destroys the illusion of a reader about the hero, as about the author of the whole novel. The persistent problem of impossibility to incarnate the planned idea by means of speech correctly appears.

The favourite Pelevin's problem is brought up to date in a novel again. It is a search of objective reality space among the enormous amount of virtual ones. "Pelevin's personages with the persistence of the "Russian boys" fight above the question: what is reality?" [3, p. 501]. There are a lot of potential worlds in "T", accordingly, the same number of truths about the sense of human existence. The past (XIX c.) and the present (XXI c.), literature and life, meet the doctrines of different religions truths, polar judgments about man's nature appear to be equally possible, and all this variety is harmonized into something indissoluble. According to Pelevin, everything taking place in reality is just a fruit of imagination of a perceiving person. Only he exists, there is nothing else.

Practically all the works by Pelevin are formed into a single metatext, where a certain hero appears, who does usually not have a favourite woman or a family, and who tries to escape from the false, illusive and simulative reality to the real world.

Genuine objective reality space in Pelevin's works has different names and due to their multiplicity has none of them: Internal Mongolia in "Chapaev and Emptiness", Iridescent stream in "The Sacred Book of the Werewolf", the Monastery of Optina in "T". In other works this topos is adopted descriptively: getting off from a conveyer in "Recluse and Six-Fingers", from a train in "The Yellow Arrow", pass in "Prince of Gosplan", exit from a labyrinth in "The Helmet of Horror"; the heroes become light of horizon ("Horizon Light"), a luminous bicycle ("The Life and Adventures of Shed Number XII") etc.

Hero's going to these spaces is not death, as E. Ermolin asserts [2, p. 335], that is awakening to the real and only the authentic life, it's light lighting up, the departure to the great Nothing, turning out to Everything. The hero's getting off the train in «The Yellow Arrow» illustrates that Pelevin's hero isn't just dying, but passing into another plane of life. The dead are thrown out of carriage windows at full speed of the train, but the young gets off at the unique moment of stop.

Sometimes Pelevin's hero realizes, that the aim he goes to is a plaster cast, a deception, a simulacrum, but, in spite of being paradoxically, he can't give it up and continues the way. Petya from "Prince of Gosplan" explains this phenomenon in such away: "When a person simply spends so much time and forces on a road, and, finally, reaches the aim, he already can't allow himself to see everything as it is" [6, p. 136]. Omon Ra from the same name novel behaves in the same way. Having appeared at the end of his virtual trip to the Moon in the tunnel of subway, he refuses to believe in what is going on and continues his imaginary wandering. Unlike other personages, the count T. knows where to go, understands that the Monastery of Optina is only the creation of mind of his creators, consequently only illusion, but he does not go ahead unconsciously as the above mentioned heroes, he

tries to recreate the world, begins to apply for role of the Universe Maker and opens Monastery of Optina in itself.

The moment of "double presence" (V. Kuricyn) is characteristic for Pelevin's heroes. Sasha from "Prince of Gosplan" is the simultaneously a worker of a bureaucratic office and a personage of a computer game, Petka ("Chapaev and Emptiness") is a participant of the revolution and a patient of the psychiatric clinic, T. ("T") is the hero and the author.

Pelevin conducted a game with the substitution of narrative instances in many works (in prefaces of "Chapaev and Emptiness", "The Sacred Book of Werewolf"). In "T" this game reaches its peak, transferring everything in the plane of literature about literature.

One of the episodes in "T" (when the count crosses the frozen Styx) appeals to "Chapaev and Emptiness". Some personages from the above mentioned novel come into the new work "in order not to increase the essences were not increased without a necessity". The text constantly sends to the names and concepts of the well-known writers, historical figures, clergymen. The author organizes the meeting for non-met Tolstoy and Dostoevsky during their life, ironically beating the collision of the literary hero and the fisherman of the dead souls from the computer shooter-game communication.

The sleep and the reality of the hero, living simultaneously at the beginning of XX century and at its end, changed each other and were the chronotop of "Chapaev and Emptiness", thus it was impossible to definite where sleep is and where is reality. In "T" the realities of the XXI century embed into, let's say, the end of the XIX century. One time includes the other, at the same time differentiating spaces and rescinding the distinctions between them, transferring everything in the ontological sphere of human life. There are a lot of spaces in "T", the borders between them are not clearly outlined. The Worlds gather one into another on the nest-doll principle, but the last, the smallest of them (the internal world of the count) appears to be the most gigantic, containing all the previous ones. "All these worlds are not true, but also it is impossible to name them false" [1, p. 83].

According to A. Arkchangel'sky, there are three parts in "T", as well as in other novels by Pelevin: "1. A false facade, the imitation of reality. 2. A gradual recovery of a hero and communication with different types of promptsers <...> 3. Finally, the hero attempt to become himself <...>" [4]. However the indicated phases of becoming of the hero are repeated many times. Having passed a similar circle, having begun to see clearly, the hero finds out again, that the gained knowledge are not true. It is possible to put the full stop in the plot development after each turn. Thus, the author gives a few versions, releases of the plot development of the novel, written in reader's eyes, possible scenarios which do not always and unnecessarily realize.

There is a great number of grounds of the hero existence in the novel. He is a literary hero, an emanation of the dead writer L.N. Tolstoy, the author of the book, the dreaming real writer Tolstoy. It is up to the reader by Whom to imagine T.

At the end of his way the count T. finds what, he was going to and aimed to – the Monastery of Optina. It is a house, "I", "that place, where the Universe, the life, the death, the space and the time, my present body and the bodies of all other the participants of presentation exist, – although, if to analyze, there is nothing at all in it" [7, p. 380].

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