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### **THE ROLE OF MORAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SYMBOLIC ASPECTS IN THE NOVELS OF EMMA ANDIYEVSKA AND TONI MORRISON**

*The aim of the article is a characterization of Emma Andiyevska's and Toni Morrison's fiction in the context of moral, psychological and symbolic aspects present in the novels. The article focuses on the following novels selected for analysis: «Herostrats», «A Novel about a Good Person» and «A Novel about Human Destiny» by Emma Andiyevska and «Beloved» and «Jazz» by Toni Morrison. Special attention is devoted to the characters' complex inner world. The writers highlight universal spiritual values against the background of historical events and everyday reality.*

In fiction religious beliefs have a symbolic, as well as psychological and emotional meaning<sup>1</sup>, which explains a constant interest of various national literary systems in these problems. As far as Ukrainian literature is concerned, it should be underlined that emphasis is placed here primarily on the moral and ethical content of the Christian doctrine. Thus the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mary, and, what is more, biblical stories and motifs are organically woven into the structure of the texts.

In Ukrainian writings religion plays an especially important role. It is actually demonstrated by the multigenre art of Petro Hulak-Artemovsky, Taras Shevchenko, Panteleymon Kulish, Yuriy Fedkovych, Mykhaylo Starytsky, Ivan Franko, Olha Kobylanska, Pavlo Hrabovsky, Mykhaylo Kotsyubynsky, Lesya Ukrayinka, Vasyl Stefanyk, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, and by representatives of the modern Ukrainian literature as well, for instance, Ivan Chendey, Petro Skunts, Dmytro Pavlychko, Ivan Drach, Lina Kostenko, Emma Andiyevska. In their works these writers rely on the foundations of the Ukrainian people's Christian beliefs. Indeed, as the prominent Ukrainian literary scholar and critic Olexandr Astafyev has observed: «<...> golden rules «of human coexistence are written in «sacred

<sup>1</sup> Лещенко А. М. Роль мистецтва в процесі становлення релігійної віри // Мультіверсум. Філософський альманах. Збірник наукових праць ; відп. ред. В.В. Лях. – 2011. – № 72. – С. 234–242. – С. 234; Brooks C. Community, Religion, and Literature: Essays. – Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995. – 334 p. – P. 17.

books», in the Bible in particular»<sup>2</sup>. In this sense the Almighty God is the source of spirituality, of goodness and truth, a shining example for all man kind.

The Christian view of the world lies behind the themes and ideas of Emma Andiyevska's prose works (b. 1931) where it receives artistic and realistically convincing expression. Her creativity is revealed in her presentation of the characters' complex inner world. The reader is encouraged to analyze the basis of their emotions and understand the causes of a sudden appearance of crisis situations. The writer creates the characters as bearers of both good and evil. With the aim of a holistic disclosure of images the author has resorted to extensive use of myths, legends, customs, which present different cultural traditions (ancient, pagan, Indian, Christian). Thus she has created her own original mythology which clearly has the Ukrainian basis, although it reveals shades of traditional classical legends and beliefs<sup>3</sup>. In this context it should be noted that the author is constantly bound to search for new forms of the expression of eternal motives. The latter, in the apt wording of Anatoliy Nyamtsu, became traditional for the general cultural consciousness due to the ability of the author «to model important sociocultural processes of the epoch»<sup>4</sup>.

An open social discernment, deeply ethical and moral demands emerge in the following works by E. Andiyevska: «Herostrats» («Герострати», 1970), «A Novel about a Good Person» («Роман про добру людину», 1973) and «A Novel about Human Destiny» («Роман про людське призначення», 1982). The main idea of her novels is the expressiveness of a human calling, including the one based on Christian morality. In order to achieve a thorough comprehension of the content of her prose writings, a penetrating reading of her texts and their «decoding» are required from the reader. Thus, in the novel «Herostrats» the author discloses the ideology of human existence and its divine source. She describes the phenomenon of «herostratism» which poses a threat to the moral and spiritual aspects of human life and causes the loss of human qualities in an individual<sup>5</sup>. Herostratism is embodied in the persons seeking to make history at any cost. Lack of faith in the higher power and in the eternal life of the soul beyond its temporary existence are the basis of this phenomenon. Therefore because of the fear of the transience of earthly life people get involved in desperate actions to implant the memory about themselves in the minds of the others. «Those who believe in eternity bestowed by God, – said E. Andiyevska in an interview –, don't need to be herostrats. A herostrat is a person that aims for eternity. But he does not believe in the possibility to get it from God»<sup>6</sup>. Antiquarian – the protagonist of the novel – also experiences such a feeling. Searching for his identity he faces the choice between good and evil. He falls into a state of crisis – a situation of an emotional and mental stress, which results in changes in the structure of the «I-person», i.e. the narrator. The essence of such a condition is connected with the person's qualitative transition to a new stage, where a new picture of the world, new meanings and relationships open and the system of values is revised<sup>7</sup>. The reason for his stress is the appearance of Client, who offers to write his biography, but does not provide

<sup>2</sup> Астаф'єв О. Поетичні системи українського зарубіжжя. – К. : Інститут літератури ім. Т. Г. Шевченка НАН України, 2005. – 64 с. – С. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Зимомя І. Романи Емми Андіївської: психологічний дискурс. – Дрогобич : Коло, 2004. – 146 с. – С. 94.

<sup>4</sup> Нямцу А. Е. Фантастические парадоксы человеческого мира. – Черновцы : Рута, 1998. – 120 с. – С. 83.

<sup>5</sup> Зимомя І. Романи Емми Андіївської... Ор. cit., С. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, С. 131.

<sup>7</sup> Байер О. О. Життєві кризи особистості: Навчальний посібник. – Дніпропетровськ : Видавництво Дніпропетровського національного університету, 2010. – 244 с. – с. 9.

any information about himself. Instead, he requires from Antiquarian to collect information independently. It beats the protagonist out of the usual order: he forgets some events from his life, loses interest in work, becomes impulsive and inconsistent in his actions. He is accompanied by hallucinations and conversations with imaginary people. He plunges into thoughts about the motives of human actions. In one of such critical moments he meets Dom – an ambiguous character, riddled with contradictions. He becomes a spiritual mentor for Antiquarian. With his prophecy he prompts Antiquarian to resolve certain vital tasks. His instructions consist in justifying the need to realize the relativity of the concepts of good and evil, which should proceed any decision-making. Besides, Antiquarian is engaged in an imaginary dialogue with Christ. Thereby, doubts about his uneasy choice disturb his mind and depend on certain moral principles underlying it. These principles prevent Antiquarian from becoming totally crazy; he finally regains lucidity of his mind and adequacy of perception and activities.

Inner dialogues and monologues reflect Antiquarian's mental state, indicating his true spiritual nature. Facing the choice between the precepts of morality and self-indulgence, the protagonist follows a long way of reflections and hesitations. However, he overcomes the crisis after a long and careful analysis of his life experience and beliefs. As a result, he identifies himself as a spiritually enriched personality. So, in the novel «Herostrats» E. Andiyevska presents the crisis that leads to a rebirth<sup>8</sup>.

In contrast to «Herostrats», in «A Novel about a Good Person» life twists and changes of characters are depicted against the background of historical facts, not imaginary events. Still, this novel is not devoid of the symbolic combination of the real and the unreal as well. Events are depicted subjectively as the writer herself has experienced upheavals of the war period and a forced adaptation to a foreign country. Characters of the novel are set in boundary situations again. They are Eastern European immigrants who at the time of World War II have to live in their new environment because of they are deprived of the possibility to return to their homeland. They are in the Mittenwald camp awaiting for decisions that would directly influence their destinies. Having appeared in a confined space, the inhabitants of the «D-P» camps often resort to an inadequate behavior, accompanied by hallucinations. Religion becomes the only shelter of the native language environment for them. The Word of God and love for their homeland inspire in them hope for survival and return. Even being in difficult conditions of the camp they do not lose their spirituality. They remain able to sympathize with the others and help one another. The characters' high moral principles are located in their subconsciousness and are gradually disclosed depending on the severity of the life situation<sup>9</sup>. Conversations of E. Andiyevska's characters about Ukraine are accompanied by references to the Creator. Symbolic memories are the ones of the Ukrainian song that characterizes the spiritual world of the Ukrainians, the river Dnipro, as water is for Christians the medium of christening, sunflowers representing the sun as the source of all kinds of grace. Consequently, for them Ukraine is the holy land, to which they have no means to return.

In «A Novel about a Good Person» E. Andiyevska makes her characters choose between good and evil. The protagonist Dmytryk performs controversial deeds on the pages of the novel. Being in a hopeless situation, he makes decisions on which his survival primarily depends. A cow's voice helps his spirituality wake up. It is among the cattle, which are being cut by Dmytryk, that he hears the question

<sup>8</sup> Зимо́ря І. Романи Емми Андієвської... Опр. cit., С. 42.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, С. 53.

«Дмитрику, чи ти добрий?»<sup>10</sup> / «Dmytryk, are you good?», which awakes his thoughts about the essence of his existence. It is clear that the voice of conscience is meant here. He recalls that he did nothing good for others and asks God to prolong his life for this noble goal. Dmytryk keeps his promise given to the Almighty God: he saves Petro Kopylenko from suicide, saves Vasyl Tereshchenko from the Soviet homicide machine, conceals aunt Teklya's husband etc. Thus, moral values, set in his mind, do not allow him to lose his spirituality. The writer leads the reader to the idea that a person himself is the one to choose the path of good or evil. However, he has to realize the consequences of his choice.

The themes of «A Novel about Human Destiny» do not significantly differ from those mentioned above in «A Novel about a Good Person». The novel deals with Ukrainian immigrants scattered around the world. Although the characters of the book are not in a confined space of the camp, they are still searching for their own identity and destiny. The author does not distinguish a separate protagonist, but portrays the nation as a subject to which each individual belongs<sup>11</sup>. That is why people's life purpose is both personal and universal.

The author's patriotism is especially observed in the depiction of the optimistic future of Ukraine. She considers Khreshchatyk, the main street of the capital of Ukraine, as the center of the earth. The church remains the last hope for the bright future of the country and therefore Ukrainians set off for the Congress to Rome to meet with the Pope. The greatness of the Eternal City as a center of religion led by the Pope, the most influential person in church activities, does not diminish the importance of their goal – appointment of Cardinal Joseph Blind as the patriarch of the Ukrainian church. The activists believe that he as a spiritual mentor will help the Ukrainian people preserve their mother tongue and thereby avoid splitting. After all, the Ukrainians fear to follow the fate of the builders of the Tower of Babel. Only individuals with a rich spiritual world can overcome various life difficulties with dignity. Thus, the author points to the search for truth by opening one's heart to God. Human destiny consists in getting to know God: «Людині треба насамперед лікувати душу, перш ніж хапатися за тіло»<sup>12</sup> / «A person should heal the soul first before grasping for body».

E. Andiyevska's novels are characterized by high spirituality and deep patriotism. Her work is embedded in the concept of the trinity «God –Ukraine –an individual person» and highlights universal spiritual values against the background of «historical reminiscence»<sup>13</sup> (Volodymyr Yershov) and life realities. Characters of her novels have to survive in an alien environment and take care to preserve their national consciousness, just as she has had to do. This goal can be achieved only if a person maintains human morality and spirituality, which are the leading guides to truth.

For the culture of English-speaking countries, the Afro-American culture in particular, depiction of the spiritual need is also a priority. White and black Americans, regardless of their life positions, are connected by the belief in the higher power, directing a person to the path of righteousness. The Church has always been the center of the social order of each community. Religion was particularly important for the Afro-American population of the United States at the time of slavery. Africans, forcibly separated from their roots, felt helpless in the strange land. They found themselves in the deadlock, doomed to work in the

<sup>10</sup> Андiєвська Е. Роман про добру людину. – К. : Орiй, 1993. – 270 с. – С. 67.

<sup>11</sup> Зимооря І. Романи Емми Андiєвської... Ор. cit., С. 72.

<sup>12</sup> Андiєвська Е. Роман про людське призначення. – Мюнхен: Сучасність, 1982. – 454 с. – С. 209.

<sup>13</sup> Єршов В. О. Своєрiднiсть iсторико-ремінісцентного тла в «Мемуарах» Г. Олізара // Київські полоністичні студії. – 2015. – № 26. – С. 370–375. – С. 370.

captivity and humiliation. Religion provided the only space for their freedom. In churches, praying together with their masters, slaves used traditional printed texts. But in privacy they created texts and melodies of their own religious hymns. They claimed that their songs contained more faith than the songs of religious assemblies of the white people. In his study on the Afro-Americans Lawrence William Levine, an American historian, describes their response to the church rituals in the following way: «They sang with all their souls and with all their bodies rocked, their heads nodded, their feet stamped, their knees shook, their elbows and their hands beat time to the tune and the words which they sang with evident delight»<sup>14</sup>. It was at that time and in that way that the traditional Afro-American musical forms of spirituals and blues appeared, followed later by jazz, which constituted an independent direction in music. Jazz music became a means of transferring the social experience for the next generations and promoted the healing of soul wounds<sup>15</sup>.

Black Americans' way of life is realistically depicted in Toni Morrison's works (b. 1931). She is Emma Andiyevska's contemporary, the author of numerous novels: «The Bluest Eye» (1970), «Sula» (1973), «Tar Baby» (1981), «Beloved» (1987), «Jazz» (1992), «Paradise» (1999), «Love» (2003), «A Mercy» (2008) and, with regard to their contents, occupies a prominent place in American and world literature. In the world of her novels she has created sustainable ties in the system of values: spirituality, family roots, brotherhood in the community. The significant role in her prose is ascribed to the difficulties and sacrifice of her characters' life choices in boundary situations. This creates the foundation of the psychological content of Morrison's novels, in which she examines the complexity of the Afro-Americans' spiritual world. She creates a kind of cultural myth, which can be interpreted at the level constituent of their national identity and personal consciousness. Her works assert an active presence of the formed choice concerning the demonstration of ethnic specifics of American population due to the linguistic and cultural differences.

The most significant novel by Toni Morrison is «Beloved» (1987), for which she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize (as the first Afro-American author) in 1988. Five years later she received the Nobel Prize in Literature for the revival of Afro-American folklore and mythology and recordings of oral folk art with the aim of their preserving<sup>16</sup>. The leading topic of «Beloved» is slavery and its consequences in the post-colonial period in the United States. The action takes place in Ohio after the Civil War (1861 – 1865). In the novel numerous religious rituals are mentioned that help black residents of Cincinnati heal their soul wounds. The role of a spiritual mentor in the story is assigned to Baby Suggs – Sethe's mother-in-law. Having been in slavery, which has left many painful memories in her mind (loss of husbands, children, grandchildren, bullying, humiliation), Baby Suggs appears to be able to find the strength for a decent existence later on. Her positive attitude and deep religious beliefs help the woman recover her state of mind. The results are evident: she was constantly in high spirits, helped her fellow citizens, had

<sup>14</sup> Levine L. W. *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom*. – New York : Oxford University Press, 1978. – 522 p. – P. 42.

<sup>15</sup> Simawe S. A. *Black Orpheus : Music in African American Fiction from the Harlem Renaissance to Toni Morrison*. – New York : Garland Publishing Inc., 2000. – 275 p. – P. 168.

<sup>16</sup> Butler-Evans E. *Race, Gender, and Desire: Narrative Strategies in the Fiction of Toni Cade Bambara, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker*. – Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 1989. – 232 p. – P. 59.



enough food for herself and her guests: «Baby Suggs' three (maybe four) pies grew to ten (maybe twelve)»<sup>17</sup>.

The old lady preaches in the natural surroundings, in the places metaphorically called «the Clearing». She heals the souls of the black Americans, wounded by slavery, with the power of her words. For this reason she is called the «unchurched preacher»<sup>18</sup>. Her healing is the clearing with a disinterested help and advice. Baby Suggs' morality is built not only on spiritual principles, but also on love for others. She is able to step over the pain of losses and discover in herself love for life in all its forms. Therefore she calls others to find love in them as well and emit it to others. She attaches great value to the perception by imagination: «She did not tell them to clean up their lives or to go and sin no more. She did not tell them they were the blessed of the earth, its inheriting meek or its glory bound pure. She told them that the only grace they could have was the grace they could imagine. That if they could not see it, they would not have it»<sup>19</sup>.

Another picture of the religious rite represents ritual clearing with singing by a group of women, gathered near Sethe's house in order to help her overcome the suffering caused by the murder of her child. The spiritual power of the ritual singing cannot be compared with the value of words: «For Sethe it was as though the Clearing had come to her with its heat and simmering leaves, where the voices of women searched for the right combination, the key, the code, the sound that broke the back of words. Building voice upon voice until they found it, and when they did it was a wave of sound wide enough to sound deep water and knock the pods off chestnut trees»<sup>20</sup>.

Jazz, as the music rooted in West African tradition as well as Afro-American folklore, occupies a prominent place in the eponymous novel by Toni Morrison («Jazz» – 1992). This musical trend became a symbol of the urban life of the black Americans who migrated from the South to the North that is – to New York – in search of a better life. New York of the twentieth century is a special cultural and social area where destinies of different cultures and social layers overlap. Full of temptations, this city is characterized by the frenetic life rhythm and rigid rules of existence. New York is seen in this way by the protagonists Joe and Violet – a young couple from Virginia. The megapolis destroys their spousal relationships: Joe betrays his wife with a young girl Dorcas who in turn is killed by him out of jealousy. Violet, having come to the funeral of Joe's lover, attempts to disfigure her face. Consequently, the spirituality, inherent in Afro-Americans, is leveled by both characters under the influence of the thirst for wealth and pleasure. They resemble Adam and Eve, who were driven out from Paradise by God for having tasted the sinful apple. The author emphasizes the effect of the boundary situations under the influence of which the «I-person» can lose his/her identity based in his/her own moral qualities<sup>21</sup>. Having been caught in the trap of city life, the characters cannot escape from it without a trace left in their inner state: «It pulls him like a needle through the groove of a Bluebird record. <...> You can't get off the track a City lays for you»<sup>22</sup>. The jazz record is used here as a metaphor referring to a limited way of urban life and its dictatorship over the citizens. It makes the characters

<sup>17</sup> Morrison T. *Beloved*. – New York : Penguin, 1987. – 324 p. – P. 137.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, P. 87.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, P. 88.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, P. 261.

<sup>21</sup> Углей Л. Афро-американський дискурс Тоні Моррісон: морально-етичний аспект // Вісник Луганського національного університету ім. Т. Шевченка. Серія : Філологічні науки. – Луганськ, 2012. – № 12 (247). – Ч. II. – С. 144–151.

<sup>22</sup> Morrison T. *Jazz*. – New York : Plume, 1992. – 230 p. – P. 120.

move in circles as far as their feelings are concerned. Therefore it is important to be on the right «track» and not to go off it.

As has been mentioned above, a noticeable feature of the Afro-American culture and its social structure is its deep religiosity. Ritual song rites are given a significant, sometimes decisive importance in overcoming life's twists and turns. At the heart of the Afro-American social structure are community values which were formed at the time of slavery. Toni Morrison, as a representative of Afro-American fiction, widely uses samples of folklore in order to transfer the spiritual heritage of her people for future generations. The basic idea of her works is calling for the unity of the Afro-American population through spiritual healing.

The same purpose is pursued by the Ukrainian novelist – E. Andiyevska, for the Ukrainian folklore also reflects the long-lasting sufferings of the people. Faith and art help people soothe their heartache as they cover those vital points that could not be spoken about at the time Ukraine was not free. According to O. Astafyev's words, «to be identified with yourself, you should get rid of your accidental, fleshly sensuality and bring the »I«out of the body»<sup>23</sup>. Biblical motifs and images in Emma Andiyevska's and Toni Morrison's prose emphasize peoples' national consciousness and inspire them with thoughts about their own identity and human destiny.

**Іван Зимомря. Роль морального, психологічного та символічного аспектів у романах Емми Андрієвської і Тоні Моррісона.**

*Метою статті є охарактеризувати творчість Емми Андрієвської і Тоні Моррісона в контексті моральних, психологічних та символічних аспектів, присутніх у романах. У статті увага фокусується на обраних для аналізу романах: «Геростати», «Роман про добру людину» та «Роман про людське призначення» Емми Андрієвської і «Коханий» та «Джаз» Тоні Моррісона. Спеціальна увага приділяється складному внутрішньому світу персонажів. Письменники підкреслюють універсальні духовні цінності на тлі історичних подій та щоденного життя.*

**Iwan Zymomyra. Rola moralnych, psychologicznych i symbolicznych aspektów w powieściach Emmy Andijewskiej i Toniego Morrisona.**

*Celem artykułu jest charakterystyka twórczości Emmy Andijewskiej i Toniego Morrisona w kontekście moralnych, psychologicznych i symbolicznych aspektów, obecnych w powieściach. W artykule uwaga skupia się na wybranych dla analizy powieściach: «Gerostraty», «Powieść o dobrym człowieku» i «Powieści o mianowaniu człowieka» Emmy Andijewskiej i «Kochanek» i «Jazz» Toniego Morrisona. Autor stawia akcent na skomplikowanym świecie wewnętrznym postaci. Pisarze podkreślają uniwersalne wartości duchowe na tle wydarzeń historycznych i życia codziennego.*

<sup>23</sup> Астаф'єв О. Поетичні системи... Ор. cit., С. 21.