

Genre Features Of Philosophical Fiction

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Abstract: The article deals with the notion of philosophical prose. Thus, the main purpose of the investigation is to show the key genre features of the works of philosophical fiction. It discusses some literary works as "Crime and punishment" by F. Dostoyevsky, "The Catcher in the Rye" by J. D Salinger, "Nausea" by J. P Sartre, "Atlas Shrugged" by A. Rand from the point of view of philosophical novel. The author shows the main distinctive genre features of philosophical prose, that concern work's genre determined by the interaction of its main components: plot, character, language, and symbolism. This system is multifaceted and complex. In the philosophical novel, the traditional structure is modified, as philosophical questions, symbolism, and a reflective hero take center stage.

Keywords: Philosophical fiction, philosophical novel, philosophical question, human nature, reflective dialogue, thought process, metaphorical meaning, allegoricality, symbolism.

Introduction: Philosophical prose or philosophical fiction is something that commits a substantial number of philosophical issues usually considered in philosophy. In such works of creation there can be identified any aspect of the human condition, such as the nature and motivation of human behavior, the purpose of life, ethics or morality, the role of art in human lives, the role of experience or reason in the advancement of knowledge, the existence of free will, or any other philosophically interesting subject. In fact, the novel of ideas, which can also be classified as science fiction, utopian and dystopian fiction, and bildungsroman, is a type of philosophical literature.

The genre specificities of philosophical prose are distinguished by a blend of artistic narrative and contemplation on basic issues of existence, humanity, the meaning of life, morality, and knowledge.

METHOD

The first genre feature of philosophical prose is the narrative that is centered on one main philosophical issue. This issue may consider human nature, liberty and accountability, the purpose of life, the connection between society and the individual, both good and evil, death, time, and history, reflection, not plot, is the foundation of the story. Just to illustrate, the question about human nature is raised in the novel of Fedor Dostoyevsky "Crime and punishment". In the story the

hero investigates the limits of human nature: is it possible for someone to violate morality? The main hero of the novel Rodion Raskolnikov builds a theory of "people who is afraid" and "people who have rights". The first are common people who have to abide by the law and moral principles, and the second are "exceptional" individuals who are entitled to "transcend" the law in order to further a greater good. Rodion raises the question: "Can someone transcend morality if they provide "huge good"?" He says: "...people, in my opinion, are divided into two categories: the lower, ordinary... and people proper, that is, those who are prone to breaking laws..." According to the novel's plot, Raskolnikov kills an old woman who is pawnbroker in order to help his poor friend Liza overcome a financial crisis and end injustice. However, in the end of the novel the main hero feels guilty for his action, and the philosophical idea of freedom and responsibility lays in this scene. After killing the elderly pawnbroker and her sister, Raskolnikov is filled with intense guilt. At first, he tries to defend himself by citing the philosophical idea of "strong men."

But over time, uncertainty, anxiety, and moral distress haunt him. The pinnacle of his regret is when he publicly admits to Sonya, a girl who suffered from old woman pawnbroker. He says that he killed and he wants to repent.

The second distinctive genre feature of philosophical prose is thought and introspection, reflection—either the author's ideas or the hero's inner monologue. Philosophical monologues, reasoning, and dialogues that resemble Platonic form are frequently encountered in the works of that kind of fiction. Just to illustrate, this kind of peculiarities are encountered in the novel of J.D Salinger "The Catcher in the Rye". Before being novelized in 1951, it was partially published in serial form between 1945 and 1946. Although it was written with adults in mind, teenagers frequently read it because of its themes of alienation and angst as well as its criticism of society's superficiality. The subjective narrative of "The Catcher in the Rye" follows the main hero Holden Caulfield's exact thought processes. The seemingly disparate concepts and episodes flow together; for instance, as Holden is sitting in a chair in his hostel, small actions like picking up a book or glancing at a table develop into conversations about experiences. One of the major examples from the novel where the main hero discusses the questions about people's hypocrisy and his own loneliness is expressed in his words, where he says that people usually pretend to be OK and smile, but in reality, they don't care about anyone. He doesn't comprehend that and wished everyone could be truly honest.

The following distinctive feature philosophical prose is that its' text may include a fusion of theoretical and creative discourses. The text could contain essay pieces, allegories, parables, author's observations, and mini-tracts. The genre frequently strikes a balance between philosophy and literature. It can be seen in the works of Camus, Dostoevsky, Sartre, and the late Tolstoy.

French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre reflected on such philosophical categories as freedom, alienation, and dialectic. He was largely opposed to war and supported pacifism. Influenced by atheistic existentialism, whose ideas confronted the fear of human death without the help of God or supernatural power, he wrote *Being and Nothingness* (1943) and *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1946). The central ideas of these works were the essence of atheistic existentialism and the idea of human free will. The author's works were written in the form of a scholarly book and also as essays. In literature, Jean-Paul Sartre is known as the author of the novel *Nausea* (1938), which explores the ideas of the Gospel from an atheistic perspective. The work of the French writer was influenced by the ideas of such philosophers as Bergson, Husserl, Dostoevsky, and Heidegger. The dominant themes of Sartre's novel are existentialist ideas such as hopelessness, despair, human destiny,

and the lack of meaning in life. The novel's protagonist, seeking the Truth, comes to the conclusion that human life is absurd. The novel's premise is described in a publication by literary scholar M.A. Kissel, who writes: "The novel's hero unexpectedly discovers a disgusting picture of naked existence, stripped of the veils that usually conceal perceptible things. The shocked hero suddenly realizes that pure existence is not an abstraction of thought, but something like a sticky paste that fills the entire space, just filled with light and color and suddenly revealed in a completely different form..." The novel "Nausea" is presented to us in the form of the diary of the thirty-year-old protagonist, Antoine Roquentin. The novel's premise is that Antoine undergoes a life-changing change, and through reflection in his diary, the hero seeks to "get to the bottom of the truth." This work belongs to the genre of the philosophical novel and explores the fundamental issues of existentialism, a literary movement that analyzes human behavior and the responsibility for one's actions. The novel's philosophy is that the hero understands himself as an existence (subject) and is left to his own devices. The genre's distinctive feature is the presence of a complex character who embodies philosophical ideas. The hero's internal conflict lies in his sudden realization of the meaninglessness and absurdity of his existence. Unemployed, alone, and completely immersed in the present, Antoine considers time the primary component of his life. For him, time is a sticky substance in which real life drowns. Reflecting on the problematization of reality, the hero comes to the conclusion that the past and future are meaningless, as nothing important happens in them. But what makes Antoine sick is the everyday ordinariness of his daily life, where he compares objects to vile things. For example, the author compares a red bench to a dead donkey, or his hand to a crab's leg. "Nausea" becomes an inescapable reality for the hero; one he finds difficult to come to terms with. The novel's structure is quite interesting. Initially, its structure consists of logically structured artistic episodes, which by the end of the novel evolve into philosophical reflections (monologues and dialogues) on existence. The diary entries of an ordinary person, which subsequently acquire a historical journalistic quality, as well as the features of a conventional artistic style with the conclusions and propositions presented by the author at the end of the work, define the philosophical style of the novel "Nausea." The novel's conflict is revealed through the conclusions the protagonist reaches by the end of the narrative:

- human life is devoid of any meaning, filled with suffering
- man is superfluous on Earth, where even death will

not change this state

– the most terrible thing in the world is that we already exist, we have no freedom, and nothing can change that.

Besides these conclusions, the novel has no other logical conclusion. The reader is left to guess whether the protagonist has the courage to live this joyless life. This is the problematization of the novel, a question to which the reader is unable to find a definitive answer. The protagonist's "nausea" is alleviated only when he listens to the music of an African-American singer. Antoine believes that life can be overcome through music, as it is a separate and independent art.

The other distinctive feature of philosophical fiction is expressed in its' metaphorical meaning, allegorically and symbolism. Thus, in these works there are images, that convey the meaning beyond the plot. The authors frequently use confrontation between good and evil, travel and road as a search for oneself, the pursuit of knowledge and understanding and images born from myths and poetry in their novels. To be concrete, these works exhibit a clear structure: the plots serve as allegories of philosophical ideas, the characters symbolize states or principles, and space acts as a metaphysical model of the world.

Ayn Rand's novel, "Atlas Shrugged," which incorporates elements of science fiction, mysticism, romanticism, dystopia, and philosophical prose, was published in 1957. According to the author herself, the main theme of this work is "the place of the human mind in existence." Like "The Fountainhead," the book analyzes philosophical tendencies based on the tenets of her own philosophical doctrine, objectivism. The novel also explores the intellect, capitalism, property rights, freedom, and the failures of government in controlling the economy.

The controversy surrounding this book's genre has led to the conclusion that it shares characteristics of both popular and high literature. According to L. Gudkov's classification, genres considered popular include the adventure-historical novel, crime novel, detective story, melodrama, science fiction, photo novels, and film novels. V.A. Kukharenko shares a similar opinion, classifying the suspense novel, romance novel, and fantasy as popular literature. High literature, in general, includes classic works distinguished by their artistry, scope, and novelty, whose influence and popularity continue for generations. Rand scholars such as John Chamberlain and V.A. Kukharenko classify "Atlas Shrugged" as science fiction, a psychological detective story (a "Dostoevsky" detective story), a political parable (a profound political parable), as well as suspense (a conspiracy against the state), and

dystopia. The novel's place in elite literature is determined by its philosophical nature and its depiction of the ideological struggle between the government and successful private entrepreneurs. The author's idea is that the prosperity of the state depends on innovative businessmen whose goal is to abolish monopolization in order to create new jobs and generate substantial profits. However, the planned economy begins to suppress the free market, and with resources no longer at its disposal, chaos ensues. The plot culminates in a conspiracy orchestrated by the enigmatic hero John Galt, which leads to the disappearance of free and talented entrepreneurs one by one, and pressing problems reach their peak, leading the country to moral and economic ruin. The novel's allusion lies in its plot structure, reminiscent of the myth of Atlantis. Just as in the ancient Greek myth, Atlas, the grandson of Oceanus, who holds the firmament on his shoulders, is freed from this heavy burden, the once dependent and oppressed creators of wealth in the United States suddenly free themselves from bondage and mysteriously leave a country where progress has no place. The concept of "Atlas" is used to depict the symbol of a free and independent individual who, despite all difficulties and obstacles, continues to create for the sake of his own success and universal prosperity. The allegorical depiction of the land inhabited by the "Atlanteans" after leaving their hopeless place is presented as a utopian island where peace and prosperity reign. The island resembles the place where the souls of deceased ancestors migrate, prompting reflection on the existence of parallel worlds. The new land is surrounded by mountains, which are a symbol of protection. Contrast is created in the description of the landscape using antinomy: "...the dark pyramids of fir trees in masculine simplicity and the feminine, multifaceted lace... of birch leaves."

Thus, Ayn Rand managed to convey in her works not only the philosophical principles of objectivism but also the truisms of popular literature, framed by a set of U.S. ideals such as democracy, freedom, equality, and opportunity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A study of philosophical prose of the 20th and 21st centuries has shown that this type of literary work is characterized not so much by clearly defined genre boundaries as by a flexible, hybrid structure. It arises from a synthesis of such genre forms as the novel, parable, essay, dystopia, and confession.

Firstly, as a metagener, philosophical prose enjoys considerable flexibility, as its distinctive features are not rigidly fixed.

Secondly, the predominance of the ideological

component over the development of events, which means the emphasis the importance of thought and its influence on the course of history is one of the main peculiarities of philosophical prose. The study revealed that within philosophical prose, narrative occupies a secondary position relative to central philosophical questions. Plot lines are often characterized by: Fragmentation, cyclical, a lack of a classical climax.

Thus, in the works of Kafka and Camus, narrative serves more as a platform for the exploration of existential concepts than for the dynamic development of events. Consequently, philosophical prose focuses not on the chronology of events, but on the in-depth understanding and experience of ideas.

Thirdly, one of the main genre features of philosophical prose is symbolism and allegory as defining features of the genre. The study found that symbols, allegories, and metaphors in philosophical prose serve not a decorative but a structure-forming function, being an integral part of its construction. Spatial images, such as a city, a desert, or a castle, acquire a metaphysical status, transcending everyday perception. Characters often act as bearers of specific ideas, rather than as deeply developed psychological characters. Time in such works can be arbitrary or exist outside of the usual historical context. Ultimately, the symbolization of reality proves to be a key mechanism defining the genre specificity of philosophical prose.

Lastly, the characteristics of the hero in philosophical prose determine its genre as well. The hero of philosophical works has the following distinctive features:

unstable self-identity, existential crisis, social marginality or alienation.

Their primary activity is reflection, and internal monologue often prevails over external actions. This creates the "philosophical hero" type, whose function is to embody an idea, not drive the plot.

A dialogue of ideas and a diversity of perspectives make a philosophical prose distinctive from other literary genres. It is expressed in hidden interaction with philosophical concepts, intertextual connections, polemics with religious, ethical, and ontological systems.

This brings it closer to essays and treatises, but in a more artistic form. Consequently, the genre is defined by an intellectual dialogic quality that extends beyond the text.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the genre-specific features of philosophical prose are rooted not in formal rules, but in the dynamics of meaning formation. The literary text here

is not just a collection of words, but a living space where the reader gains the opportunity for their own philosophical experience. The main philosophical ideas of the analyzed novels include discussions of good and evil, human essence, the role of reason in existence, human responsibility to oneself and others, life's purpose, humanism, and the creation of one's own happiness. Philosophical novels possess subjectivity, as their distinctive feature is the author's understanding of reality, which ultimately develops into a concept or ideology. The artistic style of philosophical prose after exhibits characteristics of modernism, which can include nonlinear composition, retrospection, philosophical dialogues, systematic reasoning, allusions, allegories, self-reflection, and other elements.

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