

## “SIMPLE HEART” BY FLAUBERT AND THE PHENOMENON OF “BEAUTIFUL SOUL”

Ninel A. Litvinenko, Moscow Region State University (Russian Federation)

E-mail: ninellit@list.ru

DOI: 10.32342/2523-4463-2019-0-16-16

**Key words:** *idyll, beautiful soul, aesthetics of everyday life, myth, hagiographic tradition, Georges Sand, Flaubert.*

The article is based on the analysis of Flaubert’s story “Simple Heart” (1877) and the peculiarities of embodying of the new concept of the hero in it. Unlike naturalist writers (Goncourt, Zola) and late realist writers (Champfleury, Maupassant), Flaubert leads to the subtext of social factors of the environmental influence on the formation of the consciousness of the “usual”, ordinary, not familiar with the achievements of culture, non-exclusive hero (heroine). The genre tradition of idyllic parody and lyricism reviewed by Flaubert (the preromantic tradition of Bernardin de Saint Pierre and the romantic tradition of Georges Sand) organically shifts the narrative into realism, where the character (Felicité’s maid), who is detached from society, develops a fantasy, religious and mystical consciousness in the process of evolution. “Clinical” analysis is giving way to social-ontological one.

Long before Sartre, Flaubert paints the drama of existence – outside the reflexion of the subject of existence, making his heroine an exponent of the personal and universal experience of the archetypical. The image of Felicité is painted with shades of irony and grotesque, the specificity of the details of everyday life is combined with the space of faith and myth, forming a new integrity of being.

The “Simple Heart” differs from the novel by Georges Sand (“La Mare au Diable”) in which the antithetical connection with the traditions of the “beautiful soul” phenomenon can be seen – not in the Hegelian sense – of the individual who is aware of the “greatness of his superiority”, but in the democratized myth – on another aesthetic basis opposing the «laws of the heart» and the “laws of reality”. Bourgeois-phobe Flaubert included in this phenomenon an intellectual, unconscious, democratic, potentially hagiographic beginning. The author of novels about the “world of mold colour” in the story about the “simple heart” has created a utopian version of the myth of the «beautiful soul», making the carrier of his representative of the social grassroots. This myth was fundamentally different from the one that modeled Hegel in the “The Phenomenology of Spirit”. The philosopher put the individuality at the centre, knowing that “the inner voice of their direct knowledge is the divine voice”. In the novel “Simple Heart” the function of “leading”, understanding, knowledge belongs to the narrator – Flaubert. He gave Felicité an active kindness and a halo of sacredness. On this basis, his heroine reveals an epic commonality with the ideal heroes of romanticism (Hugo, Georges Sand), whose creators artistically embodied the ideal moral and ethical imperatives, combined the search for new personal values with “collectively shared meanings”.

Flaubert’s story anticipates genre-aesthetic syntheses that characterize the search for European literature of the turn of the XIX and XX centuries.

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*Одержано 4.03.2019.*