

THE PHILOSOPHY OF BEING IN THE “COLD AUTUMN” BY I.A. BUNIN

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The article deals with the figurative and narrative system of the story “Cold autumn” by I. Bunin, which is a part of the third section of the series of novels about love “Dark alleys” (1937–1944).

The paper shows that unlike the stories of the first section of the cycle “Dark alleys” the third section of the book is full of not just impressions of the past, the memories, but permeated with philosophically thoughtful observations, vital antithetic judgments and unexpectedly paradoxical conclusions of the main characters (heroine).

The “retrospective” compositional structure of the story and the position of the text in the final part of the cycle determine the originality of the novel’s poetological features, in particular, the change in the character of the narrator. Unlike other short stories of “Dark alleys” in the “Cold autumn” the story is not on behalf of traditional and habitual male character, but on behalf of the female character. Changing the narrative-personal strategy of “Cold autumn” – against the background of the whole cycle of stories of “Dark alleys” – gives the novelistic text “gender” breadth and objectivity, allowing to go beyond the rational mentality of the male narrator-narrator and actualize in the text emotional saturation and mobility, nuance of impressions and dichotomy of girlish/female judgments.

Intertextual layers of the story “Cold autumn” enhance the emotional mood and tone-psychological aura of the story, bringing additional meanings and putting the necessary semantic accents. The philosophical richness of the story is accumulated based on a mental generalization of A. Fet, W. Shakespeare, A. Pushkin, L. Tolstoy. Appeal to the works of classical writers becomes one of the signs of the “mnemonic” story, based on personal memories, on a deep and memorable experience – his and someone else’s, life and poetry.

In figurative and metaphorical terms, the image of Fet’s “cold autumn” becomes Bunin’s polysemantic symbol of the heroine’s autumn cold life, her loneliness and discomfort that overtook her after the loss of her beloved.

Motif of love inherent in all the stories of “Dark alleys” in the “Cold autumn” is supplemented by a new component – the knowledge of the inconsistency and ambiguity of intentions, actions, words, thoughts of a man (the hero), the new judgment of the discrepancy between desires and their realization, the argument about the cost of the promises and their fulfillment. Calm and thoughtful tone of narrator-heroine gives the whole conflict of the story generalizing – philosophical – flavor. The retrospective story of the heroine goes beyond a single local event.

The article concludes that in the third part of the cycle “Dark alleys” retrospectively nostalgic motives of love stories become stronger and more with features of philosophical texts, filled with understanding of not only the history of love, but the philosophy of life, the tragic collisions of life. And the example of this idea – story “Cold autumn”.

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