

“TO LEAVE THE MEMORIES ABOUT YOURSELF IN THE WORLD”: AUTOBIOGRAPHISM AS G. KUZNETSOVA’S ARTISTIC STRATEGY

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In the article the autobiographical modus of G. Kuznetsova’s creation, leading principles of art representation of autobiographical writer’s “self” and the system of tricks, that are creating the specificity of her autobiographical narration, are analyzed; in addition to this, article concerns about the dominant forms of her prose, which in result of reproduction and replication in texts in different genre’s nature acquires the status of autometadescriptive units, from which come autobiographical plot and autobiographical subject of G. Kuznetsova’s prose.

The first quarter of the 20th century was marked by the impetuous development of memoir-autobiographical prose in Russian literature. This was due to profound changes in the socio-cultural life of society, a systematic “revaluation of values,” a change in the way of knowing the world and the status of art, that is understood as the highest revelation, giving knowledge about the secrets of human existence. The memoir-autobiographical “boom” of the early 20th century enables literary scientists to talk about the pan-autobiographical nature of the work of many Russian writers, because “the attraction to autobiography in its various manifestations” (D. Maximov) became a peculiar sign of the modern era, stimulating interest in the subjective personality and personality problems. The hybrid genre of artistic autobiography was a significant part of the work of many leading writers of the early 20th century, it was especially pronounced in the artistic practices of Russian emigrant writers, among which G. Kuznetsova left her mark on the history of Russian literature.

G. Kuznetsova’s lyrical talent and the situation of emigration, which required to maintain the spiritual culture of the nation and her own experience of her past life, naturally predetermined the writer’s appeal to the subjective genres of intimate literature in which the author’s element could be most expressively and fully manifested. Thus her famous “Grasse Diary”, the autobiographical novel “Prologue” and the story “Artist”, and the memoir essay “Friends” appeared as well as many lyrical and psychological stories.

It is important in connection with the complex nature of the autobiographical genre to determine the terminological concepts used in the article. Firstly, it is appropriate to note that the concept of auto-fiction, formulated by S. Dubrovsky, seems to be productive from a theoretical and practical point of view. It brings distinctness to the ambiguous notation of “hybrid” texts created on the border of factual and fictional discourses. Secondly, following M. Medaric, we should distinguish between autobiography as a literary genre and autobiography as a “stylistically marked device” that is result of the autobiographical intention intrinsic to the writer’s creative mind.

G. Kuznetsova’s literary texts of different genre nature contain a complex of repeating images, motifs and details, which, wandering from text to text, take the form of artistic regularity and form Kuznetsova’s autobiographical life script. This scenario models her artistic world, saturated with dominant autobiographeme-concepts (beauty, music, loneliness, ineffability), autobiographeme-topos (Kiev, Lavra, garden, south, sea), autobiographeme-emotions (sadness, melancholy, languor, suffering, dissatisfaction). G. Kuznetsova’s story “The Artist”, first published in 1995, is marked by autobiographical features, it comprehends and reinterprets the writer’s life experience, and the author and protagonist’s identities are assumed. At the same time, the stories collected by G. Kuznetsova in the book “Morning”, published in 1930, with rare exceptions are not defined as autofictional, they were not created as autobiographical. Written in emigration and for emigrants, they talked about things that were well understood and close to everyone: about the Civil War, about the crash of the White Army and mass emigration, about the hardships of emigrant life in a foreign land. At the same time these stories explicate the transformation of the writer’s life experience into artistic plots, motifs, and images, which together form the autobiographical code of the authoress that we can recognize by Kuznetsova’s autofunctional and auto-documentary prose.

Thus, G. Kuznetsova’s works contain potential possibilities for interpreting it as an autobiographical metatext, which can become bright and original component of the canon of autobiographical prose of Russian Émigré Literature.

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