

The Peculiarities of the Gothic Prose Genre in Ukrainian and English Literature: Formation and Development

Mariana Pytuliak

Abstract: *In the article the peculiarities of formation the genre of the gothic prose in Ukrainian literature are investigated. The variety of the genre modifications of the gothic works in English and Ukrainian literature is partly analyzed. The factors, which influenced on the process of formation and development of the gothic prose in Ukrainian literature, are defined also.*

Key words: *gothic prose, genre modification, romance, literature, tradition, factor*

INTRODUCTION

More or less, the reception and typological matches are found in the works of the writers of different countries, and even of different time periods. The influence of the gothic romance on the history of development of the world and Ukrainian literature is undeniable, and needs to be analyzed in details in future. In spite of the fact that the Romanticism in Ukraine was spread a little bit later than in other countries of Europe, the gothic tradition has found its place here and does not stay outside of its literature genre development. The aim of the paper is to analyze the peculiarities of the gothic prose genre formation in Ukrainian and English literatures and define the factors, which influenced the process of development of the gothic prose in Ukrainian literature.

MAIN BODY

The forming of the genre of the gothic prose, as we know from the history of literature, has began in XVIII century, when the novel "The Castle of Otranto" by H. Walpole was first published, which became actually the first standard of the gothic prose. Afterwards, the tradition of the gothic prose was continued by A. Radcliffe, M. Lewis, C. Maturin, K. Reeve, W. Scott, J. S. Le Fanu, M. Shelley, W. Ainsworth, E. Bulwer-Lytton, H. James, E. Bronte, B. Stoker, O. Wilde, A. Blackwood, J. Fowles, I. Murdoch. The study of the process of the history of forming the gothic tradition was the subject of research in works of D. Varma, M. Summers, E. Birkhead, D. Punter, E. Burke. The philosophy conception for the genre of the gothic prose was pawned by the Schlegel brothers - German researchers and literary critics; afterwards K.- G. Jung, F. Shelling, J. Herder, J. Fichte have made their impact. In the context of analysis of the role of the subconscious category in the gothic prose the philosophical conceptions of E. Kant and S. Freud are important also. The subject of the history of development the aesthetics of the Romanticism and the origin of gothic genre in literature was enlightened in the works of V. Zhyrmunskyi, M. Bachtin, V. Vanslov, as well as in works of N. Solovyeva, N. Dyakonova, A. Elistratova, V. Vatsuro, O. Hryhoryeva. In Ukraininan study of literature I. Denysyuk, I. Limborskyi, I. Kachurovskyi are working in this field. The gothic prose itself has become the subject of thesis of A. Hornyatko-Shumylovych, H. Denysyuk, O. Bilous, S. Reshetycha, O. Matvienko.

The forming of the gothic literature begins in time of the Romanticism epoch - the time of changes in social and cultural life, and in consciousness of people also. It was the period, when the writers were looking through rational principles of thinking of the Enlightenment epoch philosophers and reflection of reality as it was in the epoch of Classicism. The authors concentrate their attention on the internal experiencing of a person, his aspirations and desires. Dissatisfaction by the genre of novel of the epoch of Enlightenment, that could not represent the reality and perception of the world in the way the writers of Romanticism wanted, capture a reader in his inner world and imagination, keep him in suspense and emphasize with the characters - all these items just induced writers to incarnate an artistic reflection in a new literary form that afterwards got the

definition of "gothic romance". This new form has assisted in forming the new construction principles of the works, where the elements of fantastic and mysterious prevail, and a plot holds a reader in expectation something unusual and, at the same time, terrible. A space to dream up was enabled also. Gothic novel or, it is sometimes specified as the novel of horror, appears within the conversion from the epoch of Classicism into the epoch of Romanticism and later Realism. It was some kind of the artistic and ideological opposition to the prose, which was popular during the epoch of Enlightenment. As V. Vanslov marks [7], the epoch of Romanticism is characterized by its deep self-contradictions; only in gothic prose we can see highly represented dualism of the romantic perception of the world - the basic conflict of any gothic work is eternal opposition of good and evil.

It should be mentioned, that the gothic tradition, which begins yet in XVIIIth century has its active development today, too: short stories of horror and novels or romances on gothic subjects or with the gothic elements up to now are popular among reader audience. As to the comparative analysis of peculiarities of the English and Ukrainian gothic prose, we can begin it from the very definition of term. First, in the form of the romance, the gothic arises in English literature. The first gothic romances gravitate to the medieval novels about knights and their adventures: they contain the elements of fabulousness, the plot is sometimes protracted, too many historical facts and details are specified. The set of characters and their distribution on positive and negative, spatial chronotop, which actually defines the genre modification of the work are the elements of the gothic romance also. E. Birkhead in her research "The Tale of Terror" about beginnings of gothic novels in England says: "The medieval romances of chivalry, which embody stories handed down by oral tradition, are set in an atmosphere of supernatural wonder and enchantment" [2]. However, afterwards, the features that very brightly distinguish a gothic romance from the other genres are determined. Actually, the essential feature of the gothic romance is the feeling of pleasant terror, known in English literary criticism as the effect of "suspense" (anxious expectation).

We should mark, that in the Literature Encyclopedia (Ukrainian), the gothic romance (as talking about early medieval romances) in translation from English is "gothic novel" [4]; as we read about the determination of genre of romance (as a prose genre of literature, usually used in English to define the medieval romances) in the Literature Reference Dictionary-Book (Ukrainian) - from English – it is romance; and further it is said: "English literary criticism applies a definition "romance", when spoken about the ancient and medieval prose, and "novel" as a modern narrative story, measuring it on the "actually novel" (fiction story) and "story" as "true story" [2]. What is very interesting from the comparative literature point of view, in Ukrainian literature the writers rather often use such terms as "narration" (rendering of the story), "legend", "nebylystysya" (some kind of fable, in which the plot is built on humor and fictions facts), "byvalschyna" (a kind of a true story; true tale). These definitions the most thoroughly and clearly characterize the mentality of the Ukrainian people and represent their world view. A form of narration in, as we can generalize - short stories, coincides with the form of narration in English literature works: from the first or from the third person. A story in the form of a diary, which is typical for the gothic romances in English literature, is not typical for the Ukrainian gothic prose. According to the genres, as for example, novel or romance, we should mark, that "the Ukrainian writers of XIX of century, in particular I. Nechui-Levytskyi and Panas Myrnyi, often use the terms "romance" and "povist" (a narrative, which is bigger than story or novel, but not still a romance) as synonyms" [4]. It is important to notice that, as read in "The Tale of Terror" by Edith Birkhead, in English literature there are such definitions as "romance", "tale of terror", "novel", which in the period of prosperity of the gothic prose, marked a definition we now distinguish in the history of literature as "gothic romance".

It is necessary to notice, that the subject of the paper lays in distinguishing the peculiarities of the gothic prose in the compared literatures and factors that influenced on its development in Ukrainian literature. However, taking to the consideration the difference

between the historical, national and cultural contexts the genre of gothic prose in England and Ukraine was developing in the other period of time: when the English literature has already continued its gothic literary tradition, the Ukrainian literature only begins its full valued development. This difference in time and literary periods actually caused the variety of genre modifications of the literary works. For example, English gothic prose developed the gothic genre in the form of romance (novel) best, and in Ukrainian literature the gothic romance (novel) as we usually understand it we have just few items. Thus, we can talk about the genre modifications of the gothic prose, which are represented by gothic stories, novels, short stories, legends in Ukrainian literature.

The period of Romanticism in Ukrainian literature purchased deeply national features. It is related not only with the process of revival of language and literature, but as well with the rebirth of the nation by its own. It is linked with the aspiration of national originality and self-affirmation on the geopolitical map of the world. However, Ukraine does not yet have the age-old gothic tradition, as England does, but as we read in the Literature Encyclopedia: gothic prose in Ukrainian literature has transformed in fanciful prose [4]. Novels, sometimes - short stories, a bit rarer - povist, and often - legends with the gothic elements take its own place in Ukrainian literature process. We distinguish the gothic elements in the works by O. Somiv, P. Kulish, O. Storozhenko, H. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, M. Hohol. The Gothic prose in Ukraine continued to develop in its national course, with its peculiarities during the XXth century, too. The gothic tradition was enriched by the works of I. Franko, V. Stefanyk, M. Kotsyubynskyi, Marko Vovchok, N. Kobrynska, B. Lepkyi, M. Yatskyv, V. Schevchuk. A substantial feature, which marks the genre originality of Ukrainian gothic prose, is the national ground on which the gothic literature developed.

The identity of the Ukrainian ethnos, with its inherited national consciousness that began to develop exactly in the epoch of Romanticism had the influence on forming the literature style of that time. For example, in English gothic prose we do not have the conflicts based on the national liberation movements, as well as on the desire to become free. However these conflicts are the main subjects in Ukrainian prose. The great influence on the Ukrainian gothic prose has the mentality of Ukrainian nation and the richness of folklore also. As we can read in "Marko the Cursed" by O. Storozhenko, not only the desire of the justice which is relevant in gothic works of English prose is stressed, but the expiation of sins of the character. The element of Christian world view is brightly enlightened - a sinner needs expiation, confession and forgiveness at last.

Coming back to the origin and spreading the gothic prose on the Ukrainian lands we analyze the explorations of the Ukrainian literary researchers. Professor I. Kachurovskyi says: "... the gothic romance – as far as I can judge, we do not have up to now" [3]. However, the author of the paper gives the names of the authors whose works contain gothic elements: "The Old Court" by B. Lepkyi, "In the Old Chambers" by N. Kybalchych [3]. The authors of a Literature Dictionary distinguish a fanciful novel in Ukrainian literature, notably two related books by V. Zemlyak "The Swan Flock" and "The Green mills" [2]. Yuryi Vynnychyk, who has systematized the collections of Ukrainian gothic prose of XIX of century "The Fiery Serpent" and "The Night Ghost" names such writers as H. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, O. Somiv, O. Storozhenko, M. Hohol, M. Kostomarov, P. Kulish.

Taking into consideration the discussion about the existence of gothic romance in Ukrainian literature and gothic prose in particular, it is possible to distinguish factors, which influenced the development and formation of the literature with the gothic elements and gothic prose both. If we analyze it in the context of English gothic tradition, then it is necessary to notice, that it was formed for a long period of time - from the end of XVIII century and this process is continuing up to now. Aesthetics of the gothic literature is based on conceptions and ideas of the epoch of Romanticism, and that is why the ideas of fighting the good and evil, justice and injustice, internal aspiration of personality and reflection of reality are represented in works.

The epoch of Romanticism in Ukraine had more national tint. Favorable social and political conditions, reduction of oppressions from the side of authorities have had the positive influence on the development of science and culture centers: educational establishments were opened, language norms were developing, and new literary tradition was formed. One of the most important factors which influenced on the gothic genre in Ukrainian literature is social-historical factor. As the Ukrainian researcher M. Skrynnyk notices: "Romanticism became that historically cultural epoch, which formed the spiritually-semantic vector of XIX century ideology, expressed by the aspiring of nations to self-sufficient existence... There appeared a necessity for nation-based metatext, national metastory" [6]. Ukrainian language and literature, developing in difficult political and historical conditions, just in the epoch of romanticism began their full and rich development: the works of modern writers and poets as well as old manuscripts were printed; scientific literary communities were founded.

The peculiar feature that influenced the whole literary process is the aspiring of Ukrainians to national originality: "Scientific and literary activity ... has been concentrated around the problems the solving of which had a primary value for development of the Ukrainian nation. This is the origin of the Ukrainian nation, and its heroic fight against the oppressors, and literary sights, and folk epos" [5]. Just the same motives contain the Ukrainian gothic prose works of the epoch of Romanticism: the role of national liberation fight in the history of the Ukrainian nation: here is the eternal conflict of good and evil transformed – the basic constituent of the gothic prose. The desires of revenge to the enemy-oppressor and statement and renewal the justice on his own land – here we see the trasformed feature of the gothic romance - the punishment of those who are guilty. As Alla Sinitsyna says: "... the idea of national roots ... cannot not be apart from the idea of national originality" [5].

The next important factor we determinate is the national cultural factor. The cultural life of the nation, their customs, traditions, national identity are the inalienable parts of the national language and literature and the historical and cultural acquisition of the nation as well. An important element has become the language: "The central question on a way to national self-identity has become the question of the language and Ukrainian writing" [6]. The source of the historical memory of the nation there was and there is the language of the nation.

The important element of language is folklore. It is a treasury of not only the historically formed traditions, but a sort of the world view system of the nation, personification of his ideas, desires and aspirations also. The cognition of national folklore, its ethnographic sources, plays a large role in the process of forming the literature. An important part of national and cultural factor we consider the original Christian and mythological world views of Ukrainians also. It is said, that the development of gothic prose in the Ukrainian literature has began on the good prepared ground. Yet from the ancient times the pre-christian folk narrations and legends about good and evil forces, gods and goddess, forces of nature, as well as mythological images of nymphs, devils, witches, mermaids, wood goblins, ghosts, shadows, on which the Ukrainian land is so rich has been passed to us. All these characters inalienably accompanied the Ukrainian literature through centuries. Scary secrets, unexposed details of murder, desire of ghosts to set a justice and punish those, who are guilty, misery of the souls, who are assigned for pangs, as well as the bright ceremonial traditions had formed the foundation for a prosperity and spreading of the gothic prose from century to century.

However, with regard to the bright mythological images and details with the help of which the writers-romantics enrich their works we still analyze the gothic prose in the context of Christian view. In fact, the writers of the romantic period bind the rebirth of Ukraine and her nation with the Resurrection: spiritual and physical both. In Ukrainian Romanticism a faith in Jesus Christ appears an important element of the literature – as the source of the high stage of justice, as the ideal, which was desired by the writers. As the

illustration we can study the leading idea of redeeming and converting into Christian faith the main character in the novel "Marko the Cursed" by O. Storozhenko. We should notice, that the author at the end of the novel not simply stresses on establishment of the justice, but actually on the revival of Christian values in the soul of protagonist, his aspiration to change and be good in future. A revival of the Ukrainian ethnos is based on moral principles of the Christian religion: peace, love for everyone, honesty, justice, tolerance, freedom, unity. By the same spirit are filled the philosophical ideas, which influenced the process of forming the romantic prose. "The philosophy of heart" appealed to the inner, rich, spiritual world of people, to their desire to have higher blessing, which can be grasped through mutual love and humaneness, peaceful coexistence with all nations, to what so the Ukrainian people aspire.

CONCLUSION

Thus, as we see, the analyses of the features which form the gothic prose and the factors, that influenced the development of the gothic literature of England and Ukraine is the important aspect of comparative research. In fact gothic as literary genre, extraordinarily captures readers, even the manner of plot allows the reader to touch the secrets of hero's life. The human, in every aspect of his life, has an insuperable curiosity to forbidden, and the writers of the gothic style in some way allow the reader to submerge in the world of mysticism, become the witness of unusual events, to feel terror and pleasure at the same time. It should be noticed, that from the genre of the gothic romance extraordinarily popular today fantastic and mystic stories, horror stories, genre of fantasy, detectives have been developed. So these facts give us the evidence, that the gothic prose actively develops and needs more detailed researches of its peculiarities and modifications.

REFERENCES

- [1] E. Birkhead Edith, *The Tale of Terror: a Study of the Gothic Romance*. London: Constable & Company Ltd, 1921, pp. 123
- [2] R. Hromyak, Y. Kovaliv and V. Teremko, *The Reference Dictionary of the Study of Literature*, Kyiv: PC "The Academy", 2007, pp. 752
- [3] I. Kachurovskiy, "The gothic literature and its genres", *The Modernity*, no 5, pp. 59-67, 2002
- [4] Y. Kovaliv, *The Encyclopedia of the Study of Literature in 2 Volumes*, Kyiv: PC "The Academy", 2007, pp. 608
- [5] A. Sinitsyna, *The historical and philosophical ideas of the Ukrainian Romanticism*: (P. Kulish, M. Kostomariv). Lviv: 2002, pp.156
- [6] M. Skrynnyk, "The existential senses of the national identity in Ukrainian Romanticism", the abstract on the PhD thesis, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, 2008, pp 36.
- [7] V. Vanslov, *The aesthetics of the period of Romanticism*. Moskow: The Art, 1966, pp. 401

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mariana Pytuliak, Ukraine, V. Hnatiuk Ternopil National Pedagogical University. Postgraduate student of the second year at the History of Literature and Contrastive Literature Study department, E-mail: maryana.pytulyak@gmail.com

The paper is reviewed.