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ROMANTICISM IN THE MIRROR OF MODERN ENGLISH LITERARY CRITICISM

Abstract

The presented article is written on a topical issue. It is known that there are incomparably more critical works on Russian romanticism today than on English. The key idea of the article is to search for the roots of English romanticism. It turns out that this is a single, integral and complex literary movement, which, in turn, is literally inseparable from many other historical events in Europe. This is specified in the work. Starting from dissatisfaction with the main results of the French Revolution and the subsequent black streak of reaction and ending with the facts of previous centuries. In particular, a certain emphasis was placed on the formation of the English enlightenment novel of the 18th century. It is interesting in the article to separate two positions on both sides, the authors of which are prominent modern English critics - W. Tyndall and P. Kuennel. Each of the points of view cited by the author of the work certainly has a right to exist. At the same time, this article soberly and completely categorically briefly points out their main shortcomings. A separate and interesting page is the attitude of literary critics to neo-romanticism. There is not much specialized literature on this in our time, and the author's conclusions and generalizations are all the more valuable. It clearly follows from the article what Stevenson based his widely known novel "Treasure Island" on. It turns out that this is a tribute to the Elizabethan era, on the one hand, and the picaresque novel, on the other.

Keywords: romanticism; trends; currents; J. G. Byron; main tendencies; Anglo-American literary criticism; W. Tidal; P. Kuennell; neo-romanticism.

İBRAHİMOVA XƏYALƏ AĞAMİRZƏ QIZI **MÜASİR İNGİLİS ƏDƏBİ TƏNQİDİNİN AYNASINDA ROMANTİZM**

Xülasə.

Təqdim olunan məqalə aktual mövzuda yazılmışdır. Məlumdur ki, bu gün rus romantizmi haqqında ingilis romantizmindən müqayisə olunmaz dərəcədə çox tənqidi əsərlər mövcuddur. Məqalənin əsas ideyası ingilis romanizminin köklərini axtarmaqdır. Romantizm vahid, ayrılmaz və mürəkkəb ədəbi cərəyandır və bu da öz növbəsində Avropanın bir çox digər tarixi hadisələrindən qaynaqlanır. Bununla bağlı məqalədə geniş şərh verilir. Fransız İnqilabının əsas nəticələrindən və sonrakı qara irtica zolağından narazılıqdan başlayaraq, əvvəlki əsrlərin faktları ilə bitir. Eyni

zamanda, məqalədə göstərilən səbəblərin müsbət və mənfi xüsusiyyətləri qeyd edilir. Məqalədə eyni zamanda XVIII əsr ingilis maarifçi romanının inkişafına müəyyən diqqət yetirilmişdir. Ədəbiyyatşünasların neoromantizmə münasibəti ayrıca və maraqlı bir səhifə təşkil edir. Bu günlərdə bu mövzuda çox xüsusi araşdırmalar çox azdır, bu da müəllifin nəticələrini və ümumiləşdirmələrini daha da dəyərli edir. Məqalədən aydın olur ki, Stivenson çox məşhur olan “Xəzinə adası” romanını nəyə əsaslandırır. Belə çıxır ki, bu, bir tərəfdən Yelizaveta dövrünə, digər tərəfdən isə pikaresk romanına verilən qiymətdir.

Açar sözlər: romantizm; istiqamətlər; cərəyanlar; C. Bayron; əsas tendensiyalar; ingilis ədəbiyyatşünaslığı; V. Tidal; P. Kuennel; neoromantizm.

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РОМАНТИЗМ В ЗЕРКАЛЕ СОВРЕМЕННОГО АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЛИТЕРАТУРОВЕДЕНИЯ

Резюме

Представленная статья написана на актуальную тему. Известно, что о русском романтизме в наши дни имеется несравненно большее количество критических работ, нежели об английском. Ключевой мыслью статьи является поиск корней английского романизма. Выясняется, что это единое, целостное и комплексное литературное движение, которое, в свою очередь, в буквальном смысле слова неотделимо от множества других исторических событий в Европе. В работе это конкретизируется. Начиная от неудовлетворённости главными результатами Французской революции и последовавшей за ними чёрной полосы реакции и завершая фактами предшествующих веков. В частности, определённый упор был сделан на становлении английского просветительского романа XVIII века. Небезынтересным в статье предстаёт разведение по обе стороны двух позиций, авторами которых становятся видные современные английские критики – В. Тиндаль и П. Куэннел. Каждая из приведённых автором работы точек зрения, безусловно, имеет право на существование. Одновременно с тем в данной статье трезво и совершенно безапелляционно вкратце указано на их основные недостатки. Отдельную и интересную страницу составляет отношение критиков-литературоведов к неоромантизму. Об этом в наше время не так уж и много специальной литературы, и тем ценнее авторские выводы и обобщения. Ясно следует из статьи, на чём базировался Стивенсон в своём широко известном романе «Остров сокровищ». Выясняется, что это дань елизаветинской эпохи, с одной стороны, и плутовского романа – с другой.

Ключевые слова: романтизм; направления; течения; Дж. Г. Байрон; основные тенденции; английское литературоведение; В. Тидаль; П. Куэннел; нео-романтизм.

The originality of modern literature cannot be fully understood outside the classical traditions that have been accepted and creatively reworked. It is significant that the most outstanding works of modern criticism in Western Europe and the United States constantly examine the future possibilities and prospects for the development of modern literature in the closest unity with its past.

Since modern science does not pretend to understand the essence of the universe, but is only concerned with coordinating the various elements of experience, Keats, if he had lived in the twentieth century, would have revised this point of view. The conventional model into which these elements are included is the only subject of science, Dingle argues. Consequently, the poet has nothing to worry about, that science will force him to change his idea of the world. The poet, like the scientist, deals only with the subjective elements of his own experience and is free to dispose of them at his own discretion. This destruction of the contradiction between objective truth and romantic illusions that tormented Keats comes from subjective-idealistic and Machist or empirical-critical philosophical premises. It is clear that they lower the quality of artistic works and this phenomenon in English romanticism should be fought. It would be appropriate to dwell on the book of another theorist of formalism and champion of modernist poetry, Ivor Winters, "The Function of Criticism. Problems and Exercises". Winters declares himself an admirer of Thomas Aquinas and a fan of medieval scholastic "logic" in theosophy and art. In this regard, he blames romanticism for a certain amount of unnaturalness, artificiality of its images, excessive emotionality and, in his opinion, "the irresponsible irony of the 18th and 19th centuries", which seem to him to be a period of deep decline of national poetry. In turn, its new revival is connected, in the view of A. Winters, with modern decadence. In our opinion, one of the most relevant aspects of the romantic heritage for our modern times is due to the fact that the work of its creators arose as a reaction to the French Revolution and its world-historical consequences. In England, along with the revolutionizing influence of the international experience of the French Revolution, and later the anti-Napoleonic wars and national liberation movements in Europe and America in the 1910s-20s, the decisive role in the formation of the romantic trend in literature was played by the agrarian and industrial revolution of the 18th century. As a consequence, the destruction of the former classes of independent landowners (the so-called yeomen) and small artisans, and the first, still spontaneous, but stormy uprisings of the proletariat. These processes were reflected and rethought in very different ways in the work of English romantic poets, depending on which trend in romanticism they adhered to, whether their imagination was turned primarily to the past, in the patriarchal forms of which they sought their ideals, or to the future. However, in the works of absolutely all romantics, under one form or another, under one or another angle, current social issues were reflected. It is significant that, unlike their predecessors, the classicists, the romantics did not try to hide from the troubles

and misfortunes of modernity behind antiquity; on the contrary, they expressed their attitude to modernity in the most direct form. Mythology was only partly background information. Incidentally, unlike some English realist writers, for example, John Fowles, who relied on it along with the techniques of scholasticism, mysticism, magic, witchcraft, cynical flirting with God. And so on. But we will not expand on this topic any further, since this may lead us far from the purpose of this work. In order to more clearly answer the question posed in our article, it is necessary to point out that in the theory of modern Anglo-American literary criticism there were two polar tendencies on the subject of studying the national romantic heritage. The first tendency represents a more or less coherent concept, the essence of which is as follows: the ideological content and formal searches of all modern literature from the beginning of the 19th century to the present day are determined, first of all, by the general romantic mood of English poets. The most striking exponent of this tendency is considered to be the scientist William York Tyndale, well-known in certain circles. The merit of this scientist is, first of all, that he scrupulously examined the origins of modern English, including English-language literature. He named Wordsworth and Rousseau as the “pioneers” of this trend. From them, W. Tyndale threw a bridge to the beginning of the 19th century, stretching the thread to the work of J. G. Byron. He called him “the crown of the romantic movement” [3, pp. 44-45]. The author of “...Childe Harold” was further placed on the same level with Joyce, emphasizing that during the period of the dominance of romanticism, Joyce and Byron stood above their predecessors. Moreover, in the literal sense of the word. Let us consider this conviction subjective, especially since W. Tyndall clearly went too far, attributing transcendental features to all of Anglo-American romanticism. Some leading Russian scholars (for example, V.V. Ivasheva) correctly noted that W. Tyndale ultimately directed his teaching against realism. But we admit that he was right and insightful in one thing. The essence of the matter is that some English romantic writers remained true to their convictions and the same direction in literature and art, respectively, until the end of their days. Thus, Byron was and remained a romantic, as they say, of “crystal water” until his death. On this basis, works on comparative literary criticism appeared in “Byron studies”, in which the author of “Pilgrimage...” and the famous “Eastern Poems” was primarily contrasted with A. Pushkin. At the same time, the very question of who, in the end, was the student and teacher-mentor to whom was obscured. The discussion about the primacy of romanticism or, on the contrary, realism came to the forefront. As a result, it was established that Pushkin and Lermontov began their creative path with romantic works, and ended with a realistic novel in verse and a novel about Pechorin in prose, respectively. Byron remained a romantic in all his works, and only individual features-flashes of realistic motives can be noted. Thus, voluntarily or involuntarily, but V. Tyndale thereby actually tried to latently belittle the historical significance of J. Byron’s works. Meanwhile, the opinion

of this researcher is important to us for establishing the place of Byron and Joyce in the history of the English romantic movement that interests us. The second tendency is directly opposite to the first. Basically, it comes down to a condescending leveling of romanticism as a kind of accident in the history of English literary criticism. This point of view was defended, in particular, by the famous English Byron scholar Peter Quennell. He outlined it in the monograph "Byron. The Years of Glory". With all due respect to the author, we have no moral right not to say that this position is far from indisputable. It has given rise to debates of no lesser scale than the point of view of W. Tyndall. Thus, it seems to us that P. Quennell ultimately went so far as to call English romanticism in its formation and development a "historical curiosity", "an ossified monument of past centuries" [4, p. 52]. And this is by no means an accidental typo, an omission, but a firm conviction of the English researcher. He repeated it more than once in the aforementioned book. We, of course, categorically disagree with this opinion. Another thing is that English romanticism is difficult to consider as something universal. On the contrary, it is a phenomenon that is conditioned by history itself, subject to strict historical assessment. It is not worth talking about the role played by the French Revolution, since this can be read in any publication on literature. But at the same time it would be a mistake to cut off romanticism from literary classics. After all, when speaking, for example, about the critical realism of Charles Dickens (the novel "Dombey and Son" and others), we have no right to remain silent about some romantic themes and motifs. For example, it contains exclusively romantic images of Captain Cuttle, a young man Gay Walter, who is courting the millionaire's daughter, Florence. There are evil "witches", a highwayman, a good-natured admirer who, like in the famous fairy tale about Cinderella, puts silver shoes on Florence's foot, etc. V. Belinsky once warned about such a metamorphosis - an unexpected symbiosis of romanticism and critical realism. Moreover, the Russian critic spoke about both national romanticism and its clear manifestations on a global scale. For example, Belinsky also wrote about English romanticism, singled out the historical novels of W. Scott, pointing out that they are a "transitional link from romanticism to realism". His articles are very instructive in this case. The definition of romanticism he found as an attempt to guess the "secret of modernity" is largely applicable. "We live in titanic and exaggerated times, when everything that is inferior in size to the fantastic figures of our time seems pigmy" [2, p. 88], Byron exclaims. It is symptomatic that the educational novel with a social bias gradually degraded in England, turning into a much narrower and flatter family everyday moralizing novel of the early 19th century. In its internal content, it partly resembled the adventure novels of the 18th century. It is noteworthy, let us say, that Godwin, a prominent writer of the Education (a kind of "last of the Mohicans"), in his famous work St. Leon (1799) was forced to turn, on the one hand, to philosophy and romantic symbolism, and on the other, to the form of a fantasy novel.

Such a process, in our opinion, is easy to trace in the example of a number of famous English writers, whose work is marked by such an unusual transformation of themes and plots. So, let's take, for example, the work of the English neo-romantics. This trend was quite widespread at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries in the works of Stevenson, Haggard, Conrad, Chesterton and A. Conan Doyle. Before us are outstanding English artists of the word, who were people of different ideological and philosophical convictions. However, the so-called neo-romantics were united in one thing - in a negative attitude towards the bourgeois reality of their time. There is only one significant difference that we have no right to ignore. Thus, naturalists and especially representatives of English critical realism (for example, C. Dickens, H. G. Wells and J. Galsworthy) openly criticized the reality of the era of imperialism when depicting it. The aforementioned neo-romantics, as a rule, took a different, more mitigated path. They sought to reject the ideological, aesthetic and cultural value of the bourgeois system and therefore took readers into the distant past or into the world of exoticism. True, it turned out to be bright, colorful, full of all sorts of adventures and travels. And for examples, as they say, you don't have to go far. The world-famous work by R. L. Stevenson "Treasure Island" was not born out of nowhere. In modern terms, it is essentially a remake of the works of English romantics of an earlier time - Addison, Pope, Steele, Swift and some others. Stevenson's neo-romanticism, on the one hand, continued the narrative line of displaying literature about travels popular with national readers. It stretched back to Elizabethan times. It was genuine literature, although in some ways somewhat embellished. English romantics did not particularly care about the documentary authenticity of what was happening; it was important for them first of all to intrigue with personal records or good memories of seafarers. That is why so much material was devoted to the discoverers of new lands. On the other hand, Old Believer Puritan literature was of considerable importance for Stevenson. The author of "Treasure Island" fully preserves the romantic feature associated with stories or parables of an allegorical nature. It should be emphasized that the spiritual development of the individual was conveyed in them in a simple literary language accessible to the masses. There are many ordinary everyday details, but at the same time filled with rich ethical and moral meaning. This, of course, could not fail to be noticed by progressively thinking English literary critics. The thesis "human nature is the same everywhere", from which the writers of the Enlightenment proceeded as an axiom, clearly did not stand up to scrutiny during the period of the greatest social upheavals and revolutions that revealed enormous forces of destruction, on the one hand, and creation, on the other, in the masses. It is significant that the tendency characteristic of romantic art as a whole, towards a direct and immediate ascent from the individual to the universal, mainly extended from Byron. However, not by gradual transitions and indirect actions, but, most likely, in leaps and bounds, through a flight of fantasy and poetic conjecture. It may

seem strange, but in certain periods of his work Byron followed the orthodox logic of Cunctator's actions. (Brief historical background: Fabius Cunctator was a Roman commander who went down in world history as a man who adhered to a wait-and-see tactic. In this unconventional way, he achieved considerable success in the political arena). In our opinion, it seems even more paradoxical that in his work Byron, according to a number of English critics, managed to achieve truly cosmic breadth in his poetic generalizations. For example, symbolism clearly prevailed. A natural question arises: how exactly is this expressed? First of all, in the pantheistic identification of nature with the individual consciousness of a romantic personality. For example, Childe Harold is shown in this way from the first and famous poem of the author. As is rightly noted in literally all monographs and even any textbooks for students, the central hero is a hereditary aristocrat by his origin and upbringing, but an egoist and individualist by his moral and psychological appearance and way of life. But, as we see, he is drawn to nature, to new ideas and travels around the world. Although he was only an outside observer and never interfered in the struggle of the peoples of those countries that he visits throughout all four parts of the poem. At the same time, Childe Harold's pantheistic attitude to nature is reflected in his scholastic thinking. Byron himself, who should in no way be identified with his romantic character, glorified nature differently. Namely, not in general, but in close connection with human deeds. In his view, only a spiritually developed and liberated person is able to understand and correctly appreciate the beauty of Nature. In Don Juan, the nature of the narrative changes. Let's leave aside the love plot and the genealogy of the "eternal plot" about the hero-seducer of women's hearts. In English literary criticism, the idea that there are biblical motifs and expressed allusions from the period of Antiquity, as well as Indian mythology, is firmly entrenched. Incidentally, the creation of mythological symbols turned out to be a necessary historical stage in the development of artistic knowledge and exploration of the world in the period we are describing. And not only in Byron's poems, but also in many other works by leading poets and writers of the 19th century, instead of ordinary farmers, merchants or landowners, who mainly figured in the educational literature of the 18th century, titanic, exceptional creatures unexpectedly appeared before the readers. And along with them, fantastic images of heaven and hell also arose, various symbolic devices embodying the deeds of all mankind, initially as if alienated from them, but subsequently actually receiving an independent existence.

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Rəyçi: f.ü.f.f., dosent Dürdanə Hübətova