

A. Platonov's Poetics of the 1920s-1930s Short Stories

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Abstract:

This article is devoted to the analysis of Andrei Platonov's poetics in his works of the 1920s and 1930s. It examines the main themes and motifs of his prose, such as the grotesque, philosophical metaphors, and the imagery and metaphor of the road. Special attention is paid to the combination of the realities of post-war famine with the fantastic and symbolic principles in Platonov's work. The article also explores Platonov's authorial style, his original vocabulary, the psychological depth of his characters, and the philosophical profundity of his works. It analyzes how Platonov reflects the inner worlds of his characters, their search for the meaning of life, and their relationship with the socialist ideas that permeate his work.

Keywords: Andrey Platonov, grotesque, metaphor, road, social realism, philosophical prose, psychologism, fantastical, Soviet literature, Platonov's vocabulary.

Andrei Platonov holds a unique place in 20th-century Russian literature.

The first thing that strikes every reader of his works is his unique writing style, which, according to F. Suchkov's figurative expression, is difficult to imitate - it's like trying to reuse hardened plaster. Numerous works have been dedicated to Andrei Platonov's "false charm of language," and the linguistic anomalies in his prose have been studied and systematized. However, the secret of the phenomenon called "Platonov's language" remains.

A. Platonov's stories from the 1920s and 1930s ("The Sandy Teacher," "In a Hazy Youth," "Fro," and others)

In 1929, Platonov published his story "Doubting Makar." This work is rich in humor, abundant laughter, and subtle irony. Makar is a type of "natural fool" whose head is "empty" but whose hands

are "clever." He couldn't get along with his comrades, particularly Chumov, because Chumov had a "clever head" but "empty hands." Makar's journey to Moscow and his work on construction sites there, as well as his service in an institution, form the main content and conclusion of the story. The main protagonist of the story is laughter. The author laughs at all that is foolish and ugly in "socialist life."

In Makar's dream, he sees the "wisest man" standing on a mountain. Makar asks him: "What should I do in life so that I am useful to myself and others?" But the eyes of the man he questioned were dead "from afar," and he himself was dead. There is no one to answer Makar's question.

Makar ends up in a mental hospital, where he improves his ideological level in the "reading room." After leaving the "madhouse," Makar and Peter go to the RKI (Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate). There they meet Chumov. The ending of the story is unexpected: the author shifts the action to the plane of "distant view" and "bad infinity": Chumov sits alone in the institution until the time of the commission for the "liquidation of the state." He worked for forty-four years and "died in oblivion and paperwork."

All of Platonov's characters are young, honest, active people of folk character, emerging from the depths of Russian life. They are full of fervent hopes and carry strong emotions within themselves. They are also self-sacrificing. Overcoming self-pity, they dedicate their lives and destinies to a goal that is a common cause for them.

The lyrical story "Fro," written in 1936, depicts a young woman's eager anticipation of her own happiness and joy. She faithfully loves her husband and constantly longs for him. To distract herself from her difficult experiences, she tries to work alongside other women. Her grief and anxieties lead her to send a telegram to her husband saying, "I am dying." Her father sends the telegram, and on the seventh day, Fedor returns. Fro tells her husband: "I'm afraid that one day you will stop loving me, and then I will truly die." The author explains: "They wanted to be happy immediately, in the present moment, before their future arduous work yielded results for personal and common happiness." "Frosya wanted her children to be born, to raise them, and for them to continue the work of their father — communism and science." Thus, Platonov, speaking about the essence of human happiness, tries to convey to us the importance of the balance between personal and common happiness.

The story "Beautiful and Furious World," written in 1941, reflects the powerful fascination with technology of both Platonov and his characters. The machinist Malsev is an energetic, talented worker. There was no one equal to him in his work, and he was bored with his talent as if he were bored with loneliness. From this fascination, he was able to feel the soul of the locomotive. The old machinist loves his locomotive like a living being, feeling it with all his heart. At the same time, this communion with technology gives him satisfaction and evokes a sense of happiness. But the humane and sensitive writer Platonov creates such a situation and conflict that, although the mechanic felt the machine with his whole being, he was indifferent to a living person, did not notice his student's envy towards him, and did not appreciate his loyalty. The machine had overshadowed the human in his consciousness. Only the misfortune that occurred — a lightning strike and blindness — brings him back to understanding and compassion for people. He began to appreciate his assistant only when he fought for his master's name, supporting him morally in difficult times. Having experienced all the trials: the pride of loneliness, distrust and captivity, the loss of his beloved work, he is reborn and begins to see not only himself but the whole world. And this light was returned to him through human love and devotion.

"The Return" story ("The Ivanov Family") in 1946

During the war years, Platonov was a front correspondent for the "Red Star" newspaper. The stories about the war reflect the ambiguity of assessments, the paradoxical circumstances of life, and the internal conflicts between man and the world.

Platonov's 1946 story "The Ivanov Family" ("The Return") was sharply criticized for slandering the "Soviet family." V. Yermilov's article "Platonov's Slandorous Story" condemned the story.

The main criticism was directed at the psychologism of Platonov's stories, as it was seen as a threat to the "realism" of "socialist realism," which was the only permitted method in Soviet literature. Platonov's creative style was far from socialist realism. His style is distinguished by simple vocabulary, childlike sincerity, and the unusual use of common Russian words. The images of the characters are more symbolic, highlighting the philosophical-allegorical aspect of the portrayal.

Platonov was ahead of his contemporary writers by several steps. As early as 1946, the author raised the issue of changes in human consciousness under the influence of war, depicted the upheavals in the family, the trauma inflicted on the minds of children, and the complex dialectic of adult emotions. V. Dorofeyev wrote: "Platonov was one of the first to speak seriously about the burdens of war, the tragedy it brought, and the coarsening of the human soul."

Expressing the new content required new facets of lyricism, philosophical thought, and epic scope. The chronological time and setting of the story are clearly defined and are precise both domestically and psychologically. The protagonist of the story — Aleksey Alekseevich Ivanov — a guards captain, is "leaving the army for demobilization." The exposition introduces the circumstances that influence the fate of the protagonist. Meeting Masha at the station — perhaps, gives him reason to think about returning. The kiss on the cheek serves as a harbinger of this. Upon his return, he is met by "strangers-acquaintances." The writer skillfully depicts the complex feelings of the protagonist in the dramatic reunion with his family members: it is difficult for him to leave, he is even afraid to see the house from the train window. *Ivanov closes his eyes, not wanting to see and feel the pain of the running children, but he feels in his chest the burning heart that has been beating in vain and hopelessly all his life.* Tender love is interpreted as a return on the path of love and as a sense of loyalty and duty to the family. The metaphor of return! "Eternal return" is the main motif of the entire story (Platonov's characters try to unite with the universe or return to their native land — at the end of the story "The Foundation Pit," the characters sink into the pit, symbolizing a return to the mother's womb). Here — returning to the family, to one's homeland (detail — the perception of the world, the sense of the smells of one's home is expressed through "Masha's hair — tree leaves").

Another reason for the non-acceptance of Platonov's "Return" is a misunderstanding of his artistic style. The story is dominated by an objectified form of depiction, in which the inner monologues of the character are intertwined with impersonal direct speech. Platonov is characterized by an imperceptible transition from the writer to the character in the perception of reality. Platonov's unique style combines the relevance and research approach of essay writing with unique imagery and simplicity of words. "In a sense, this can be seen as the author as a linguistic expression," says I. Brodsky.

A. Platonov's stories are unique in the spiritual image of their characters. His plots are unique and life-affirming, they breathe the truth of life and the truth of man. The humanist Platonov, sacredly believing in the kind heart of man, showed how difficult the path to human self-awareness is. The accuracy of psychological details, the twists and turns of thoughts and feelings determine the uniqueness of Platonov's prose style.

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