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THE IMAGE OF AN ARTIST AS A LITERARY-AESTHETIC PHENOMENON

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Abstract. The article deals with the literary essence of the concept of the image of an artist in the imagery system of the work of art. It is defined that according to the level of generalization the image of an artist can be referred to the literary type, as it concentrates in itself the most essential traits and the outlook of the creative individuals of the time, at the same time demonstrates its uniqueness and originality. Depending on the perspective of the study it can be seen both as an image-character and image-personage.

Keywords: the image of an artist, an image-character, an image-personage, an image-type, conflict.

1. INTRODUCTION

The image of an artist is a complicated and ambiguous concept covering quite a wide range of interpretations depending on the field it is considered in. Some of its aspects are highlighted in a number of works (K. Shakhova, N. Bochkarova, Y. Kovaliv, O. Skidan, U. Vaysshtayn, etc.) which focus on the problems of a creative personality and society; the image of an artist as a spokesman of the author's ideas; the synthesis of literature and painting caused by the presence of the image of an artist in the text. But the phenomenon in question hasn't been considered as a component of the image system of a work of art yet, which testifies to the vitality of the given paper aiming at investigating the literary essence of the concept "the image of an artist" and its place in the image system of a work of fiction.

In literary criticism the notion of image is one of the most important ones. Most of the scholars consider it to be a defining component of a work of art. The profound research of this category contributes to a deeper comprehension of the ideological content and the artistic peculiarities of a literary work. N. Dmytrenko interprets the image as "the main structural unit of a literary work's perception" [1].

O. Zabarny admits that "the instructional and educational functions of literature are performed mainly by means of artistic images; in comparison with other components of a work of fiction, images are the most important ones in terms of expressiveness, intensity, and meaning of the work" [2]. According to V. Ivanyshyn, the author of *Essays on Theory of Literature*, "an artistic image is a specific form of the aesthetic and sensuous exploration (perception and reflection) and transformation (generalization and modeling) of reality; specifically-perceptual idea that influences both feeling and consciousness" [3].

M. Khrapchenko differentiates the concepts of image and artistic image. Unlike “the image” as a general concept which “is a photograph of the surrounding world observed by a person”, the artistic image “is the result of a complicated transformation of impressions and observations of life. Its essence is defined primarily by the facility to generalize reality and human experience” [8]. The above mentioned peculiarity results in the multi-aspect and polysemantic character of the artistic images that in its turn gives the ground for their classification. Nowadays there are many classifications of the artistic images, but the most complete one is suggested by V. Ivanyshyn. The scholar groups the artistic images according to various criteria: the subject of the representation – the images of the people (images-personages, images-collectives, assembly images), the images of the scenes, animals, buildings, phenomena, landscapes (rural, urban, industrial, marine, space, interiors, exteriors; the function in the text – the main, secondary, incidental; the character of generalization – typical, exceptional, ideal, etc. [3].

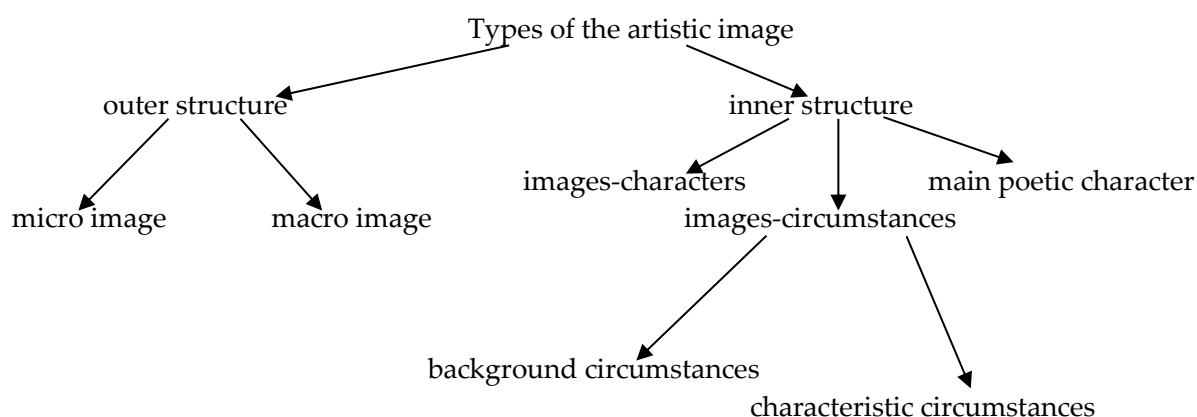
2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Such a precise classification creates the basis for profound researches of the artistic image as a multi-aspect phenomenon. It provides scholars with deep and meaningful comprehension of the form, theme and the idea of the analyzed work of art. Thus, the image of an artist according to the above mentioned characteristics can be both intertextual and imaginary; positive or negative; main, secondary or incidental, etc. The artist in a work of fiction performs a certain function, he is depicted with the help of some creative method, has his own structure, is marked by a definite way of generalization, and takes some place in the aesthetic system.

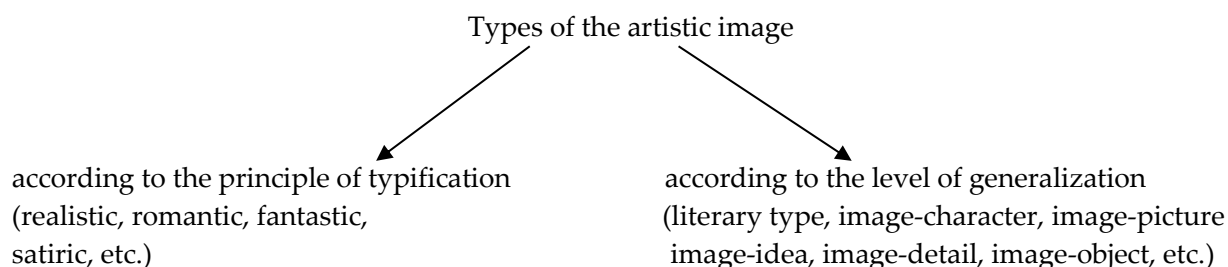
Applying the whole-system approach to the concept of an image, V. Udalov considers its outer and inner structure. Within the outer structure the researcher distinguishes a **micro image** (“the smallest unit of a literary work of art” [7]) and **macro image** (“a personage in a novel, a play or a film” [7]). According to the inner structure the images are divided into **images-characters** and **images-circumstances**. It should be pointed out that V. Udalov does not identify the image-character with the image of a person considering it to be one of the manifestations of the image-character. The image which represents a certain side of the reality in the foreground and a generalized one in the background is called the image-circumstance [7]. The latter in its turn is divided into **background circumstances**, which perform a background function – rather neutral for understanding the ideas of a work of fiction and **characteristic circumstances** which are a bit closer to the ideas and are connected with the images-characters. The image-character is opposite to circumstances: in the foreground it embodies a generalized (not a concrete) side of the picture, in the background – a concrete one [7].

Furthermore, the literary scholar defines the third kind of the artistic image – the **circumstantial character**, which refers to the characters as it conveys the ideological concepts of a work though it is circumstantial as it is connected with the ideas of minor importance [7]. In the context of our research this kind of images is the most essential with reference to a specific status of an artist in the society. In most cases creative personalities are opposed to circumstantial images as “the environment” of the artist. For example, in the novel *The Moon and Sixpence* by S. Maugham the circumstantial characters are considered to be Strickland’s wife, Dirk Stroeve, Blanche and others, i. e. all the personages except Strickland. They are contrasted to Strickland as the world of mock-art and philistines. Each of them embodies some ideas, but they are secondary and not key ones.

V. Udalov also points out the fourth (the last) group of images, which constitutes the second kind of images-characters, namely the image as the **main poetic character** in a certain work. It conveys the main idea, dominates in the work [7]. The typology of images according to V.L. Udalov can be represented in the following scheme:



A. Sytchenko offers the classification of the image according to the principle of typification and the level of generalization.



The researcher states that in the history of literature the concepts of the image-character, the image-personage and the literary hero are viewed as synonyms. At the same time he emphasizes that the notion of the image-character is narrower than that of the image-personage. His arguments are based on the fact that the image-personage has not only the traits of the character, it also plays a certain ideological and aesthetic role in the context.

O. Zabarny differentiates such categories as “image-personage”, “image-character” and “image-type” with reference to the degree of generalization of the image peculiarities. In comparison with the personage the character is depicted more completely and profoundly, his traits are lined more distinctly and expressively [2]. The image in a work of fiction is considered to be a broader concept than the character as it has traits referring not only to the character. The image, including the character, has an aesthetic value as it represents both the objective content and the means of its artistic disclosure, marked by the author’s intention [2].

The literary type is the image-character which embodies most essential human traits and those of social relationships of a certain epoch. It means that not every personage can be a character and not every character can be a type. The type is a generalized image. Modeling the image of a person as an individual character the writer generalizes the traits, typical of a certain group of people. So, the image-type can be defined as the embodiment of the general through the individual from the point of view of the author's evaluation of life and his creative initiative [2].

On the basis of the above represented analysis it can be admitted that the concept of “the image of an artist” absorbs all the main attributes of the artistic image, i.e. diversity, generalization, expressiveness, emotionality, aesthetics, abstractness, etc. This is a unity of the objective and the subjective (describing an objectively existing social group of artists, the author cannot create an impersonal image without processing it in his own world-view. Recipients, in their turn, treat the image of the artist in their own way, and their treatment may not coincide with the author’s); the general and the individual (on the one hand the image of an artist reflects the mode of life and thinking of creative people in general, on the other hand it displays the unique nature of a particular artist), the typical and the individual.

No doubt that the image of a painter in a literary work is the image-character as the painter is a personage with certain traits of character, moral qualities, a steady world-view that determines his behaviour and attitude to the reality. However, he does not only have certain traits, but also conveys the author's conception, plays a certain ideological and artistic role in the text. A number of scholars focus on this issue. For instance, K. Sizova considers that the author's world-view, his perception of reality are reflected in the system of artistic images. Consequently, one can speak about the objective-subjective nature of the image structure in a work of fiction. The image of an artist is treated by modern literary criticism as the result of artistic cognition and also as its tool, the creative verbal depiction of a personality in the light of the author's ideal of a person. The character of a personage in a work of fiction appears to be the most complete representation of the writer's moral position, his world-view, ideological conviction and aesthetic opinion. The artistic conception of a person correlates with the writer's style, and these two phenomena cannot be analyzed separately [6]. N. Dmytrenko points out that "the system of images in a work of fiction depends on the creative personality of the author of the text; the internal form of any image reflects the writer's intention, his world-view, and aesthetic ideas" [1].

Since the image of an artist comprises a great amount of generalization, it can be referred to literary types. Describing a certain painter, the author depicts the traits of character typical not only of a certain representative but of a specific social layer – artistic personalities. The image of an artist is "the image-personage, that comprises the traits of character, the way of thinking, the world-views of a certain group of people or a nation", at the same time it "is marked by bright individuality and uniqueness"[1]. The novel *The Masterpiece* by E. Zola can be a good example of this assertion. The protagonist of the narrative – painter Claude Lantier – embodies the personal traits of the impressionist Cezanne and, as K. Shakhova claims, "the traits of a number of artists-losers, finders and sufferers, victims of their vocation in the society which is ignorant of real values, measuring art at market prices". In this way the writer "managed to present a deep and psychologically convincing typification" [9].

The confirmation of this point of view can be found in O. Semenishchyva's research according to which "the whole group of artists of this or that epoch forms a certain, quite complete perfect image. It reflects the main traits of a creative person, which are common for all of them, and each in particular, as each of them is connected with their own history, set of works of art, attitudes of people who live nearby, critics' opinions, etc. This is important in the process of forming a collective image, especially if we take into account the collective perception, as the subject that fixes such an image is the whole culture" [5].

The image and the status of an artist at different historical-cultural stages were as different as the aim and the tasks of the depiction of the former [9]. An importance of introducing such a personage in the literature of late 19th - early 20th centuries was caused by general elevation of art and recognition of its importance. Focusing on the uniqueness and significance of individual life and individual experience the writers of the time were looking for a new hero in the sphere of art. Art was associated with freedom and self-awareness, and was viewed in contrast to social environment with its established order and values. In the writings of the time, the number of which was rapidly increasing, the eternal conflict between the artist and society found the most profound implementation. The theme of art and artists was explored in such novels as *A Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) by O. Wilde, *The Masterpiece* (1886) by E. Zola, *The Lesson of the Master* (1892) by H. James, *The Light that Failed* (1890) by R. Kipling, *A Portrait of the Artist as a young Man* (1916) by J. Joyce, *The Moon and Sixpence* (1919) by S. Maugham, etc. In most cases, the artist being opposed to the conventional reality, considers freedom as the essential condition for self-realization and for the achievement of artistic maturity. He creates his own values which focus on aesthetics rather than ethics. As a result, his devotion to art as well as claims of society lead to his isolation, and finally, to a tragic end.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the literary theories of the artistic images shows the varieties of criteria of the images' classification. Most of the theories focus on such concepts of the artistic images' analysis as content, structure and function. The content of the image is treated as an aesthetic characteristics in fiction of specific life forms; structure is viewed as a system of the artistic techniques of creating images; value of the image is determined by its ideological and artistic functions in a definite work of fiction as well as by the place it occupies both in the aesthetic world of the writer (its creator) and cultural context. Perception of image-character depends on the unity of direct sensory comprehension of his appearance and behaviour, meaningful penetration into the nature and effect of personal influence of the literary hero on the reader. The image of an artist is considered to be one of the most complicated in the imagery system of a literary work. As an artistic image it represents the creator's evaluation of human life, has cultural value, and expresses tendencies and ideas of the time. In spite of the fact that its status at different historical-cultural stages was different as a literary type it is marked by ambiguity and contradiction that in most cases determines the conflict between art and society revealed in the work.

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У статті узагальнено теоретичні аспекти поняття літературного образу, проаналізовано критерії його класифікації. На цій основі обґрунтовано літературознавчу сутність поняття образу художника в системі образів художнього твору. У результаті проведеного дослідження визначено, що за рівнем узагальнення образ художника правомірно віднести до літературного типу, який концентрує в собі найсуттєвіші риси характеру та світогляд творчих особистостей, зберігаючи при цьому свою неповторність. В залежності від ракурсу дослідження він може водночас розглядатись як образ-характер і як образ-персонаж.

Ключові слова: образ художника, образ-характер, образ-персонаж, образ-тип, конфлікт.