PHILOLOGY

LITERARY CRITICISM

LITERATURE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRIES OF ABROAD (WITH INSTRUCTIONS OF THE CONCRETE LITERATURE)

DOI: 10.32743/UNIPHIL.2026.139.1.21731

PHILOSOPHICAL TENDENCIES IN THE NOVELS OF AYN RAND AND ROBERT PIRSIG

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ФИЛОСОФСКИЕ ТЕНДЕНЦИИ В РОМАНАХ РОБЕРТА ПИРСИГА И АЙН РЭНД

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with philosophically coated prose that appeared in the mid of the XX century in the U.S.A – the age known as contemporary. Philosophical tendencies were one of the most popular and topical approaches in American literature, which emerged because of the immense changes that Europe and America faced at that time. Traditional values and beliefs became fragile after the two World Wars, and the themes of individuality, isolation, alienation and escapism occupied many thinkers, philosophers and writers' minds. Among them American novelists like Ayn Rand and Robert Pirsig became famous for their novelty in philosophically inclined literature. In this research we are going to analyze (using historical-cultural, biographical, empirical and comparative methods) these writers' works of fiction written with philosophical approach**.** The research materials are the novels of the writers we mentioned above "The Fountainhead", "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance").

Among other things, the article is published as an illustration of the origins and modern form of the concept of individualism, presented by an adherent of this concept (in contrast to collectivism and corresponding convergent theories).

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье рассматривается философски ориентированная проза, появившаяся в середине XX века в США. Произведения с философской тенденцией были одними из самых популярных и актуальных произведений в американской литературе, которые возникли в связи с огромными изменениями, которые произошли в Европе и Америке в то время. Традиционные ценности и убеждения пошатнулись после двух мировых войн, и темы индивидуальности, одиночества и отчуждения, эскапизма занимали умы многих философов и писателей. Среди них американские романисты, такие как Айн Рэнд и Роберт Пирсиг, прославились своим новаторством в философски ориентированной литературе. В данном исследовании мы проанализируем художественные произведения этих писателей, написанные с философским подходом, опираясь на историко-культурный, биографический, эмпирический и сравнительный методы. Материалами исследования послужили романы упомянутых выше писателей: "Источник" и "Дзен и искусство ухода за мотоциклом". В том числе статья публикуется как иллюстрация истоков и современного вида концепции индивидуализма, представленная приверженцем данной концепции (в отличие от коллективизма и соответствующих конвергентных теорий).

Keywords: Art, morality, objectivism, Metaphysics of Quality, Chautauqua, romantic approach, abstract thinking , classical approach.

Библиографическое описание: Yevstegniyeva E.S. PHILOSOPHICAL TENDENCIES IN THE NOVELS OF AYN RAND AND ROBERT PIRSIG // Universum: филология и искусствоведение : электрон. научн. журн. 2026. 1(139). URL: *https://7universum.com/ru/philology/archive/item/21731*

Ключевые слова: искусство, мораль, объективизм, метафизика качества, Шатокуа, романтический подход, абстрактное мышление, классический подход.

Introduction. Philosophical prose or novels with philosophical tendency presuppose not so much the embodiment of the self-development of life mediated by pictures, the depiction of phenomena, as in purely artistic prose, but rather a direct, concentrated expression of the meaning of what is happening, taking place in the process of obtaining it. Moreover, the ways of thinking about the world, the paths along which thought, moves, become a special subject of philosophical prose. Often, works of philosophical prose are built on the primacy of a moral and philosophical thesis that is clear to the author, and the narrative is subordinated to the logic of its disclosure.

In such works, thought subordinates to itself the development of artistic imagery, or rather, is a kind of dominant that organizes the internal structure of an artistic image. It must be remembered that the supremacy of conceptual thought in the composition of an artistic image is only a tendency, a kind of semantic pole that is never attainable in practice. In a word, philosophical imagery manifests itself on the basis of concentration, consolidation of the general meaning of phenomena, as well as due to an increase in the proportion of the protagonist (hero), the consciousness of the narrating subject. Hero's biography includes absolutely all significant events occurring within the framework of the social whole of which he is a member. The direction of the author's consciousness in works of philosophical prose is always clearly deductive, the general meaning is often given and is only refined, proved, concretized in the process of unfolding the artistic image. [1, 408]

Philosophical prose is also a holistic exploration of the world; but the prism through which the artist looks at the world is not a fact, not a phenomenon, but the dynamics of social consciousness, recreated in its individual contradictory forms. The narrative in philosophical prose is not the "direct embodiment of artistic thoughts" of the author, because such self-expression would be analogous to the abstract contemplation of abstract thinking. Philosophical prose is a phenomenon of art, and therefore combines knowledge and action. The author of philosophical prose does not so much form his thoughts about the world as he reveals the general state of reality, exploring the dynamics of social consciousness. [1, 408]

In this article, we analyzed the works of fiction including "The Fountainhead" by Ayn Rand, "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" by Robert Pirsing implying the philosophy of individualism and the so-called objectivism, and revealing the artistic creativity of the authors.

To investigate our topic, we will imply historical-cultural, biographical, empirical and comparative methods. The main motives of our objects – are the discussions about life, morality, art and truth.

Main part

Philosophical tendencies firstly came as an opposition to a documentary genre. In 1968, Alberto Moravia suggested that fiction should be considered as a document or a record. He claimed that the representation of literature and its' objects almost are not dimensional. He warned, if that approach continued, the fiction would die out. [2, 7] Moravia's anxiety was quite reasonable. If we refer to statistics, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the documentary genre has overtaken other literature forms except for commercial literature. The writers, who were against commercial and documentary forms, constantly turned their attention to the philosophical inclination, considering the ethical and moral problems.

Contemporary American literature has always been a piece of interest in many countries including Central Asia, owing to the fact that its masterpieces were subversive with the elements of surreal, bizarre names, incredible plots and consistent, biting interpretation. American authors have always been prominent with their unique styles and views of the world. Consequently, modern American literature arguably continues to be evaluated as highly politicized fiction, which was popular between the 18th and 19th centuries, along with the thought-provoking and influential philosophical questions of the 20th century Modernism, Objectivism, Existentialism and other philosophically inclined trends. To be precise, philosophical literature developed unevenly since the post-war period. Moreover, the works of American writers became more philosophically oriented during the 1950s – 1970s. [3, 58] Further we present several famous American novelists and their literary works with philosophical content.

In the XX century, American literature presented prominent female writer Ayn Rand and her novels written under the influence of her own established philosophy which is called Objectivism. Ayn Rand, in fact influenced by John Locke. Moreover, Ayn Rand's attitude is quite optimistic as she rejects absurdity of the life, and shows an example of ideal man in her work "The Fountainhead".

Alisa Zinovyeva Rosenbaum, later Ayn Rand, was born on February 2, 1905. Educated and born in Russia, she moved to the United States in 1926. She achieved her first fame with her 1943's novels "The Fountainhead" and "Atlas Shrugged". In fact, she contributed to the development of the philosophical system, which was named later Objectivism and wrote some novels in line with this theory.

Rand represented Objectivism as "the concept of man as a heroic being, with his own happiness as the moral purpose of his life, with productive achievements as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute". [4,1170] The main principles of Objectivism outline the real world exists autonomously of human consciousness, and that people have uninterrupted contact with reality through the sense of perception. Moreover, no one

is able to achieve objective knowledge from understanding via the procedure of concept formation and inductive logic. Rand stated that the pursuit of one's own happiness is the proper moral goal in life, laissez-faire capitalism is the only form of social organization that fully respects individual rights, and the function of art in human life is to transform people's metaphysical ideas by selectively reproducing reality into a physical form that one can understand and emotionally respond. [5, 1]

Having analyzed the term objectivism we can say that this notion can be related to both literary and philosophical trends. Therefore, the first vivid illustration of the theory described above, is a romantic and philosophical novel "The Fountainhead". Being published in the United States, this work is considered quite big, having approximately 753 pages. The plot of the novel is interesting and sophisticated. The main hero of the novel is Howard Roark, an ambitious and individualistic young architect who designs modernist buildings. In the course of the plot, we recognize him as a man with a powerful will and a strong character. In fact, we notice some traits of his character through his own profession – architecture. As for his work, he possesses himself as a hardworking and innovative specialist who refuses to compromise with an architectural establishment unwilling to accept innovations. The author shows the main hero as an ideal and independent man, who has his own individuality and integrity. The main character is described from the point of view of some moral and philosophical concepts. According to Gladstein, (1999) Rand's stated goal in writing fiction was to portray her vision of an ideal man. The character of Howard Roark in "The Fountainhead" was the first instance where she believed she had achieved this.[6,20]Roark embodies Rand's egoistic moral ideals, especially the virtues of independence and integrity .[7,337]To prove that it is worth to recollect his words eliciting them from the novel: *"But you see," said Roark quietly, "I have, let's say, sixty years to live. Most of that time will be spent working. I have chosen the work I want to do. If I find no joy in it, then I am only condemning myself to sixty years of torture. And I can find the joy only if I do my work in the best way possible to me. But the best is a matter of standards – and I set my own standards. I inherit nothing. I stand at the end of no tradition. I may, perhaps, stand at the beginning of one."* [8,11]

American architect Frank Lloyd Wright served as at least a partial inspiration for the character of Roark. Rand claimed that the motivation was restricted to "the pattern of his work" and some notions he had about construction. She disputed the idea that Wright was connected to Roark's worldview or the plot's events. Despite Rand's denials, observers continue to assert that Wright and Roark have closer ties. When asked if he believed Roark was modeled on him, Wright was evasive, at times hinting that he did and at other times denying it.[9,392] Peter Keating, in contrast to the individualistic Roark, is a conformist who makes decisions based on what other people want. Keating, who is first introduced to the reader as Roark's classmate in architecture, is not actually interested in becoming an architect. Although he enjoys painting, his mother encourages him to pursue a career in architecture. Keating follows his expectations rather than his own interests in this decision as well as all of his others. Roark says: "*Listen to what is being preached today. Look at everyone around us. You've wondered why they suffer, why they seek happiness and never find it. If any man stopped and asked himself whether he's ever held a truly personal desire, he'd find the answer. He'd see that all his wishes, his efforts, his dreams, his ambitions are motivated by other men. He is not really struggling even for material wealth, but for the second-hander's delusion – prestige. A stamp of approval, not his own. He can find no joy in the struggle and no joy when he has succeeded. He cannot say about a single thing: This is what I wanted because I wanted it, not because it made my neighbors gape at me. Then he wonders why he's unhappy."* [8,12] In the above reference from the novel, we can see the main hero's interpretation of the whole society. Roark criticizes the people who tend to be great inhabitants of our universe. However, after his own observation of the world, he concludes that most people are miserable and not humane. Unlike Howard, the opponent develops into a social climber who uses a combination of self-deception and fashion compliance to advance his profession and social standing. [10,1] He chooses to marry Dominique instead of the woman he loves, who lacks Dominique's beauty and social standing, in his private life, following a similar route. Keating is unhappy with his path and his career is in decline by middle age, but it is too late for him to change.

While reading the novel we understand the complete meaning and the intention of the writer. The main contrasts that were depicted by the author are two types of a people: a person-creator and a person-destroyer. Certainly, the main hero tends to be the most positive character of the novel. He is a person-creator. The description of his character makes us understand the ideas of philosophy like "*What is the meaning of life?", "What is the main purpose of our existence?", "How to be or what to be?".* Therefore, a person who is a creator always relies on his own thoughts, ideas, knowledge, and strengths. This person, of course, a positive one, is always trying to be independent, wants to create only things that he really wants, without being forced by others. However, another type – a person-destroyer tends to destruct and subdue a person-creator. Negative people, who are described in the novel, are always trying to steal the ideas and results of someone's labor. Moreover, being envious due to a person's success and individuality, they try to humiliate and bite a person like parasites. The central theme of the novel is the primacy of the individual. The plot of "The Fountainhead" centers on Roark's battle to maintain his uniqueness in the face of forces determined to subdue him. Roark makes the case that people, not societies, drive history at his second trial. He claims that the origins of civilization lie with individual inventors. The crowd responds to Roark's passionate and lyrical speech in stunned silence. The fight for uniqueness is not exclusive to Roark. The urge to establish oneself emerges as the single greatest quality a human can have as each

likable character in the book attempts to act independently from society. The book comes to a glorious conclusion not because Roark vanquishes or wins over his foes, but rather because he has gained the freedom to live up to his own ideals. The central claim of "The Fountainhead" is that people must be selfish in order to be free and happy because society has a herd mentality. Furthermore, thoroughly investigating the main themes of the work, the following question might appear. *What philosophy does the book "The Fountainhead" exactly preach?* The answer to this question we may find in the following lines: *"I stand at the end of no tradition. I may, perhaps, stand at the beginning of one."* [8,12] Here it means that the main hero denies accepting his existence because of the society and its old norms. He strives for excellence and the pleasure he finds in it and for this, he takes his own path, unexplored and open.

In short, he says he would exist as an individual any day rather than a collective social being. *"I could die for you. But I couldn't, and wouldn't, live for you."* [8,12] Here he says that nothing binds him to his life except his purpose of existence, not even the woman of his life.

The author of the article thinks that Ayn Rand portrayed *"Man"*, as he should be. Man, who follows his own style with no regard for customs and traditions which call a man an inferior being and a man, who worships his purpose of life and a man, who doesn't accept his fate, but strives to make a progress for his satisfactory life.

It is inevitable to say that most of the philosophical novels reflected the problems of the era, in which the authors lived. Ayn Rand's philosophy was –individualism. Being published in 1943, "The Fountainhead" implicitly says: *"think for yourself, draw your own conclusions, choose your own values, and live by your own standards."*

Lastly, we would like to contemplate about the peculiarities of philosophical approach in another notable writer, Robert Pirsig's literary work. We want to give a brief analysis of the novel – "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance". This work was first published in 1974. Mainly, the novel depicts a fictionalized autobiography of the author. This book was the first of Pirsig's texts, which explored his "Metaphysics of Quality".[11,206]The Metaphysics of Quality (MOQ) is a theory of reality established in Robert M. Pirsig's philosophical novel, "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" (1974) and expanded in "Lila: An Inquiry into Morals" (1991). The MOQ embodies facets of Sophistry, East Asian philosophy, pragmatism, and Indigenous American philosophy. Pirsig asserts that the MOQ is more sufficient perspective through which to view reality than the subjective/objective mindset that Pirsig attributes to Aristotle. "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" references the Sanskrit doctrine of Tat Tvam Asi ("Thou art that"), which asserts an existential monism as opposed to the subject–object dualism. [11,1]

Pirsig himself says that despite its title, *"it should in no way be associated with that great body of factual information relating to orthodox Zen Buddhist practice. It's not very factual on motorcycles, either."* [12,1]

Firstly, we would analyze the genesis and the genre of this novel. It has been proven by many literary scholars and critics, including Valentina Ivasheva that the novel belongs to philosophical prose. Reading this novel we may find several philosophical discussions related to *Chautauquas* by the author, on topics including epistemology, eastern philosophical and religious culture as Zen, the history of philosophy, and the philosophy of science.

A lot of dialogues are linked with the story of the writer's past life. This story is alluded to within the third individual as Phaedrus (after Plato's exchange). Phaedrus is an inventive and specialized professor in a small college. He has always got to be engaged within the question of and what in common characterizes a Great, or "Quality", which he compares to Tao. (Taoism is an ancient Chinese philosophy and religion that instructs believers on how to exist in harmony with the universe). His philosophical examinations in the long run drove him crazy, and he was subjected to electroconvulsive treatment, which forever changed his personality. Phaedrus's solid and strange identity, displayed as unsafe to the storyteller, starts to re-emerge and the storyteller is accommodated with his past towards the conclusion of the book. According to Edward Abbey, the book presents us the biography and some moments of life of a 17-day journey that Pirsig made on a motorcycle from Minnesota to Northern California along with his son Chris. The story of this travel is related to a first-person narration, in spite of the fact that the creator is not recognized. Father and child are also accompanied, for the primary nine days of the trip, by near companions John and Sylvia Sutherland, with whom they portion ways in Montana. Concurring to the data from online library Pirsig's reasoning points to show the broad social disappointment he detected within the states amid the mid-twentieth century. [13,1]

The long time, from 1950-1975 saw numerous particular dissents against the foundation, counting organized endeavors to allow respectful rights to African-Americans, across the nation dissents against the Vietnam War, and counterculture bunches just like the Beat Artists and the "hippie" development. This multifaceted irritation with the status quo is likely what motivated Pirsig to distribute his logic. In our opinion, all these points mentioned above implicitly highlighted in the work by the use of some philosophical notions.

The major concept of this book is the consideration of the state of mind and different approaches to life. Within the 15 chapters the creator watches the behavior of his co-travelers, his friends. They are a married couple who travel with the main hero from one to another places of America on the motorcycles. The storyteller portrays the "romantic" approach to life and technology of his companion, preserves his costly modern cruiser. The narrator says that addressing the clash between human values and technological requirements isn't about avoiding technology. That cannot be done. To resolve the conflict, it is essential to dismantle the dichotomy of thought that hinders a genuine comprehension of technology – which should be seen not as an exploi-

tation of nature, but as a synthesis of nature and the human spirit into a new form of creation that surpasses both. When this transcendence happens in events like the inaugural airplane journey over the ocean or the first steps on the moon, a form of public acknowledgment of technology's transcendent nature takes place. However, this elevation should also take place on a personal basis, in one's own life, in a less dramatic way. [14,133]

What "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" indicates us is that we won't get to the truth about life through pursuing answers through the rational mind only. The narrator hungered for a rational explanation of everything, but in the end found that both science and philosophy are just maps of the truth. But in love of another person, or in the experience of nature or in a feeling of closeness to God, we can access truths that can't be broken down. The book makes a person think about the technological culture we live in and where we can find room in it for 'quality' and things of the spirit. It shows how a life drained of gumption is not really a life.

Results and discussions

Accompanying the representatives of literature with philosophical coating, we analyzed the notion of philosophical tendencies in literature and fiction with philosophical coating, variety of definitions proposed by dictionaries, encyclopedias and the general observations of scholars of literature and philosophy. The main tendencies of philosophy in literature are: the content itself might raise philosophical coating in which an author and a reader can embody fictional characters, and even fantastic creatures or technological issues. The ability of a person's mind to imagine, and even to feel sympathy for those characters in fiction; it itself reveals the nature of the human mind. A number of literary works may be represented as a sign of a new thing in ethics, describing personages in fiction, their intentions, their deeds, and the results of their activity. Given the above, we see that a number of authors have used different plots and composition forms to present their philosophical views as Robert Pirsig and Ayn Rand did. Ayn Rand founded *objectivism* which preaches the notion of ideal man in her novel "The Fountainhead", and Robert Pirsing who approved technological and scientific development and the ways to coexist with it in his novel "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance". The novel of Ayn Rand "The Fountainhead" was created under the influence of a philosophical movement. The ideal man is the creator of his own destiny, putting his interests and desires first, as well as individualism opposing collectivism, which became the main meaning of the writer's works. All these principles were developed in novels under the influence of the philosophical movement - "objectivism", which was created by Ayn Rand herself.

"The Fountainhead" proclaims ardent individualism, rejection of old, standard orders and canons, healthy egoism, which are aimed at achieving one's own happiness and goals. Ayn Rand presents to us the ideal embodiment of the principles of the philosophy of Objectivism in the person of the protagonist Howard Roark, who says: *"Men have been taught that it is a virtue to agree with others. But the creator is the man who disagrees. Men have been taught that it is a virtue to swim with the current. But the creator is the man who goes against the current. Men have been taught that it is a virtue to stand together. But the creator is the man who stands alone. Men have been taught that the ego is the synonym of evil, and selflessness the ideal of virtue. But the creator is the egoist in the absolute sense, and the selfless man is the one who does not think, feel, judge, or act. These are functions of the self."* [15, 440] Unlike Ayn Rand, Robert Pirsig was not aimed at creating any philosophical trend, but just wanted to show a philosophical viewpoint on the problems that people face in the relationship between human and technology. "Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance: An inquiry into values" was a good example of solving that type of conflict. So, the author, Rober Pirsig exemplifies lots of examples in his books how to treat the technology through the 'taking care' of the motorcycles. Thus, he claims that if people would have a thorough approach to solve any problems connected with machines, that means that the same deep thinking and investigation they would use while solving the problems connected with family, friends or even society. Just to illustrate, let's look at the quote from the book by Robert Pirsig "Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance: An inquiry into values". *"Each machine has its own, unique personality which probably could be defined as the intuitive sum total of everything you know and feel about it. This personality constantly changes, usually for the worse, but sometimes surprisingly for the better, and it is this personality that is the real object of motorcycle maintenance."*[16,20] In this quote the author compares a person's personality to the art of motorcycle maintenance, and this comparison makes the book look unique, with a deep sense, that we may feel after reading the whole work of the author.

Conclusion

To conclude we can state that philosophy is a distinct form of social consciousness and knowledge of the world. It develops a system of knowledge about the basic principles and foundations of human life, studies and generalizes the most important features of human relations with the world. In fiction with philosophical inclination authors express the moral problem, trying to show the place of a man in the world of chaos. The representatives of the school of Socrates, declared that the philosophy's main purpose is to reveal "love of truth". The pursuit of truth is one of the main themes in philosophical works of literary art. We see some motives in American literature of the twenties that highlights individualism or objectivism founded by Ayn Rand, finding harmony in modern society with Robert Pirsig's philosophical works of fiction. Individualism over collectivism was one of the main themes of Ayn Rand's philosophy, however not in politics but within the humans' souls. Thus, her concept of an ideal man was portrayed through the main character Howard Roark. Ayn Rand genuinely represented the core qualities of a person who can live this life "happily" and later

generated it into a philosophical trend stated that it is only a man's responsibility and aim to feel himself contented through hard, but satisfactory exertion. Along with A. Rand, Robert Pirsig created his own philosophical novel as well. He also tried to find the harmony in his life through reasoning, comparing, commentary and investigating. Thus, we consider all these novels highly metaphysical and intellectual thanks to promulgating the love to labor, science, independence and worthwhile existence.

The XX century had many experimental changes, and we cannot skip over philosophical inclination that flourished in Great Britain and America, and shaped many renowned writers and their valuable works. In this research we counted few of them, and analyzed their prestigious novels.

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