

“BORDERLINE SITUATIONS” AND THEIR ROLE IN REVELATION OF TRUE HUMAN’S ESSENCE IN THE NOVEL BY L. ULITSKAYA “DANIEL STEIN, THE TRANSLATOR”

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The article is devoted to the study of “borderline situations” in the mainstream of literary criticism. We have given a brief description of “borderline situations” phenomenon according to founder of this term – K. Jaspers. The article provides a brief analysis of some literary critics’ works who studied “borderline situations”. These works are devoted to the works of Russian classics – L.N. Tolsoy and F.M. Dostoevsky, who, according to the researchers, are the founders of the existential direction in literature in Russia.

The main objective of our article is to analyze L. Ulitskaya’s novel “Daniel Stein, the translator” in the context of existentialism. In the course of our research we have established the influence of “borderline situations” on the change of human’s inner essence. The chronotope of war is one of the prevailing situations of this kind. We have noted what irreversible changes happen to a person – his worldview changes, much loses its significance and value (someone else’s human life is worth 20 coins or “good sheepskin coat”), he feels emotional suffering, etc.

Difficult military conditions, fear for their own life instigated people to mean acts, but the irony of the fate was that such behavior didn’t give them any confidence in tomorrow’s day. Moreover, quite often they became victims themselves and got requital for what they had done. If a person was involved in any bad affair against his will, its consequences became an inalienable part of his life, he could no longer get rid of memories and the feeling of guilt.

Except that, the author of the book touches upon the problem of inner conflict, which occurs when it’s needed to make a choice between good and evil and under such circumstances be ready to be responsible for it.

From our point of view, the most destructive influence of the war was that a person began to get used to the state of war and death around him. His perception of the world was changing, the cruelty of the surrounding reality to be perceived as usual, ordinary and everyday phenomenon.

One more vector in understanding of “borderline situations” in the novel are diseases, which make characters take a different look at what their life is filled with – work, affairs, vanity. The sad reality of life (and not only within the novel) is that people have lost the value of intimacy and communication. When their relatives face serious diseases, which can take their life, they realize that they did not set priorities in life correctly. The sad truth of life is that only the burden of diseases and similar hardships of life are able to open human’s eyes to vital things.

In the course of our study we also noticed that the characters consider their own illnesses as something wholesome – this is a kind of period of rethinking their life, changing the hierarchy of values.

Moreover, the author of the studied novel represents an incredibly important idea – life can and must continue despite any political and economic disasters around.

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