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THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN INTERACTION WITH THE WORLD: THE EXISTENTIAL APPROACH (ON MATERIAL OF THE PROSE M. MATIOS)

ПРОБЛЕМА ВЗАЄМОДІЇ ЛЮДИНИ ЗІ СВІТОМ: ЕКЗИСТЕНЦІЙНИЙ ПІДХІД (НА МАТЕРІАЛІ ПРОЗИ М. МАТІОС)

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The study is focused on the analysis of the work by M. Matios in the philosophical aspect. It reveals the disclosure of the paradox in the plot and compositional structure of the work. The paper describes the meaning of the problem of choice and the existence of self-compliance in the genesis of the main female character.

It is proved that the novel by M. Matios is interesting precisely for its philosophical content, which makes you think about the existential problems of fate, human choice, responsibility, which, in certain periods, gaining more or less acuteness and relevance, still remains eternal.

Key words: personality, alienation, paradox, gnoseology, existence.

У розвідці проаналізовано творчість М. Матіос у філософському аспекті. Простежено розкриття парадоксу в сюжетно-композиційній структурі твору. Розкрито значення проблеми вибору та екзистенціалу собі-відповідності в бутті героїні.

Доведено, що роман М. Матіос цікавий саме своїм філософським наповненням, що змушує замислитися над екзистенціальними проблемами долі, людського вибору, відповідальності тощо, які, в ті чи інші періоди набираючи більшої чи меншої гостроти й актуальності, все ж залишаються вічними.

Ключові слова: особистість, відчуження, парадокс, гносеологія, екзистенція.

В исследовании проанализировано творчество М. Матиос в философском аспекте. Прослежено раскрытие парадокса в сюжетно-композиционной структуре произведения. Раскрыто значение проблемы выбора и экзистенциала себе-соответствия в бытии героини.

Доказано, что роман М. Матиос интересен именно своим философским наполнением, что заставляет задуматься над экзистенциальными проблемами судьбы, человеческого выбора, ответственности, которые, в те или иные периоды набирая большей или меньшей остроты и актуальности, все же остаются вечными.

Ключевые слова: личность, отчуждение, парадокс, гносеология, экзистенция.

Stating the problem. The novel of Mariia Matios "Sweet Darusia" managed to attract the attention of numerous researchers over a short period of time, some of them among other things pointed out the writer's employment of such a fairly common in modernist literature means of depicting an artistic reality as a paradox.

In our opinion, this aspect of the work of Mariia Matios deserves detailed analysis, since the phenomenon of paradox involves considerable opportunities for reflecting the peculiarities of transitional, crisis periods, one of which became the object of artistic observation of the Ukrainian writer.

The word "paradox" (from the Greek paradoxos) stands for 'unexpected, strange') and means a thought, a judgment which is different from the

generally accepted understanding and use of concepts and which contradicts logic. "New Explanatory Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language" interprets this word as "incompatibility, discrepancy, illogical, unexpected phenomenon, which does not correspond to the usual scientific notions" [6, p. 206].

Wolf Schmidt points out that in the antique age, the paradox was all that denied the ruling, generally accepted views [7, p. 10].

Let us compare the word "orthodox" – correct, the "one that corresponds to the ruling tradition" [2, p. 176] and "paradoxical" – the one that does not correspond to the established ideas, denies them.

Paradox was widely used in ancient rhetoric as a means of supplementing a judgement with peculiarity, unexpectedness, independence which fascinated

listeners. Literature reference dictionary mentions in this context the philosophical work of Cicero "Paradoxes".

Obviously, taking into consideration originality, unexpectedness of the judgment, denial of triviality found in paradox, O. Pushkin regarded the paradox of thinking as an essential feature of genius, saying that "Genius is a friend of paradox".

Paradoxality is a distinguishing feature of the works of Bernard Shaw, Anatol Franz, Oscar Wilde, poetry of Francois Vinion, Arthur Rambo and other European writers.

Paradox is widely used in the Russian literature, starting from Derzhavin's "I am a king, I am a slave, I am a worm, I am God" and ending with the Struhatsky brothers, according to whom "Monday begins on Saturday".

The extensive use of paradox can be found in the Ukrainian literature, especially in the polemical and preaching one, which is explained by the aim of these genres – to influence the reader or listener (Ivan Vyshenskyi's "Epistle ...", Melentii Smotrytskyi's "Trenos", Lazar Baranovich's "Pipes of preaching words" etc.). Paradox is one of the argumentation means in the philosophical writings of H. Skovoroda, and the very structure, for example, of I. Velychkovsky's "crayfish" is based on a paradox.

The problem of paradoxes in the life and work of the Ukrainian writer of the era of "The Executed Renaissance" by V. Domontovych (V. Petrov) was deeply investigated by V. Aheieva in the work "The poetics of paradox: intellectual prose of Viktor Petrov-Domontovych".

Considering the concept of "paradox", one should note the following: being in its essence an ontological (that is, existing independently of human consciousness) phenomenon, paradox, at the same time, also performs a deep epistemological function, as it promotes the cognition of the world, gaining the truth. "Where there is a paradox, there are new prospects for research. Paradox is always the transition of cognition at a new level of comprehension of the essence of something ..." [3, p. 404].

Consequently, paradox can exist and become an object of artistic research as a purely objective phenomenon (paradoxical events – in everyday life, in society, in the course of historical changes – and their consequences; paradoxical deeds, paradoxical perception and interpretation of some phenomena and reactions to them, etc.).

On the other hand, paradox is an utterance – that is, the product of meaningful cognition denying the "dox", which carries an original idea, the opposite of orthodox logic and accepted views.

That is why paradox is like an indicator of crisis states in society or in philosophy, and it flows as the most powerful current into the literature and the philosophy of transitional epochs, in "non-classical, disorderly periodic systems, in times of epistemological unsteadiness" [1, p. 16].

It is quite obvious that both the time of writing the novel "Sweet Dariusia" (2002–2003), and the time described in it, and, indeed, almost the whole twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are defined as "the time of epistemological unsteadiness", uncontrolled by generally accepted standardizing systems. That is, it is a time when, according to researchers, paradoxical situations and events, and, therefore, the utterances generated by them, are dominant both in life and in literature.

Stating the task. The aim of this work is to reveal the paradox in the plot and compositional structure of the novel, its ideological and artistic, philosophical content.

Basic material presentation. M. Matios's novel is permeated with paradox. Here we meet the paradoxes of heroes' outlook and characters, and the paradoxes of their actions and deeds along with their paradoxical consequences, and the paradoxes of fate and even of Divine Providence. This paradoxical world of a small village exists on the background of the global paradox of the historical existence of the people whose children are the characters of the work.

"... On both sides of <...> a humming and rushing Cheremosh, between the humps of curls, as if in a deep female bosom, located two mountain villages with the same name – Cheremoshne. If you could look at them from the height of the bird's flight <...> then the village would be reflected in one another the same way as <...> human face does in the mirror. Originally the inhabitants of both Cheremoshne spoke the same mother tongue, they equally made hands for the same "our Father in heaven" ...even their clothes were similar, and swearing, and thanksgiving..."

But from time to time their grandparents would pass from one state to another, as if a weak-willed woman was in the hands of a more powerful man ..." [5, p. 201]. The two twin-villages separated by the borderline are a symbol of the paradox of history, which separated the previously united state, the united people.

All the activity of the new authorities is also completely built up on paradoxes.

In Hershkov's mill, "where it is necessary to grind not with a tongue", the authorities appointed as supervisor a farrowing lazy farmer in the village – Les Onufriichuk, who only knew how "to fool people around with a gossipy and boneless tongue"

and every time he asked Hershko what side should the wheel be approached from” [5, p. 127].

Contrary to common sense, the very people to be exterminated by the new authorities were those who had been most interested in “Muscovite’s happiness” and, who during the rule of the Romanians, crossed Cheremosh to the side occupied by “Soviets”. The most active agitator for “Muscovite’s happiness” was Kuryk, whose daughters, “with flags, blue and yellow stitched”, ran out as far as Khorov to meet these, as Paraska Danyiulichka says, “oprichniks”.

The modern reader, who at least superficially knows the history of competitions in Western Ukraine and repressions against all those suspected of “nationalism”, immediately pays attention to the colors the flags were embroidered with. The Bukovyna peasant standing far aside politics, who, like Mykhailo, is interested in a workbench and a household, does not understand the actions of the authorities, he can not understand why it is these families taken out who met the “Soviets” with the greatest joy and why they are taken out at night, secretly.

“Do you understand what is happening?” – says Danyiulichka to Matronka. “They are taken away like thieves. But the Romanians would have brought the thief in front of the people and beaten him well, and then they would have sent him to prison. But the Kuryks did not steal anything, only faithfully served them” [5, p. 132].

Paradoxical for the healthy mind is the pathological hatred with which the representatives of the new authorities are tormenting the corpses of the brutally murdered young man and girl – the banderovites.

This paradoxical, aimless for the common sense cruelty (they are already dead!!!), non-motivated actions of the “overwhelming and nervous” authorities creates an atmosphere of anxiety, uncertainty and fear, which, in fact, is what the “second Soviets”, who became masters of the land, seek to achieve. And here is the cue of the paradox of power, which came not to unite the divided lands, not to unite the separated over centuries people, but to subjugate it, to attach a new territory to their possessions.

The central plot-forming element of the novel by Mariia Matios is also a paradox that could be formulated as “sin because of sinlessness” or “crime because of innocence”.

Even the tablets of Moses, among other commandments of God, which should be perceived by mankind as imperatives, stated: “You shall not give false testimony!”

So, can the truth turn to be a sin? And betrayal? Betrayal is definitely a sin, and, more than that, the betrayal of one’s father. The victim of this paradox

is a trustful child who does not understand cunning, can not see an enemy in another person. A child who is brought up in love and trust in the world and people.

How can she, little Darusia, know that the struggle around her for the will of the Ukrainian people has not finished yet? How can she know that a man in riding breeches and a soldier’s blouse with shining buttons, talking to her so cuddly and even allowing her to lick of a sweet lollipop-cockerel, is an enemy, a conqueror who fiercely mocked her mother and mocks the whole people?

She does not know that. She does not know that the enemy can not be told the truth, because she even does not know such a thing as an “enemy”.

Enchanted by the affectionate conversation and the enticing taste of a “candy” that a “good man” is about to hand her, Darusia sincerely answers all the questions of the national safety officer about the night-guests, whom the father almost voluntarily gave the products prepared for the Soviet authorities, sincerely answers the question about what the name of her mother is, or who braids her wonderful plaits for her – by doing so, she betrays her father and mother, and dooms the whole family to death.

“It would have been better to poison such a scum in the womb or give birth to her being dumb ...” said Matronka in the evening, without getting up from her bed.

“Be afraid of God, my woman, the child is not to blame ... We did not teach the child lies ...” [5, p. 171–172].

Being unable to understand the paradoxality of Divine Providence, which makes the righteous suffer and “does not turn away from the one who does evil to the others, but is well-off himself” [5, p. 172], which allowed her torturer, who was to “die away long before”, came to her house and then made her child “an enemy”, Matronka commits suicide, and little Darusia has to redeem her sinless sin with suffering, pain and silence, bearing forever the name of “Sweet Darusia”.

In a paradoxical world, masterfully reproduced by Mariia Matios, no one can expect to see positive consequences even of the most noble action, because the law of paradox requires breaking of causal relationships, depart from the generally accepted laws of logic.

Betrayed by one of the neighbors and shown by his own child to national safety officers, Mykhailo Ilashchuk, who is believed to be the most honest man among his fellow villagers, is stealing, because only by doing so he can save his family from deportation to Siberia, or even from physical extermination. That

is, the only way for him to create the good is a way through the crime, through the creation of the evil.

The good, on the contrary, generates the evil. Did a police sergeant who was a supervisor during Tsvychok's arrest wish the evil to Ivan Tsvychok, when he kindly gave his military clothes to the almost naked prisoner – the riding breeches and the same dark green shirt with shining buttons and a wide strap for it? Certainly, he did not, he sincerely wished the good.

But when, “extremely happy about being so rich», John appeared in this outfit in front of Darusia, “her eyes got somehow crazy – and she quietly slipped to the ground, just to the powders” [5, p. 76], and then “fainted, got black and covered with some small wounds”, and since the Second Holy Mother to the Cover of the Virgin she “was lying with the attacks of a fierce headache, which had no other remedy, except for Ivan's departure from her land.

“Who is to blame, Mariia?” – cried Tsvychok, without any embarrassment.

“Fate, Ivan, and people. And nobody else” [Matios 2007: 78].

Thus, the good turned to be the evil, because the kind and sympathetic sergeant (“there are good people everywhere, even in the police...”, the author mentions) could not know that the woman to be visited by Ivan Tsvychok will always associate riding breeches, soldier's blouse and shining buttons under the belt with the cold legs of her mother, who hung herself on her own plait, with the death of her grieving father, who outlived his wife only by several years, and with her own sinless sin, which she had been tempted with by an inhuman monster in the same riding breeches and shining buttons.

Thus, a nice from all the views affair, such a praise-deserving affair as showing respect to the dead and tidying his grave on an abandoned rural cemetery, also leads to disaster.

Having planned to make a fence around the grave of Darusia's father, Tsvychok organized village children, for, let us call it “the collection of scrap metal”.

“In the afternoon, the children went to Darusia's yard faster than to school. But everybody with iron rods, and with screw nuts and washers” [5, p. 47], collected along the roadside of the village streets, garbage dumps and landfills. Tsvychok generously gave children jew's-harps and even bought a seven-copec cake for each of them.

It could seem that one can only rejoice: the iron that choked the village, rushing along the ditches and garbage dumps can be used for good; at the cemetery, where Tsvychok mowed all the weeds, there will be one less grave; a lonely cripple Darusia will be happy; schoolchildren have joined the public service work...

Actually, what village authorities should have cared about long ago, was done now, and in the normal world these authorities could thank Ivan Tsvychok for the work done instead of them.

But in the world where the characters of Mariia Matios live, the laws of logic, the laws of common sense do not work. Here, like in the Swift country of Lilliputium, every high upsurge of the human soul causes the rage of spiritual pygmies, endowed with power, and every grain of happiness that falls into the palm of the destiny deprived creature causes the envy of the shamefully well-off.

It was the good deed of Tsvychok that started his conflict with the village authorities, which in the future led to the tragedy of his falling out with Darusia.

It was his compassion and understanding of the depth of pain and the height of Darusia's suffering, which grew into immense tenderness and love for this miserable, but spiritually strong woman, led to the deepening of this conflict and to the arrest of Tsvychok. Since who knows as perfectly as the authorities who is a fool, and who is clever, who is allowed to be happy, and who – unhappy, who is to suffer, and who is to rejoice.

“All the bad things happening in the village,” says the village council having called Tsvyrchok, “are connected with you, Ivan.”

“Until you weren't here,” the district police officer adds, “Darusia used to be normal. She used to delve the ground.

“Used to tie up pear trees...”

“Used to walk with dogs across the village...”

“And now she stopped going to the cemetery. Nor does she visit her Dad...”

“She listens to your jew's harp and takes the dogs home at night”.

For them, the authorities, which rule the inverted, paradoxical world, it is a paradox, an alogism, “abnormal” that Darusia has no pain and no longer needs to delve the ground to reduce it; that the burning feeling of loneliness, which had been bringing her to the cemetery, to her father's grave to speak with the dead, because there had been no one among the living to whom she could have spoken, left her; that now, when having the one to care about, she does not tie the strips up to a dried pear tree, decorating it as a living creature. All this for the rulers of the inverted world used to be a “dox”, an inconvenient “it must be”, which was violated by Tsvychok's presence in the village, his concern for a miserable Darusia, by his love and tenderness, which revived her, filled with life, made her speak “in a gross, inhuman voice, like a roar of a wounded beast, or the efforts of both the dumb, the deaf and the blind, but ... in words that

have long been denied by her tongue and throat» [5, p. 69].

Normativity in violating the norm is another paradox in the world of paradoxes, which, however, is perceived by its inhabitants as a norm that allows all kinds of “members” (district committee) the Kolobky, the Odainy storekeepers, district policemen, Varvarkas, Paraskas, Vasiutkas, Stefkas and other, sometimes nameless characters of the work to feel highly moral people who have the right to interfere in someone else’s life, to hold their judgment over others.

It is essential that most of these characters (with the exception of representatives of the official authorities), in fact, are not characters as such. It is a hardly personalized voice (thoughts, views, values and moral instincts...) of the masses of ordinary people who live in a paradoxical world and master its “doxes of paradox”. Therefore, they appear in the work for the most part in dialogues-inserts – a tool masterly used by Mariia Matios for depicting the image of the crowd.

Somewhat distanced from them are those for whom the norms of a paradoxical world are not a “dox”, who can understand and internally accept the true norms and values, but not able to actively oppose to the generally accepted norms. The most striking character among these is Mariia – Darusia’s neighbor.

Those who, by their own will or by the will of fate, opposed themselves to the orthodoxy of a paradoxical world, become outcasts of society, like Darusia or Tsvychok, or perish, like Matronka and Mykhailo. These people are “not from this world”, the bearers of true values, true feelings, governed by the laws of naturalness, truth, “by the voice of the heart”, and not by the norms and precepts of the paradoxical world, who are strong enough to rebel against it. Each

of them manifests this rebellion in their own way: Matronka – by the suicide, Ivan Tsvychok – by the rejection of the “legitimized” way of life and by the right to tell the world the naked truth, Darusia – by a departure from people in artificial silence and foolishness. But in each case, the path of a pure-hearted “natural” person in a paradoxical world is a path of suffering, a way to redeem their own or others’ sins.

And the fact that at all times the greatest suffering is given to the best people, is one more global and eternal, even fixed in the Gospel, paradox of human existence.

The very fact of the possibility of comparing certain philosophical positions of the author with the Gospel should keep us from the temptation to look for the causes of the paradoxality of the depicted world in those social deformations that had been the product of the totalitarian regime. The new, undeniably, perverse and inhuman in its essence, authorities (which is quite clearly shown in the novel) only deepened the paradoxes that are ontologically inherent in human existence, brought a sadistic, insidious in its insincerity aspect to them, legitimized and “normalized” the most horrible paradoxes of existence and the most perverse manifestations of human instincts.

However, if the essence of the novel was reduced only to depicting the anti-human fundamentals of a totalitarian society, it would have been ordinary, albeit skillfully composed revealing work, like many others recently written.

But M. Matios’s novel is interesting for its philosophical content, which makes us think about the existential problems of fate, human choice, responsibility, etc., which, over various periods, gaining more or less urgency and relevance, still remain eternal.

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